From the Georgia Scenes.

THE SHOOTING-MATCH.

Shooting-matches are probably nearly coeval with the colonization of Georgia. They are still common throughout the Southern States, though they are not as common as they were twenty-five or thirty years ago. Chance led me to one about a year ago. I was travelling in one of the northeastern counties, when I overtook a sworthy, bright-eyed, smerky little fellow, riding a small poney, and bearing on his shoulder a long, heavy rifle, which, judging from its looks, I should say had done service in Morgan's corps.

'Good morning, sir!' said I, reining up my horse as I came beside him.

'How goes it, stranger?' said he, with a tone of independence and self-confidence that awakened my curiosity to know a little of his character.

'Going driving?' inquired I.

'Not exactly,' replied he, surveying my horse with a quizzical smile; 'I havn't been a driving *by myself* for a year or two; and my nose has got so bad lately, I can't carry a cold trail *without hounds to help me.*'

Alone, and without hounds as he was, the question was rather a silly one; but it answered the purpose for which it was put, which was only to draw him into conversation, and I proceeded to make as decent a retreat as I could.

'I didn't know,' said I, 'but that you were going to meet the huntsmen, or going to your stand.'

'Ah, sure enough,' rejoined he, 'that *mout* be a bee, as the old woman said when she killed a wasp. It seems to me I ought to know you.'

'Well, if you *ought*, why *don't* you?'

'What *mout* your name be?'

'It *might* be anything,' said I, with borrowed wit; for I knew my man, and knew what kind of conversation would please him most.

'Well, what *is* it, then?'

'It *is* Hall,' said I; 'but you know it might as well have been anything else.'

'Pretty digging!' said he. 'I find you're not the fool I took you to be; so here's to a better acquaintance with you.'

'With all my heart,' returned I; 'but you must be as clever as I've been, and give me your name.'

'To be sure I will, my old coon; take it, take it, and welcome. Anything else about me you'd like to have?'

'No,' said I, 'there's nothing else about you worth having.'

'Oh, yes there is, stranger! Do you see this?' holding up his ponderous rifle with an ease that astonished me. 'If you will go with me to the shooting-match, and see me knock out the *bull's-eye* with her a few times, you'll agree the old *Soap-stick's* worth something when Billy Curlew puts his shoulder to her.'

This short sentence was replete with information to me. It taught me that my companion was *Billy Curlew;* that he was going to a *shooting-match;* that he called his rifle the *Soap-stick*, and that he was very confident of winning beef with her; or, which is nearly, but not quite the same thing, *driving the cross with her.*

'Well, said I, 'if the shooting-match is not too far out of my way, I'll go to it with pleasure.'

'Unless your way lies through the woods from here,' said Billy, 'it'll not be much out of your way; for it's only a mile ahead of us, and there is no other road for you to take till you get there; and as that thing you're riding in an't well suited to fast travelling among brushy knobs, I reckon you won't lose much by going by. I reckon you hardly ever was at a shooting-match, stranger, from the cut of your coat?'

'Oh yes,' returned I, 'many a time. I won beef at one when I was hardly old enough to hold a shot-gun off-hand.'

'*Children* don't go to shooting-matches about here,' said he, with a smile of incredulity. 'I never heard of but one that did, and he was a little *swinge* cat. He was born a shooting, and killed squirrels before he was weaned.'

'Nor did *I* ever hear of but one,' replied I, 'and that one was myself.'

'And where did you win beef so young, stranger?'

'At Berry Adams's.'

'Why, stop, stranger, let me look at you good! Is your name *Lyman* Hall?'

'The very same,' said I.

'Well, dang my buttons, if you an't the very boy my daddy used to tell me about. I was too young to recollect you myself; but I've heard daddy talk about you many a time. I believe mammy's got a neck-handkerchief now that daddy won on your shooting at Collen Reid's store, when you were hardly knee high. Come along, Lyman, and I'll go my death on you at the shooting-match, with the old Soap-stick at your shoulder.'

'Ah Billy,' said I, 'the old Soap-stick will do much better at your own shoulder. It was my mother's notion that sent me to the shooting-match at Berry Adams's; and, to tell the honest truth, it was altogether a chance shot that made me win beef; but that wasn't generally known; and most everybody believed that I was carried there on account of my skill in shooting; and my fame was spread far and wide, I well remember. I remember, too, perfectly well, your father's bet on me at the store. *He* was at the shooting-match, and nothing could make him believe but that I was a great shot with a rifle as well as a shot-gun. Bet he would on me, in spite of all I could say, though I assured him that I had never shot a rifle in my life. It so happened, too, that there were but two bullets, or, rather, a bullet and a half; and so confident was your father in my skill, that he made me shoot the half bullet; and, strange to tell, by another chance shot, I like to have drove the cross and won his bet.'

'Now I know you're the very chap; for I heard daddy tell that very thing about the half bullet. Don't say anything about it, Lyman, and darn my old shoes if I don't tare the lint off the boys with you at the shooting-match. They'll never 'spect such a looking man as you are of knowing anything about a rifle. I'll risk your *chance* shots.'

I soon discovered that the father had eaten sour grapes, and the son's teeth were on edge; for Billy was just as incorrigibly obstinate in his belief of my dexterity with a rifle as his father had been before him.

We soon reached the place appointed for the shooting-match. It went by the name of Sims's Cross Roads, because here two roads intersected each other; and because, from the time that the first had been laid out, Archibald Sims had resided there. Archibald had been a justice of the peace in his day (and where is the man of his age in Georgia who has not?); consequently he was called '*Squire* Sims. It is the custom in this State, when a man has once acquired a title, civil or military, to force it upon him as long as he lives; hence the countless number of titled personages who are introduced in these sketches.

We stopped at the 'squire's door. Billy hastily dismounted, gave me the shake of the hand which he had been reluctantly reserving for a mile back, and, leading me up to the 'squire, thus introduced me: 'Uncle Archy, this is Lyman Hall; and for all you see him in these fine clothes, he's a *swinge* cat; a darn sight cleverer fellow than he looks to be.—Wait till you see see him lift the old Soap-stick, and draw a bead upon the bull's-eye.—You *gwine* to see fun here to-day. Don't say nothing about it.'

'Well, Mr. Swinge cat,' said the 'squire, here's to a better acquaintance with you, offering me his hand.

'How goes it, Uncle Archy?' said I, taking his hand warmly (for I am always free and easy with those who are so with me; and in this course I rarely fail to please). 'How's the old woman?'

'Egad,' said the 'squire, chuckling, 'there you're too hard for me, for she died two-and-twenty years ago, and I haven't heard a word from her since.'

'What! and you never married again!'

'Never, as God's my judge!' (a solemn asseveration, truly, upon so light a subject.)

'Well, that's not my fault.'

'No, nor it's not mine *nither*,' said the 'squire.

Here we were interrupted by the cry of another Rancey Sniffle. 'Hello, here! All you as wish to put in for the shoot'n'-match, come on here! for the putt'n' in's *riddy* to begin.'

About sixty persons, including mere spectators, had collected; the most of whom were more or less obedient to the call of Mealy Whitecotton, for that was the name of the self-constituted commander-in-chief. Some hastened and some loitered, as they desired to be first or last on the list; for they shoot in the order in which their names are entered.

The beef was not present, nor is it ever upon such occasions; but several of the company had seen it, who all concurred in the opinion that it was a good beef, and well worth the price that was set upon it—eleven dollars. A general inquiry ran round, in order to form some opinion as to the number of shots that would be taken; for, of course, the price of a shot is cheapened in proportion to the increase of that number. It was soon ascertained that not more than twenty persons would take chances; but these twenty agreed to take the number of shots, at twenty-five cents each.

The competitors now began to give in their names; some for one, some for two, three, and a few for as many as four shots.

Billy Curlew hung back to the last; and when the list was offered him, five shots remained undisposed of.

'How many shots left?' inquired Billy.

'Five,' was the reply.

'Well, I take 'em all. Put down four shots to me, and one to Lyman Hall, paid for by William Curlew.'

I was thunder-struck; not at his proposition to pay for my shot, because I knew that Billy meant it as a token of friendship, and he would have been hurt if I had refused to let him do me this favor; but at the unexpected announcement of my name as a competitor for beef, at least one hundred miles from the place of my residence. I was prepared for a challenge from Billy to some of his neighbors for a *private* match upon me; but not for this.

I therefore protested against his putting in for me, and urged every reason to dissuade him from it that I could, without wounding his feelings.

'Put it down!' said Billy, with the authority of an emperor, and with a look that spoke volumes intelligible to every by-stander—'Reckon I don't know what I'm about?' Then wheeling off, and muttering in an under, self-confident tone, 'Dang old Roper,' continued he, 'if he don't knock that cross to the north corner of creation and back again before a cat can lick her foot.'

Had I been king of the cat tribe, they could not have regarded me with more curious attention than did the whole company from this moment. Every inch of me was examined with the nicest scrutiny; and some plainly expressed by their looks that they never would have taken me for such a bite. I saw no alternative but to throw myself upon a third chance shot; for though, by the rules of the sport, I would have been allowed to shoot by proxy, by all the rules of good breeding I was bound to shoot in person. It would have been unpardonable to disappoint the expectations which had been raised on me. Unfortunately, too, for me, the match differed in one respect from those which I had been in the habit of attending in my younger days. In olden time the contest was carried on chiefly with *shot-guns*, a generic term which, in those days, embraced three descriptions of firearms: *Indian-traders* (a long, cheap, but sometimes excellent kind of gun, that mother Britain used to send hither for traffic with the Indians;) the *large musket*, and the *shot-gun*, properly so called. Rifles were, however, always permitted to compete with them, under equitable restrictions. These were, that they should be fired off-hand, while the shot-guns were allowed a rest, the distance being equal; or that the distance should be one hundred yards for a rifle, to sixty for the shot-gun, the mode of firing being equal.

But this was a match of rifles exclusively; and these are by far the most common at this time.

Most of the competitors fire at the same target; which is usually a board from nine inches to a foot wide, charred on one side as black as it can be made by fire, without impairing materially the uniformity of its surface; on the darkened side of which is *pegged* a square piece of white paper, which is larger or smaller, according to the distance at which it is to be placed from the marksmen. This is almost invariably sixty yards, and for it the paper is reduced to about two and a half inches square. Out of the centre of it is cut a rhombus of about the width of an inch, measured diagonally; this is the *bull's eye*, or *diamond*, as the marksmen choose to call it: in the centre of this is the cross. But every man is permitted to fix his target to his own taste; and accordingly, some remove one fourth of the paper, cutting from the centre of the square to the two lower corners, so as to leave a large angle opening from the centre downward; while others reduce the angle more or less; but it is rarely the case that all are not satisfied with one of these figures.

The beef is divided into five prizes, or, as they are commonly termed, five *quarters*—the hide and tallow counting as one. For several years after the revolutionary war, a sixth was added; the *lead* which was shot in the match. This was the prize of the sixth best shot; and it used to be carefully extracted from the board or tree in which it was lodged, and afterward remoulded. But this grew out of the exigency of the times, and has, I believe, been long since abandoned everywhere.

The three master shots and rivals were Moses Firmby, Larkin Spivey, and Billy Curlew; to whom was added, upon this occasion, by common consent and with awful forebodings, your humble servant.

The target was fixed at an elevation of about three feet from the ground; and the judges (Captain Turner and 'Squire Porter,) took their stands by it, joined by about half the spectators.

The first name on the catalogue was Mealy Whitecotton. Mealy stepped out, rifle in hand, and toed the mark. His rifle was about three inches longer than himself, and near enough his own thickness to make the remark of Darby Chislom, as he stepped out, tolerably appropriate: 'Here comes the corn-stock and the sucker!' said Darby.

'Kiss my foot!' said Mealy. 'The way I'll creep into that bull's-eye's a fact.'

'You'd better creep into your hind sight,' said Darby. Mealy raised and fired.

'A pretty good shot, Mealy!' said one.

'Yes, a blamed good shot!' said a second.

'Well done, Meal!' said a third.

I was rejoiced when one of the company inquired, 'Where is it?' for I could hardly believe they were founding these remarks upon the evidence of their senses.

'Just on the right hand side of the bull's-eye,' was the reply.

I looked with all the power of my eyes, but was unable to discover the least change in the surface of the paper. Their report, however, was true; so much keener is the vision of a practised than an unpractised eye.

The next in order was Hiram Baugh. Hiram was like some race-horses which I have seen; he was too good not to contend for every prize, and too good for nothing ever to win one.

'Gentlemen,' said he, as he came to the mark, 'I don't say that I'll win beef; but if my piece don't blow, I'll eat the paper, or be mighty apt to do it, if you'll b'lieve my racket. My powder are not good powder, gentlemen; I bought it *thum* (from) Zeb Daggett, and gin him three-quarters of a dollar a pound for it; but it are not what I call good powder, gentlemen; but if old Buck-killer burns it clear, the boy you call Hiram Baugh eat's paper, or comes mighty near it.'

'Well, blaze away,' said Mealy, 'and be d—d to you, and Zeb Dagget, and your powder, and Buck-killer, and your powder-horn and shot-pouch to boot! How long you gwine stand thar talking 'lore you shoot?'

'Never mind,' said Hiram, 'I can talk a little and shoot a little too; but that's nothin'. Here goes!'

Hiram assumed the figure of a note of interrogation, took a long sight, and fired.

'I've eat paper,' said he, at the crack of the gun, without looking, or seeming to look, towards the target. 'Buck-killer made a clear racket. Where am I, gentlemen?'

'You're just between Mealy and the diamond,' was the reply.

'I said I'd eat paper, and I've done it; haven't I, gentlemen?'

'And 'spose you have!' said Mealy, 'what do that 'mount to? You'll not win beef, and never did.'

'Be that as it mout be, I've beat Meal 'Cotton mighty easy; and the boy you call Hiram Baugh are able to do it.'

'And what do that 'mount to? Who the devil an't able to beat Meal 'Cotton! I don't make no pretense of bein' nothin' great, no how: but you always makes out as if you were gwine to keep 'em makin' crosses for you constant, and then do nothin' but '*eat paper*' at last; and that's a long way from *eatin' beef*, 'cordin' to Meal 'Cotton's notions, as you call him.'

Simon Stow was now called on.

'Oh, Lord!' exclaimed two or three: 'now we have it. It'll take him as long to shoot as it would take 'Squire Dobbins to run round a *track* o' land.'

'Good-by, boys,' said Bob Martin.

'Where are you going, Bob?'

'Going to gather in my crop; I'll be back agin though by the time Sime Stow shoots'

Simon was used to all this, and therefore it did not disconcert him in the least. He went off and brought his own target, and set it up with his own hand.

He then wiped out his rifle, rubbed the pan with his hat, drew a piece of tow through the touch-hole with his wiper, filled his charger with great care, poured the powder into the rifle with equal caution, shoved in with his finger the two or three vagrant grains that lodged round the mouth of his piece, took out a handful of bullets, looked them all over carefully, selected one without flaw or wrinkle, drew out his patching, found the most even part of it, sprung open the grease-box in the breech of his rifle, took up just so much grease, distributed it with great equality over the chosen part of his patching, laid it over the muzzle of his rifle, grease side down, placed his ball upon it, pressed it a little, then took it up and turned the neck a little more perpendicularly downward, placed his knife-handle on it, just buried it in the mouth of the rifle, cut off the redundant patching just above the bullet, looked at it, and shook his head, in token that he had cut off too much or too little, no one knew which, sent down the ball, measured the contents of his gun with his first and second fingers on the protruding part of the ramrod, shook his head again, to signify there was too much or too little powder, primed carefully, placed an arched piece of tin over the hind sight to shade it, took his place, got a friend to hold his hat over the foresight to shade it, took a very long sight, fired, and didn't even eat the paper.

'My piece was badly *loadned*,' said Simon, when he learned the place of his ball.

'Oh, you didn't take time,' said Mealy.—'No man can shoot that's in such a hurry as you is. I'd hardly got to sleep 'fore I heard the crack o' the gun.'

The next was Moses Firmby. He was a tall, slim man, of rather sallow complexion; and it is a singular fact, that though probably no part of the world is more healthy than the mountainous parts of Georgia, the mountaineers have not generally robust frames or fine complexions: they are, however, almost inexhaustible by toil.

Moses kept us not long in suspense. His rifle was already charged, and he fixed it upon the target with a steadiness of nerve and aim that was astonishing to me and alarming to all the rest. A few seconds, and the report of his rifle broke the death-like silence which prevailed.

'No great harm done yet,' said Spivey, manifestly relieved from anxiety by an event which seemed to me better calculated to produce despair. Firmby's ball had cut out the lower angle of the diamond, directly on a right line with the cross.

Three or four followed him without bettering his shot; all of whom, however, with one exception, 'eat the paper.'

It now came to Spivey's turn. There was nothing remarkable in his person or manner. He took his place, lowered his rifle slowly from a perpendicular until it came on a line with the mark, held it there like a vice for a moment, and fired.

'Pretty *sevigrous*, but nothing killing yet,' said Billy Curlew, as he learned the place of Spivey's ball.

Spivey's ball had just broken the upper angle of the diamond; beating Firmby about half its width.

A few more shots, in which was nothing remarkable, brought us to Billy Curlew. Billy stepped out with much confidence, and bro't the Soap-stick to an order, while he deliberately rolled up his shirt sleeves. Had I judged of Billy's chance of success from the looks of his gun, I should have said it was hopeless. The stock of Soap-stick seemed to have been made with a case knife; and had it been, the tool would have been but a poor apology for its clumsy appearance. An auger-hole in the breech served for a grease-box; a cotton string assisted a single screw in holding on the lock; and the thimbles were made, one of brass, one of iron, and one of tin.

'Where's Dark Spivey's bullet?' called out Billy to the judges, as he finished rolling up his sleeves.

'About three quarters of an inch from the cross,' was the reply.

'Well, clear the way! the Soap-stick's coming, and she'll be along in there among 'em presently.'

Billy now planted himself astraddle, like an inverted V; shot forward his left hip, drew his body back to an angle of about forty-five degrees with the plane of the horizon, brought his cheek down close to the breech of old Soap stick, and fixed her upon the mark with untrembling hand. His sight was long, and the swelling muscles of his left arm led me to believe that he was lessening his chance of success with every half second that he kept it burdened with his ponderous rifle; but it neither flagged nor wavered until Soap-stick made her report.

'Where am I?' said Billy, as the smoke rose from before his eye.

'You've jist touched the cross on the lower side,' was the reply of one of the judges.

'I was afraid I was drawing my bead a *leetle* too fine,' said Billy. 'Now, Lyman, you see what the Soap-stick can do. Take her, and show the boys how you used to do when you was a baby.'

I begged to reserve my shot to the last; pleading, rather sophistically, that it was, in point of fact, one of Billy's shots. My plea was rather indulged than sustained, and the marksmen who had taken more than one shot commenced the second round. This round was a manifest improvement upon the first. The cross was driven three times: once by Spivey, once by Firmby, and once by no less a personage than Mealy Whitecotton, whom chance seemed to favor for this time, merely that he might retaliate upon Hiram Baugh; and the bull's-eye was disfigured out of all shape.

The third and fourth rounds were shot.—Billy discharged his last shot, which left the rights of parties thus: Billy Curlew first and fourth choice, Spivey second, Firmby third, and Whitecotton fifth. Some of my readers may perhaps be curious to learn how a distinction comes to be made between several, all of whom drive the cross. The distinction is perfectly natural and equitable. Threads are stretched from the unefaced parts of the once intersecting lines, by means of which the original position of the cross is precisely ascertained. Each bullet-hole being nicely pegged up as it is made, it is easy to ascertain its circumference. To this I believe they usually, if not invariably, measure, where none of the balls touch the cross; but if the cross be driven, they measure from it to the centre of the bullet-hole. To make a draw shot, therefore, between two who drive the cross, it is necessary that the centre of both balls should pass directly through the cross; a thing that very rarely happens.

The Bite alone remained to shoot. Billy wiped out his rifle carefully, loaded her to the top of his skill, and handed her to me.—'Now,' said he, 'Lyman, draw a fine bead, but not too fine; for Soap-stick bears up her ball well. Take care and don't touch the trigger until you've got your bead; for she's spring-trigger'd, and goes mighty easy: but you hold her to the place you want her, and if she don't go there dang old Roper.'

I took hold of Soap-stick, and lapsed immediately into the most hopeless despair. I am sure I never handled as heavy a gun in all my life. 'Why, Billy,' said I, 'you little mortal, you! what do you use such a gun as this for?'

'Look at the bull's-eye yonder!' said he.

'True,' said I, 'but *I* cant shoot her; it is impossible.'

'Go 'long, you old coon!' said Billy; 'I see what you're at;' intimating that all this was merely to make the coming shot the more remarkable; 'Daddy's little boy don't shoot anything but the old Soap-stick here to-day, I know.'

The judges, I knew, were becoming impatient, and, withal, my situation was growing more embarrassing every second; so I e'en resolved to try the Soap-stick without farther parley.

I stepped out, and the most interest was excited all around me, and it flashed like electricity around the target, as I judged from the anxious gaze of all in that direction.

Policy dictated that I should fire with a falling rifle, and I adopted this mode; determining to fire as soon as the sights came on a line with the diamond, *bead* or no *bead*. Accordingly, I commenced lowering old Soap-stick; but, in spite of all my muscular powers, she was strictly obedient to the laws of gravitation, and came down with a uniformly accelerated velocity. Before I could arrest her downward flight, she had not only passed the target, but was making rapid encroachments on my own toes.

'Why, he's the weakest man in the arms I ever seed,' said one, in a half whisper.

'It's only his fun,' said Billy; 'I know him.'

'It may be fun,' said the other, 'but it looks mightily like yearnest to a man up a tree.'

I now, of course, determined to reverse the mode of firing, and put forth all my physical energies to raise Soap-stick to the mark. The effort silenced Billy, and gave tongue to all his companions. I had just strength enough to master Soap-stick's obstinate proclivity, and, consequently, my nerves began to exhibit palpable signs of distress with her first imperceptible movement upward. A trembling commenced in my arms; increased, and extended rapidly to my body and lower extremities; so that, by the time that I had brought Soap-stick up to the mark, I was shaking from head to foot, exactly like a man under the continued action of a strong galvanic battery. In the mean time my friends gave vent to their feelings freely.

'I swear poin' blank,' said one, 'that man can't shoot.'

'He used to shoot well,' said another; 'but can't now, nor never could.'

'You better *git* away from 'bout that mark!' bawled a third, 'for I'll be dod darned if Broadcloth don't give some of you the dry gripes if you stand too close thare.'

'The stranger's got the *peedoddles*'* said a fourth, with humorous gravity.

'If he had bullets enough in his gun, he'd shoot a ring round the bull's-eye big as a spinning wheel,' said a fifth.

As soon as I found that Soap-stick was high enough (for I made no farther use of the sights than to ascertain this fact), I pulled trigger, and off she went. I have always found that the most creditable way of relieving myself of derision was to heighten it myself as much as possible. It is a good plan in all circles, but by far the best which can be adopted among the plain, rough farmers of the country.—Accordingly, I brought old Soap.stick to an order with an air of triumph; tipped Billy a wink, and observed, 'Now Billy,'s your time to make your fortune. Bet 'em two to one that I've knocked out the cross.'

'No, I'll be dod blamed if I do,' said Billy; 'but I'll bet you two to one you han't hit the plank.'

'Ah, Billy,' said I, 'was joking about *betting*, for I never bet; nor would I have you to bet: indeed, I do not feel exactly right in shooting for beef; for it is a species of gaming at last: but I'll say this much: if that cross isn't knocked out, I'll never shoot for beef again as long as I live."

'By dod,' said Mealy Whitecotton, you'll lose no great things at that.'

'Well,' said I, 'I reckon I know a little about wabbling. Is it possible, Billy, a man who shoots as well as you do, never practised shooting with the double wabble? It's the greatest take in in the world when you learn to drive the cross with it. Another sort for getting bets upon, to the drop-sight, with a single wabble! And the Soap-stick's the very yarn for it.'

'Tell you what, stranger,' said one, 'you're too hard for us all here. We never *hearn* o' that sort o' shoot'n' in these parts.'

'Well,' returned I, 'you've seen it now, and I'm the boy that can do it.'

The judges were now approaching with the target, and a singular combination of circumstances had kept all my party in utter ignorance of the result of my shot. Those about the target had been prepared by Billy Curlew for a great shot from me; their expectations had received assurance from the courtesy which had been extended to me; and nothing had happened to disappoint them but the single caution to them against the 'dry gripes,' which was as likely to have been given in irony as in earnest; for my agonies under the weight of the Soap-stick were either imperceptible to them at the distance of sixty yards, or, being visible, were taken as the flourishes of an expert who wished to 'astonish the natives.' The other party did not think the direction of my ball worth the trouble of a question; or if they did, my airs and harangue had put the thought to flight before it was delivered. Consequntlyf they were all transfixed with astonishment when the judges presented the target to them, and gravely observed, 'It's only second best, after all the fuss.'

'Second best!' exclaimed I, with uncontrollable transports.

The whole of my party rushed to the target to have the evidence of their senses before they would believe the report: but most marvellous fortune decreed that it should be true. Their incredulity and astonishment were most fortunate for me; for they blinded my hearers to the real feelings with which the exclamation was uttered, and allowed me sufficient time to prepare myself for making the best use of what I had said before with a very different object.

'Second best!' reiterated I, with an air of despondency, as the company turned from the target to me. 'Second best only? Here, Billy, my son, take the old Soapstick; she's a good piece, but I'm getting too old and diminished to shoot a rifle, especially with the drop-sight and double wabbles.'

'Why, good Lord a'mighty!' said Billy, with a look that baffles all description, 'an't you *driv* the cross!'

'Oh, driv the cross!' rejoined I, carelessly. 'What's that! Just look where my ball is! I do believe in my soul its centre is a full quarter of an inch from the cross. I wanted to lay the centre of the bullet upon the cross, just as if you'd put it there with your fingers.'

Several received this palaver with a contemptuous but appropriate curl of the nose; and Mealy Whitecotton offered to bet a half pint 'that I couldn't do the like again with no sort o' wabbles, he didn't care what.' But I had already fortified myself on this quarter by my morality. A decided majority, however, were clearly of opinion that I was serious; and they regarded me as one of the wonders of the world. Billy increased the majority by now coming out fully with my history, as he had received it from his father; to which I listened with quite as much astonishment as any other one of his hearers. He begged me to go home with him for the night, or, as he expressed it, 'to go home with him and swap lies that night, and it shouldn't cost me a cent;' the true reading of which is, that if I would go home with him, and give him the pleasure of an evening's chat about old times, his house should be as free to me as my own.—But I could not accept his hospitality without retracing five or six miles of the road which I had already passed, and therefore I declined it.

'Well, if you won't go, what must I tell the old woman for you? for she'll be mighty glad to hear from the boy that won the silk handkerchief for her, and I expect she'll lick me for not bringing you home with me.'

'Tell her,' said I, 'that I send her a quarter of beef, which I won, as I did the handkerchief, by nothing in the world but mere good luck.'

'Hold your jaw, Lyman!' said Billy; 'I an't gwine to tell the old woman any such lies; for she's a *rael* reg'lar built Meth'dist.'

As I turned to depart, 'Stop a minute, stsange!' said one: then lowering his voice to a confidential but distinctly audible tone, 'What you offering for?' continued he. I assured him I was not a candidate for anything; that I had accidentally fallen in with Billy Curlew, who begged me to come with him to the shooting-match, and, as it lay right on my road, I had stopped. 'Oh,' said he, with a conciliatory nod, 'if you're up for anything, you needn't be mealy-mouthed about it 'fore us boys; for we'll all go in for you here up to the handle.'

'Yes,' said Billy, 'dang old Roper if we don't go our death for you, no matter who offers. If ever you come out for anything, Lyman, jist let the boys of Upper Hogthief know it, and they'll go for you to the hilt, against creation, tit or not tit, that's the *tatur*.'

I thanked them kindly, but repeated my assurances. The reader will not suppose that the district took its name from the character of the inhabitants. In almost every county in the State there is some spot or district which bears a contemptuous appellation, usually derived from local rivalships, or from a single accidental circumstance. HALL.

*'This word was entirely new to me; but like-most, if not all words in use among the common people, it is doubtless a legitimate English word, or, rather, a compound of two words, the last a little corrupted, and was very aptly applied in this instance. It is a compound of 'pee,' to peep with one eye, and '*daddle*,' to totter or wabble.

Just Received.

SPRING style of GENTLEMEN'S HATS, received this day, and now open for inspection, at MYERS & BARNUM'S.

March 19.

The Old Rock Spring FOREVER!

THE ROCK SPRING RESTAURATEUR is now open for the accommodation of the public, where every *Refreshment* the market affords may be had, at all hours of the day or night. The Bar is supplied with *choice Liquors, Wines and Cigars.* DAVID THALLY.

Dec 18, 1846 14-y

MYERS & BARNUM,

MANUFACTURERS AND DEALERS IN

Hats, Caps, Bonnets, Umbrellas, Walking Canes, &c. &c.

RESPECTFULLY call the attention of the citizens of Wilmington and vicinity, to their *large and splendid assortment* now receiving at the old stand of C. MYERS, North side of Market street, which we offer at wholesale and retail, *cheaper than ever.*

Gent.'s Beaver, Nutria, Moleskin, and Silk Hats,

of Beebee & Costar's and Leary's Fall Fashion for 1846, a splendid article, just received, and a "few more left of the same sort." Please call and examine them. Also, a very large assortment of

Men's, Boys', & Infants' Caps,

of the latest and most approved patterns. Gent.'s French soft Dress, Silk, Velvet, and Cloth Caps; Gent.'s French Guard do.: Blue and Black Spring Band, Palo Alto, Ringgold, Oregon, Oil Silk, Velveteen, Glazed Lawn, &c., &c.

Youths' and Boys' Caps

of every style and quality, from 12½ cents to $2,-50, the largest assortment ever offered in this market, and at astonishing low prices. A beautiful article of Infants' *Cloth and Silk Velvet Caps,* to which we particularly call the attention of those wanting Caps for children. In fact, every article in our line we have a rich and full assortment, to which we respectfully call the attention of the Public, and warrant a genteel fit, and at Prices to suit the times.

MYERS & BARNUM,

Wilmington, Oct. 30, 1846. 7-tf

THE Subscriber would express his gratitude to his Friends and Customers, for their liberal patronage heretofore extended towards him in Wilmington. The same business will hereafter be conducted under the name and firm of MYERS & BARNUM, at the old stand.

C. MYERS.

MONUMENTS, TOMB TABLES, *Head & Foot Stones, &c.*

THE subscriber has taken the AGENCY of an extensive MARBLE MANUFACTORY at the North, and will receive orders for the above named articles on as favorable terms as can be procured from any other establishment.

GUY C. HOTCHKISS.

Wilmington, N C, Feb 13, 1846 f22-1y

WINDOW SASHES--BLINDS and DOORS.

THE subscriber is agent for one of the best manufactories at the North, and will receive orders for the above named articles, which will be boxed up and delivered on board of vessels in New York, at the LOWEST PRICES, and at short notice. Persons about to contract for buildings, will find it to their interest to call and examine prices before sendind their orders abroad.

GUY C. HOTCHKISS.

COMMERCIAL BANK OF WILMINGTON.

THE organization of this institution having taken place, in conformity to its Charter, Books of Subscription are now re-opened at the Bank of Cape Fear in this place for balance of capital stock. O. G. PARSLEY, Pres't.

April 39, 1847—[33-tf

$10 REWARD.

RUNAWAY from the subscriber, about the 15th ult., his Negro boy BEN. He is about 17 years old; is well known about Wilmington; and formerly belonged to Dr. W. A. Berry, from whom the subscriber purchased him last spring. He is so well known about town, where he is believed to be lurking, that a more minute description is deemed unnecessary. The above reward will be paid for his confinement in the Wilmington Jail, or for his delivery to

DANIEL S. SANDERS.

November 6, 1846. 8tf

Hats, Caps, &c.

WE have just received by late arrivals from New York, a fresh supply of Gentlemen's black Beaver and Moleskin Hats, spring style; one case extra Drab Beavers, A No. 1; Gent's black and drab Leghorns; Boys' Leghorn Caps, and patent leather Belts. Also, a few silk velvet Riding Caps for Ladies, very pretty. Call and see, at

MYERS & BARNUM'S.

May 28, 1847.

BLANKS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION FOR SALE.

SUPERIOR HAMS.

A LOT of very fine HAMS, put up expressly for family use, for sale by

[July 9] HOWARD & PEDEN.

Spring and Summer Medicine.

Dr. Townsend's Sarsaparilla.

THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY MEDICINE IN the world.—This extract is put up in quart bottles; it is six times cheaper, pleasanter, and warranted superior to any sold. It cures diseases without vomiting, purging, sickening, or debilitating the patient.

The great beauty and superiority of this Sarsaparilla over all other remedies is, while it eradicates disease, it invigorates the body.

IT HAS PERFORMED MORE THAN 15,000 CURES THIS YEAR.

1,000 cures of Rheumatism.
1,000 cures of Dyspepsia;
2,500 cures of general debility, and want of nervous energy;
3,000 Female complaints and over;
7,000 cures of diseases of the blood, viz:

Ulcers, Scrofula, Erysipelas, Salt Rheum, Pimples on the face, &c. &c., together with numerous cases of consumption, Liver Complaint, Spinal Affections, &c. This, we are aware, must appear incredible, but we have letters from physicians and our Agents from all parts of the United States, informing us of extraordinary cures. R. Van Buskirk, Esq., one of the most respectable druggists in Newark, New Jersey, informs us that he can refer to more than one hundred and fifty cases in that place alone. There are thousands of cases in the City of New York, which we will refer to with pleasure, and to men of character well known.

UNITED STATES OFFICER.—Capt. G. W. McLean, member of the New Jersey Legislature, late of the United States Navy, has kindly sent us the following certificate. It tells its own story:

Rahway, January 25, 1847.

A year since I was taken with the influenza and my whole system left in a debilitated state. I was induced to try Dr. Townsend's Sarsaparilla, and after taking two or three bottles I was very much relieved, and attributed it entirely to the said Sarsaparilla. I have continued taking it, and find that I improve every day. I believe it saved my life, and would not be without it under any consideration. G. W. McLEAN.

THE EDITOR.—John Jackson, Esq., Editor of the Rahway Republican, published the above certificate, and remarked in an editorial as follows:

The success of Dr. Townsend's preparation of Sarsaparilla appears to be of the most extraordinary character. We publish to-day two certificates in its behalf, one from Capt. McLean, of this town, and one from Rev. Mr. White, of Staten Island, a gentleman well known in Rahway.—Capt. McLean believes the medicine to have saved his life, and Mr. White seems to entertain an equally strong confidence in its efficacy. Intelligent men like these would not praise so strongly what they did not fully believe to deserve it.

SCROFULA CURED.—This certificate was handed in to Dr. Townsend's office this week, and conclusively prove that his Sarsaparilla has perfect control over the most obstinate diseases of the blood. Three persons cured in one house is unprecedented.

THREE CHILDREN.

Dr. Townsend—Dear Sir: I have the pleasure to inform you that three of my children have been cured of the Scrofula by the use of your excellent medicine. They were afflicted very severely with bad sores; have taken only four bottles; it took them away, for which I feel myself under deep obligation. Yours respectfully,

ISAAC W. CRAIN, 106 Wooster street.

New York, March 1, 1847.

RHEUMATISM & THE PILES.

September 10, 1846.

Dr. Townsend—Dear Sir: My wife has been for several years afflicted with rheumatism. She has tried many different remedies to obtain some relief, but all to no purpose. She was finally induced, by seeing your advertisement, to give your Sarsaparilla a trial. We procured some of it from your agent (Mr. Van Buskirk) and it gives me pleasure to state that after using it she experienced great relief, and was in a very short time perfectly cured. I was also (together with a man in my employ) badly troubled with piles, and by using a small quantity of your Sarsaparilla, our complaint was completely cured. I consider it one of the best of medicines, and would advise all who are afflicted to give it a trial.

GARRIT GARRABRANT,
—— 123 Market-st. Newark.

Clergymen and Physicians.—As well as thousands of others in all parts of the United States, are continually sending certificates and informing us of the benefits derived from Dr. Townsend's Sarsaparilla.

Dr. Townsend—Sir: Some time since you requested my opinion of the virtues of your compound Syrup of Sarsaparilla; I am now prepared to give it. I have used it in my practice and prescribed it for the last few months, and must give it my decided preference over anything of the kind with which I am acquainted, both as to its medical virtues and the reasonable price at which you sell it. In scrofulous affections, cutaneous eruptions generally, dyspepsia, indigestion, costive habits, and liver complaints, I am much pleased with its effects. In these complaints, or any other where scrofula is indicated, I can with confidence recommend it to the patronage of the profession as a valuable auxiliary for removing diseases in some of its most troublesome forms, and to all, as a safe and valuable medicine.

Brooklyn, Nov. 21, 1846. BEN. WEEKS, M. D.

Dr. Townsend—Dear Sir: Having for some time past been afflicted with a pulmonary affection on my lungs, and a continual pain in my side, owing to evening exposure in travelling after preaching, and finding my disease to increase, with much difficulty of breathing and other alarming symptoms, I was advised by a clergyman, a friend of mine, to try your celebrated Sarsaparilla. I did so, and after taking two or three bottles I found myself relieved. My appetite has been restored. I find myself much stronger, and hope very soon to resume my usual duties. I have been so greatly benefitted by your excellent medicine, I feel it my duty to make known the facts for the benefit of others who may be laboring under the same difficulties that I have been for some time past. Yours, respectfully, SAM. WHITE,

Nov. 22, 1846.] Pastor of Baptist Church, Staten Island.

ALMOST A MIRACLE.

Read the following, and doubt if you can, that consumption cannot be cured. This is only one of the several hundred cases that Townsend's Sarsaparilla has cured: Brooklyn, Sept. 14, 1840.

Dr. Townsend—Dear Sir: I was taken, a little over a year ago, with a severe cough and a pain in my side. It increased on me very fast, indeed. I was pronounced by physicians to have the quick consumption. I raised large quantities of bad matter, had night sweats, and sinking very fast: my doctor said he could do nothing for me. I went into the hospital in hope of being benefitted, but was pronounced there as incurable. I was now greatly distressed at the lungs and could hardly breathe; I soon became emaciated, and expected to die; was confined to my bed, and was obliged to have watchers; indeed I cannot give you any description that would do justice to my case. I was supposed by my friends to be past recovery; I had tried a great number of remedies, and all seemed to be to no purpose. I read of some most extrordinary cures performed by your medicine, and to