

Donaldsonville Chief.

THE POET'S CORNER.

May.

BY YERNE LEE.

Welcome, beautiful May,
With your wealth of buds and flowers,
Kissing the woodlands so gay,
Opening of April showers.

Welcome, beautiful May!
Fair as the morning of life,
Before our souls are saddened
By all earth's toil and strife.

We see once more thy garlands,
That make the spring complete,
And we hear again the music
Of thy daintily-sounded feet.

And the sweetly-scented arbutus,
Down in the field below,
Tries with its fatty blossoms
To mimic the wreaths of snow.

The apple trees are filling
The air with sweet perfume,
For to all their boughs are clinging
The clusters of scented bloom.

And the birds with radiant plumage,
That to wood and field belong,
Add to the gift of spring
The glorious note of song.

And we think we hear them saying
Throughout the living day:
"Praise to the Great Creator
For the beautiful gifts of May."

A Spring Grown!

BY C. F. ORANCH.

Would you think it? Spring has come,
Winter's paid his passage home;
Packed his ice-box, gone half way
To the Arctic pole, they say.
But I know the old ruffian still
Skulks about from hill to hill,
Where his freezing footsteps cling,
Though 'tis Spring.

Heed not what the poets sing
In their rhymes about the Spring;
Spring was once a potent queen
Robed in blossoms and in green.
That, I think, was long ago;
Is she buried in the snow,
Deaf to all our caroling—
Poor old Spring!

Windows rattling in the night;
Shutters that you thought were tight
Slamming back against the wall;
Ghosts of blossoms in the hall;
Roaring winds and growling trees;
Chimneys shuddering in the breeze;
Doleful damps in everything—
Such is Spring.

Sunshine trying hard awhile
On the bare brown fields to smile;
Frozen ruts and slippery walks;
Grey old crops of last year's stalks;
Silvering hens and moping cows;
Curled sap in leafless boughs,
Nipped by winter's icy sting—
Such is Spring.

Yet the other day I heard
Something that I thought a bird.
He was brave to come so soon,
But his pipes were out of tune
And he chirped as if each note
Came from a human heart's throat,
And he had no heart to sing—
Ah! poor thing.

If there comes a little thaw,
Still the air is chill and raw,
Here and there a patch of snow
Dribbles down a marshy flood
Ankle-deep you stick in mud,
In the meadows—white you sing
"This is Spring."

Are there violets in the soil?
Creeping beneath the sod?
When all the flowers give us peace,
Do you winter signs a lease
For another month of frost,
Leaving Spring to pay the cost?
For it seems he still is King—
Though 'tis Spring.

—N. Y. Independent.

An Old-Time Election.

There is an old man living near me (says a western correspondent) who was in this section of the country fifty years ago, when he was a young man of thirty. He is now quite as vigorous at eighty as most men are at sixty; has a rosy full face, and a bright eye; and has been known on occasions to go out into the harvest field and help his grandsons to get in the wheat. It is easy to see from his massive form and limbs that he must have been athletic and powerful in his youth; and the very few who still survive, who wear his neighbors then, say that he was as strong as a horse, fleet as a deer, quick as a panther, and brave as a lion. But when Enoch Page first came and commenced to clear a patch of ground, all this was not so well known to the people as it was afterward.

I am writing now of times half a century past, when instead of all these flourishing cities and villages, these productive farms and orchards, and these railroads and canals, there were dense forests, a few little settlements at the crossings of roads, and the roads themselves few in number and indifferent in condition. The population, sparse as it was, had buried itself in the woods, and by judicious and energetic use of the ax, was fast solving the first problem of civilization. But the people were coming in rapidly, and at Blunt's, which was a central point, the settlement was fast increasing to the proportions of a village.

This was the condition of things when the first election in the new country took place. It was held at Blunt's; and, being a novel occasion, it called out a large crowd. Several hundred voters were present, besides many who were not voters. The election was for sheriff, which in a new county is always an office of importance. It was felt to be doubly important here, for a threatening element of scoundrelism had lately been added to the population, which could be suppressed or held in check only by a firm and determined administration of the laws. The election was by ballot; but there being no printing press within a hundred miles the ballots were all written out.

The candidates by common consent (for there were no caucuses), were two—Col. Walton and Dr. Reed. The former was, perhaps, the most substantial man in the county, possessing education, experience, and integrity, and was supported by the best men, those who were anxious to have law and order prevail. The latter was a quiet, inefficient person, wholly untested by nature and habit for the office; but he had been put forward by a clique of idle, dissolute

fellows, who considered it decidedly for their interest to get a man elected who would not execute the law. And knowing that they could not command sufficient votes to elect one of themselves, they did the next best thing in putting up a man who they knew they could control if successful, and for whom they hoped to catch some respectable votes.

The ring-leader of this precious set was one Ham Perkins—a great brassy ruffian—who delighted in affrays and combats of all kinds; and he rallied his peculiar followers on election day, and they all put forth a united effort to elect Reed. The votes of this gang were all in within two hours after the opening of the polls, and they next began to exercise their terrorism over respectable voters. Many who detested them were compelled to vote for their candidate merely from fear of personal violence or injury to their property and so many there were who were willing to pursue this weak course, that at noon one of Perkins' party, who had kept a tally, announced that Reed was then five ahead. The intelligence was received with a whoop and yell of exultation, and the rowdies became more insolent than ever. The leaders of the Walton party were in anxious consultation, which seemed as hopeless as it was anxious; and affairs bore this aspect when Enoch Page, who had just arrived from the ground, came up to vote. As he approached the window, a ballot was handed him by one of Col. Walton's friends. He took it and read the name, and nodded approval to the man from whom he had received it, and stepped up to deposit it.

Ham Perkins had witnessed the incident, and familiarly accosted the young man as he approached.

"I say, my boy, you've made a mistake in the paper you've got there in your fist. This here is the ticket you want."

He held up the Reed ticket toward Enoch; who, without paying the slightest heed to the paper or the man who offered it, stepped past to the window. Perkins started and scowled, and then laid his brassy hand on Enoch's shoulder.

"Didn't you hear what I said, my lad?" he inquired in a high and menacing key. "That ain't the name we're voting here to-day; you take this one and put it right in there."

Enoch shook off the hand from his shoulder, and returning the ruffian's bullying look with one of undaunted firmness, replied:

"I believe I did not ask your advice on this subject. I shall vote for Colonel Walton. Stand out of the way if you please."

It was the first manly opposition that the bully had met that day, and the words were spoken in a tone that told him he was dealing with a brave and determined spirit. But Perkins had wielded his peculiar power too long to brook such defiance as this, uttered in the hearing of a hundred men, who were now gazing at him to see what he would do next.

"Ho! puttin' on airs, are ye lad?" he vociferated, while his face reddened with anger. "Now I say ye shan't vote that ticket—so!"

With the words he reached out his hand and snatching the ballot from Enoch, tore it to pieces. With a promptness that amazed the crowd, and with an audacity that made them hold their breath with fright, Enoch seized the bully by the nose and tweaked it vigorously, and then, with his flat hand, smote him on both sides of his face with a noise that sounded like the crack of muskets.

The young man took two steps back and planting himself against the building gathered his muscles for the onset he knew would follow. It did follow immediately. Smarting with pain, and fairly howling with rage, Perkins made a headlong rush, like a wild beast springing on its prey. The spectators shuddered, expecting to see Enoch strangled in the grasp of the infuriated ruffian. But he never reached him; a terrible blow from Enoch's fist, delivered with all the force that could be thrown into it, fell full on his breast, with a sound like the beat of a great drum. Perkins threw up his arms, and with a loud groan fell in a heap at the young man's feet. Some of his friends raised him up; they saw him gasp once—and then all was over.

"Is he dead?" Enoch coolly asked.

"Yes—you've killed him—you've killed him!" one of his late adherents exclaimed.

The Reed party carried off their fallen chief; and so thoroughly cowed were they by his tragic but merited fate that they did not show themselves at the poll again that day.

The result was that Walton was elected by more than one hundred majority, and rampant ruffianism never raised its head again in that county. The next grand jury formally investigated the circumstances of Ham Perkins' death, and emphatically vindicated the conduct of Enoch.—*Forney's Weekly Press.*

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