

# Raftsmen's Journal.

COME AND TAKE ME.—DUVIVIER.

VOL. I.

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**RAFTSMAN'S JOURNAL.**  
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## Select Poetry.

### FLOWERS—A DIRGE.

From a poem called "Time and the Ages," in the "Shekinah," for October, by Fanny Green—a poem in all respects remarkable.  
Sleep my children! Soft and fair  
Beneath the morn and breathes the air,  
Gentle rain and pearly dew,  
Shed their freshness over you!  
Children of the early morn,  
Ye are gone—all gone.  
One by one I gave you rest,  
In our loving mother's breast,  
Where the chirping swallows play,  
And the singing waters stray,  
And the light is soft as dawn—  
Ye are gone—all gone.  
Ye were lovely as the flowers  
That awake within your bowers,  
Gentle as the beating flocks,  
That ye led among the rocks,  
But my early hopes are shorn—  
Ye are gone—all gone.  
Children of the sunny elms,  
Earliest, fairest—born of Time!  
I have hushed in deepest sleep,  
Eyes that scarcely learned to weep,  
Hearts that might have been forlorn—  
Ye are gone—all gone.  
But your virtues could not die,  
They are set like stars on high,  
Beaming with a purer light  
Mid the mysteries of Night!  
Through the portals of the morn,  
Ye are gone—all gone.

## Original Moral Tale.

[WRITTEN FOR THE JOURNAL.]

### THE MARTYR FAMILY.

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[Continued from last week.]

#### CHAPTER II.

Valens ascended hastily the lofty flight of marble steps that led to the door of his residence. He had stopped, however, a moment; and having turned round, he was gazing through the surrounding darkness, with a strange and anxious interest, on the redempted skies.  
He could easily see that the flames were spreading, and the number of fires rapidly multiplying.  
While thus intent, the door quickly opened, and Valencia, his wife, stood before him. Her face was more than usually pale, and her hurried and trembling voice indicated alarm and excitement.  
"Oh, my Lord!" said she, "I'm so happy in your return; it's late; but—see! thou art not in—come in."  
In a few moments they were seated in a chaste, but richly furnished apartment, engaged in conversation, with intervals of thoughtful silence.  
But as this family is to act a principal part in what follows, a few facts relative, at least, to their present circumstances, may not be out of place.  
Valens, as already intimated, belonged to the Roman nobility; and his family, for several centuries, had held a high and distinguished rank among the Roman people. Valens himself had been a member of the Senate, but had relinquished that honor when the present Emperor—Nero Dimitian ascended the throne. Since then he had been living merely as a private citizen, in a somewhat retired part of the city, a close and shrewd observer, however, of passing events.  
In person, he was slightly above the ordinary height; and to the advantages of birth, and a faultless form, there was joined all the dignity and gravity of the Roman Senator. He was frugal, but not parsimonious; and to his inherited estate, he had added greatly by his economy; and was now regarded as one of the most opulent citizens of Rome.  
He was also fond of learning, and the society of learned men, and was thoroughly versed in the Platonic Philosophy, of which he had been a great admirer. And then no one was better acquainted than himself, with all the rites and mysteries of Pagan superstition, and few had ministered at her gloomy altars with a more real and unfeigned devotion.  
Two years ago, however, he had received a new light, and came to the knowledge of a better faith. The light of the gospel, having spread through all the coasts of Judea, had reached Rome, and already numbered many devoted and ardent disciples. Among the first to embrace it, in the higher ranks, was Prynthes, an old Philosopher; and then, after a time, Valens.  
As yet, however, Valens was not fully instructed in all that belonged to the new faith, though familiar with its few simple rites, and

ardently attached to such of its great truths as had been presented to his mind. And if in his character there was any thing defective, it was his fondness of the world, and fears of the cross.  
Valencia, his wife, and eldest daughter, Fiducia, had abjured Paganism, and embraced christianity, nearly a year before himself; and had been living models of that piety and meekness which adorned the lives of most of the primitive disciples.  
But his youngest daughter, Vertitia, and only son, Valinus, had hitherto resisted all attempts at their conversion. While the former was gay and thoughtless, the latter was wild and reckless; and the efforts of their parents in their behalf, seemed only to have increased their hatred of christianity, and driven them to greater excesses in the pleasures of the Roman Metropolis.  
At the base of one of the hills on which Rome was built, there was a broad, regular street, or avenue, lined on either side, by ample pleasure grounds, and several costly and magnificent edifices. Every thing indicated the abodes of luxury and wealth, with freedom from the annoyances of the more densely populated parts of the city.  
On this street, and marked out from the rest by its massive and imposing front, was the residence of Valens and his family.  
A full description of it, however, is needless. It must suffice to say, that the grounds around it were beautified and adorned by the noblest efforts of taste and genius. The creations of fancy were nicely blended with those of nature. Clusters of vines, with every variety of scented flowers, were in the richest profusion; while an abundance of stately, representing the heroes and divinities of Rome, interspersed, set off the whole with an air of classic elegance.  
It is due, however, to say, that some of these latter, of late, had not been regarded by a portion of the family, at least, with the same interest as formerly. Several that stood in prominent places, Fiducia had managed to conceal entirely from view, by training around them some vines that grew in their vicinity. And two, that had long graced the opposite corners of the marble steps, Valens had lately removed, and placed in a remote corner of the grounds. Indeed these types of an well-ancient and repudiated worship had well-nigh disappeared, both from within and without the family mansion; and many a passer-by had wondered at the sacrilegious doings of the Valens.  
In a large, airy apartment, looking out on the great, broad street, Valens and his wife were seated, with their eldest daughter, Fiducia.  
"You seem alarmed to-night, Valencia," said Valens; "what has disturbed thy wonted peace and quiet?"  
"Dost thou not see it in the red, glaring skies?" said she, hastily rising, and seating herself by his side.  
"Tis only the city on fire," said he calmly, but, at the same time, betraying evident emotions of uneasiness.  
"And hast thou seen Prynthes, to-night?"  
"I have just seen him," said Valens.  
"And what thinkest he of our Emperor?"  
"The good man hath studied deeply the secrets of the human heart, and thinks our Emperor hitherto may have feigned his virtues, and hath only thrown aside the disguise."  
"But thinkest thou that one exalted to such dignity could be guilty of such treachery?"  
"The same baseness that would actuate the slave may also actuate the master," said Valens, impatiently.  
During this conversation, Fiducia had sat in silence in an opposite corner of the apartment. She was looking thoughtfully at a child, about six months old, which lay asleep at her side—while the long, glossy folds of hair, falling profusely over her neck and shoulders, partly concealed her pale face, and prevented her parents from observing the tears that occasionally fell from her large, round, dark eyes.  
Her thoughts were of by-gone days—of one to whom she had been early wedded. A few months before, however, he had sickened and died; but not till he had rejoiced with herself in the hopes of a better life. In her child, Fiducia had a reproduction of his image; and while her fond heart rejoiced in the loved treasure, she would sit for hours, gazing upon its mirrored countenance, in sorrowing thoughts of him who had been removed by death a few hours only before its birth.  
"The skies are yet red with the consuming city," said Valens, returning from the door, and resuming his seat; "I think they do but little to arrest the flames."  
An interval of some minutes silence followed, Valencia gazing with heart-felt emotion upon her daughter and child, when they were suddenly startled by the sound of foot-steps at the door.  
"It's Vertitia and Valinus returning, I suppose," said Valencia; "an hour ago they left on some business of pleasure."  
"Most strange!" said Valens, rising to his feet, and pacing the apartment.  
"Would they could be persuaded to other thoughts," said Valencia.  
"Most gladly would my heart rejoice in it,"

said Valens; "nor can aught of real happiness possess my breast, till it is so."  
"But they enter not," said Valens, walking slowly towards the door, when it suddenly opened, and a young officer belonging to one of the Roman legions stood before him.  
Hastily inquiring for Vertitia, and learning her absence, he stammered an apology, and left.  
"Marcus is frequent in his visits, of late," said Valens, as he resumed his seat.  
Valencia, slightly agitated, cast an inquiring look at Valens, but made no reply.  
"His rank entitles him to our hospitality," said he; "this courage is worthy of his Legion, and the son of one of Rome's greatest generals; but such frequent visits, and unrestrained intimacy, under existing circumstances, may not be advisable. He inquired for Vertitia, to-night," he added, with some emphasis.  
Valencia dropped her eyes on the floor, and sat as before, in silence. At length, raising them, and looking at Valens, she said with a suppressed sigh:  
"If Marcus was only a christian."  
"But no young officer in Rome is more faithful to the Emperor, right or wrong; and none more hostile to our faith."  
"But may we not venture a hope?" said Valencia.  
"There is an irresistible power in our faith," said Valens, and no heart is proof against it; but to encourage a family intimacy with one so strangely attached to the Emperor, may, in the end, prove a snare. The warmest friendship may be converted into the basest treachery."  
"Surely," said Valencia, looking at Valens, with surprise; "you would not attribute such baseness to Marcus—so brave and courteous; and, with all, so generous and noble-hearted. Nor can I see aught of peril from his visits," she added.  
"Our faith is unknown to the Emperor; and prudence, at least, dictates that it remain so."  
But the reader may as well, at once, be told the whole truth, though doubtless it has already been, in some measure, anticipated.  
[To be Continued.]

**Old but Good.**  
Our funny friend, Field, tells the following good 'un—and it's just as good as new—of a Missouri politician, whose fortune it was to put up for the night, on a certain occasion, with a hospitable Western family, whose mansion comprised but one apartment.  
The landlord, it seems, had retired to bed, leaving the old woman, "gals," and "stranger," to settle any question of delicacy that might arise.  
The candidate yawned, looked at his bed, went to the door; looked at the daughters; finally, in downright recklessness, seating himself upon the "downy," and pulling off his coat. Well, he pulled off his coat—and he folded his coat—and then he whistled—and then he called the old lady's attention to the fact that it would never do to sleep in his muddy trousers—and then he undid his vest—and then he whistled again—and then, suddenly, an idea of her lodger's possible embarrassment seemed to flash upon the old woman, and she cried—  
"Gals, jest turn your backs round till the stranger gets into bed."  
The backs were turned, and the stranger did get into bed in "less than no time," when the hostess again spoke.  
"Reckon, stranger, as you aint used to us, you'd better kiver up till the gals undress, hadn't you?"  
By this time our friend's sleepy fit was over, and though he did "kiver up," as desired, somehow or other, the old counterpane was equally kind in hiding his blushes, and favoring his sly glances. The nymphs were soon stowed away, for there were neither bustles to unhitch, nor corsets to unlance, when their mamma, evidently anxious not to smother her guest considerably relieved him.  
"You can unkniver now, stranger; I'm married folks, and you aint afeard of 'em, I reckon!"  
The stranger happened to be "married folks" himself; he unknivered, and turned his back with true conjugal indifference.

**Scrap of History.**  
During the revolutionary war Gen. Lafayette being in Baltimore, was invited to a ball. He went, as requested, but instead of joining the amusement, as might be expected of a young Frenchman of 22, he addressed the ladies thus:  
"Ladies, you are very handsome; you dance very prettily; your ball is very fine—but my soldiers have no shirts."  
The appeal was irresistible. The ball ceased; the ladies went home and went to work, and the next day a large number of shirts were prepared by the fairest hands of Baltimore, for the gallant defenders of their country.

"Hans, do yer see der red cow vat has der cabbage last night?"  
"Yaw."  
"Vell, now yer dake der fowling piece, and ven you sees her prake her nose under defence load der parrels mit powder and ball, and prake te gun over his head."  
"Yaw, Ich vill."

**BILL ATKINS;  
OR, THE RAFTSMAN.**  
There is a life, wild, stirring, and manly, encompassed by the green banks of the Susquehanna, of which little has been "said or sung;" but no one, who has dwelt within the sound of its waters, can hear the word "Rafting," without a thrill that sends the blood warmer and faster through the veins.  
When the snow lies deep over valley and village, all winter long is heard the ringing of the sturdy woodman's axe; and the dark green hemlock, the tufted pine, and even the "giant oak," waver before his good steel, and come groaning and heavy to the breast of "mother-earth."  
When the spring time comes, and the river, breaking the ice-chains which bound it, swells fiercely within its sloping banks, there is heard the din of unceasing labor. Strong hands soon bind the trunks of the old "forest lords," and in a few hours they are securely lashed together, and lay heaving on the turbulent waters.  
It is wild life the raftsmen leads, when once his frail island is launched on the soil-stained waves; but to his hardy spirit, the very toils and dangers he encounters form the greatest charm of the rude voyage. If the raft should swing slowly over some obstacle, ere the mountain echoes have answered the steersman's loud "Hands over," half a dozen hardy forms have plunged in the tide, and as many strong shoulders have pushed it once more on its trackless path. When the star-lit night is shining over them, their floating home is pushed once more out of the strong current, and fastened to the shore. And with the unceasing song of the hurrying waters in their ears, outstretched on the rough timbers, they sleep soundly, until the first streak of dawn melts into the sky.  
The raftsmen are, for the most part, hardy mountaineers, whose whole lives have been passed in this calling; and it is almost impossible to imagine the reckless devotion with which they regard it.  
The story I am about to relate, and for the truth of which I will be a voucher, is a fair illustration of the enthusiasm which governs them.  
Of all the steersmen on the Susquehanna the very pride and glory was one Bill Atkins, a broad-shouldered, athletic young fellow, with a ray from his good natured soul, twinkling in his clear blue eye, and a tone of it in his lusty voice. It chanced one day Bill strayed into a camp-meeting, and whatever might have been the motive that took him in, he came out, to the astonishment of his brother raftsmen, a "new man;" and faithful to his energetic nature, not content with working only an oar on the way to heaven, Bill fairly petrified his old comrades by becoming a steersman—and turned "preacher."  
Time wore on; Brother Atkins proved himself a powerful auxiliary to the body Methodistical, and was soon settled over the little church by the road side, on the river bank.—It was said he wielded the sword of the Spirit with great power; and if any very strong argument reared itself in his way, he steered clear of it with as much skill as if it were a rock, while he exulted over the bearing down of a weak one in the self-same tone he used to sing out "heave yo, heave," in time of old.  
Spring was coming on, and the snow had melted so gradually from the hills, that the river, as yet, wound its way along as much like a silver thread as it would be midsummer. Produce was spoiling, and the timber was waiting for the fresher. Raftsmen were watching sky and water anxiously, and Brother Atkins, with commendable faith, betook himself to prayer, that the "windows of heaven" might be opened, and enough rain be sent for a "rafting fresh." Perhaps it was in answer to his ungodly petition, that the next week the "windows of heaven" were opened, and the rain came pouring down in torrents.  
The river banks were smooth, and sloping near the church, and from time immemorial it was here that rafts had been girded. A giant old elm still bears the gridding marks of the rope which bound them to the shore.  
The river had risen to a furious height, and still the rain came pouring down. The raftsmen worked cheerily and steadily at the huge timbers, while the preacher was frequently seen among them, showing how this point should be secured, and how long that timber should be, until, as the work drew near completion, Brother Atkins felt all the interest one naturally feels in the result of one's own skill.  
With all his dexterity in his new vocation, the tide of old habits was hurrying poor Bill fast upon dangerous rocks.  
After giving the matter due reflection, he made a sort of compromise with his ministerial duties, and offered to run the raft, as of old, to the "Island," "provided," that there should be no swearing among his comrades during the trip. This was readily agreed to, and, with his conscience at ease, Brother Atkins threw off his coat, as if he would have thrown off the parson with it, and went heartily to work with the others. Hammers few faster, timbers rolled together with a fresh impetus, and soon the raft lay completely in the deep water.  
Saturday morning came; still the rain poured, and still the river rose; but at noon the dark clouds rolled away, over the mountain

tops, and the sun came smiling out, over valley and hill.  
The stormy waters were, as yet, at too great height to be ventured upon, and Atkins gave it as his opinion, that very early on Monday morning the river would be at the right level. It commenced falling rapidly, however, before night; and it was said, that the pastor's step was more than once heard, during the still night watches, crossing his chamber-floor to the window; but then—his mind might have been troubled with thoughts of leaving desolate his little flock.  
Sabbath morning broke brightly upon the world, and the sound of the church bell was heard in the valley. Brother Atkins was seen issuing from his door, and wending his way to the church. It must be confessed, his face wore an anxious look as he neared it; for in full sight lay the raft, chaining the shore, as if impatient at the extraordinary delay. A heap of carpet-bags and valises were thrown together in the centre, and a knot of athletic fellows stood near, in earnest conversation. It was not an unprecedented thing, when sky and water were favorable, to commence the voyage on the holy Sabbath; and when Atkins saw the group about to join him, he well understood their wishes and could only say to them, with a ghastly smile, "Well, boys, if you go, it will be without me." There was a general cry of "No, no," to this; but what he might have been the inward struggle, Atkins came nobly through it, and proceeded to the little church, and took his seat in the pulpit; but, alas! so near, that he could not keep his eyes from it, was still the picture of the noble raft, and the broad, vigorous forms of his old comrades upon it. He arose and prayed, but there lurked in the corner of his eye an irresistible longing towards the river—and it would open. He read a hymn, but still the temptation was there. What was to be done? He ran it all over in his mind, and, with a desperate effort, formed his resolution.  
The moment the voices of the singers had ceased, he arose, and commenced, in a startling tone, "Boys!" That wouldn't do; so coughing a little, and coloring a great deal, he began again; "Men and brethren, it has long been a settled point with me," (by preference to the corner of his eye, he saw coats thrown off, and the steering pole in the hands of the steersman,) and he continued, "that we don't improve God's blessing enough."—"Amen," was responded. At that moment the bright gleam of a knife-blade caught his eye, and an outstretched arm was actually about to apply it to cut the rope, the very last link which bound them to the land. It was too much. Without waiting to explain, and with a mental ejaculation of "Try me, oh Lord, any way but in a rafting fresh!" he had given one bound, over pulpit and altar, and was springing, as for life, over the green slope. Too late! too late! the raft was gliding into the swift current—five, ten, fifteen feet of deep water lay between it and the shore. Swinging his brazen arms for impetus, with a glorious leap he reached the raft; and ere his deserted congregation had time to turn their wonder-stricken eyes from each other, a shout arose from the joyous raftsmen, that scared the very owls on the pine-tipped mountains.

**The Preaching Monkey.**  
There is a curious animal, a native of South America, which is called the preaching monkey. The appearance of this is at once grotesque and forbidding. It has a dark thick beard, three inches long, hanging down from the chin. This gives it the mock air of a Capuchin friar, from which it has acquired the name of the preaching monkey. They are generally found in groups of twenty or thirty, except in the morning or evening meetings, when they assembled in vast multitudes. At these times, one of them, who appears by common consent to be leader or president, mounts on the highest tree which is near, and the rest take their places below. Having by a sign commanded silence, the orator commences his harangue, consisting of various modulated howls, sometimes sharp and quick, then again slow and deep, but always so loud as to be heard several miles.  
The mingled sounds at a distance are said to resemble the rolling of drums, and rumbling and creaking of cart wheels ungreased. Now and then the chief gives a signal with his hand, when the company begin the most frightful chorus imaginable, and with another sign, silence is restored. The whole scene is described as most ludicrous, and yet the most hideous, that the imagination can conceive.

"Mr. Jones, have you got a match?"  
"Yes, sir—a match for the d—; there she is mixing up dough." Jones pointed to his wife, and then put for the front yard. The last we seen of him he was putting down the road, closely pursued by a red-headed lady and a cistern pole.

STOP HIM!—Miss, can I have exquisite pleasure of rolling the wheel of conversation around the axle-tree of your understanding a few minutes this evening?" The lady fainted.

"I say, mister, how came your eyes so all-fired crooked?"  
"By sitting between two gals, and trying to look love at both of 'em at the same time."

**The Father of our Country.**  
[We find the following on the death of WASHINGTON in the New York Courier and Enquirer, which cannot fail to be of interest to the reader.]  
Proceeding still further over a very bad road we came suddenly in view of the Potomac; and Mount Vernon, with its mansion-house and smooth green lawn, was before us. Having sent in our address, we received permission from the courteous branch of the family, who now hold the estate, to enter, and survey the interior. We were struck with its extreme simplicity, the lowness of its walls and ceilings, and the bare floors which were waxed—not as with us, carpeted.  
Passing through the great hall—ornamented with pictures of English hunting scenes—we ascended the oaken staircase, with its carved and antique balustrade. We stood at the door; we pressed the handle—the room and the bed where he died were before us. Nothing in the lofty drama of his existence, surpasses the grandeur of the final scene. The cold which he had taken from exposure, in overexposing some parts of his grounds, and which had resisted the earlier domestic remedies that were applied, advanced, in the course of two short days into that frightful form of the disease of the throat, *laryngitis*. It became necessary for him to take to his bed.  
The valued friend, Dr. Craik, was instantly summoned, and assisted by the best medical skill of the surrounding country, exhausted all the means of his art, but without affording him relief. He patiently submitted, though in great distress, to the various remedies proposed, but it became evident from the deep gloom settling upon the countenances of the medical gentlemen, that the case was hopeless, advancing insidiously, the disease had fastened itself upon him. Looking with calmness upon the sobbing group around him, he said:—"Grieve not my friends; it is as I anticipated from the first, the debt which we all owe; is now about to be paid; I am resigned to the great."  
Requesting Mrs. WASHINGTON to bring two wills from his *escritoire*, he directed one to be burnt, and placed the other in her hands, as his last testament, and then gave some final instructions to Mr. Lear, his secretary and relatives as to the adjustment of his business affairs. He soon after became greatly distressed; and as the paroxysms became more frequent and violent, Mr. Lear who was at his side, assisting him to turn, he with kindness but with great difficulty articulated—"I fear I give you great trouble sir,—but—perhaps, it is a duty, which we all owe to one another—I trust that you may receive the same attention when you shall require it."  
As the night waned, the fatal symptoms became more imminent—his breath more laborious, and suffocating and his voice soon failed him. Perceiving his end approaching, he stretched himself to his full length, folded his own hands in the necessary attitude upon his chest—placing his finger upon the pulse of his left wrist, and thus calmly prepared, and watching his own dissolution, awaited the summons of his Maker. The last faint hope of his friends had disappeared. Mrs. WASHINGTON, stupefied with grief, sat at the foot of the bed, her eyes fixed steadfastly upon him; Dr. Craik, in deep gloom stood with his hands at the fire; his faithful black servant Christopher, the tears uncontrolled came trickling down his face, on one side took the last look of his dying master; while Mr. Lear in his speechless grief, with folded hands, bent over his pillow on the other.  
Nothing broke the stillness of his last moments but the suppressed sobs of his affectionate servants collected on the stair case; the tick of the large clock in the hall as it measured off with painful distinctness, the last fleeting moments of his existence, and the low moan of winter wind, as it swept through the leafless snow covered trees. The laboring and wearied spirit drew nearer and nearer its goal; the blood languidly coursed slower and more slowly through its channels—and the noble heart stopped—struggled—fluttered; the right hand slowly slid from the wrist, upon which its finger had been placed—it fell at the side and the manly effigy of WASHINGTON was all that remained upon the death couch!

**A CAUTION TO GOSSIPS.**—The following act of assembly was passed in Virginia in 1782:  
"An Act for the Punishment of Scandalous Persons. Whereas, many habbling woman slander and scandalize their neighbors, for which their poor husbands are often involved in chargeable and vexatious suits and costs in great damages:  
"Be it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid, that in action of slander, occasioned by the wife, after judgement passed for damages, the woman should be punished by ducking; and if the slander should be so enormous as to be adjudged at greater damages than five hundred pounds of tobacco, then the woman is to suffer a ducking for each five hundred pounds of tobacco adjudged against the husband, if she refused to pay the same."  
OBEYING ORDERS.—I wish you would pay a little more attention," exclaimed a carpenter to his careless apprentice. "Well, sir, I am paying as little as I can," was the calm reply.