

THE BOURBON NEWS. (Seventeenth Year—Established 1881.)

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TOM BOWLING.

Some Anecdotes of the Great Son of Lexington.

Senator Joe Blackburn, of Kentucky, is a sturdy admirer of the running horse, as was his father and a number of ancestors before him. A few evenings ago he related some anecdotes of that good son of Lexington, Tom Bowling. As everyone knows, Bowling was a man of the worst type, he being only excelled in that respect by Balls Florizel, an ancestor. Doubtless cruel grooms had much to do with Bowling's bad temper. He killed and maimed a number of grooms before he died. The senator said when Bowling was about to be raced it was worth the price of admission to the track to see his trainer and jockey labor to get him from his stall to the track. To saddle him was the first task, which consumed upwards of half an hour. During that period he bit, struck with his front feet and lashed out savagely with his hind ones.

Finally, when all was ready, the jockey was thrown on his back. Ropes were attached to each side of his bit, and in this condition, and with much back jumping and like antics, he was led to the track. When on the track, previous to the fall of the flag, Bowling would spend his time in trying to get rid of his rider. If he failed to dislodge him with his teeth he would try to crush his legs against the fence. Bowling rarely ever got off with his field. Usually when the flag fell he was turned the wrong way of the track, but when he saw the field was really off, the chestnut rogue would whirl and follow. He was so fleet that he would give an ordinary field a distance and catch it without seriously stretching his neck, and only the very best horses of his time could give him any kind of a race. When he became in turf parlance aged, although, in fact, young as far as years are counted, he was retired to the stud. Marcus Daly, of Montana, finally purchased him, and after using him in the stud for some time, where he was kept like a caged tiger, he was sent back to Kentucky and sold for a mere pittance. Bowling kept his savage temper up to the time of his death, which occurred a few months ago.

Lexington, the sire of Bowling, was a fair-tempered horse, as racing thoroughbreds go, and yet he was no angel. In the latter years of his life he was suffered to run in a paddock. He seemed to know instinctively when a stranger encroached upon his preserves, although his sight had been gone ever since his great victory over Lacompte, at New Orleans. At the sound of footsteps he would turn his sightless eyes in the direction from whence they came, and, laying back his ears, make for the intruders with his mouth wide open.—St. Louis Republic.

WOMEN AS HUMORISTS.

They Can See a Joke, But They Make One Exception.

The question has often been propounded "Has woman as thorough a sense of humor as man? Does she enjoy the ludicrous as fully?" This question is never asked by a man who has fallen down on the ice in close proximity to a party of ladies. It is more generally asked by a crusty old bachelor or a person who wants to fill up a page of manuscript. For as far as depth of enjoyment is concerned, daily observation must convince any impartial observer that a woman does enjoy a fine point or a whimsical image quite as much as a man.

Laughter, except that growing out of exuberance of pure joy, is apt to be iconoclastic in its nature. It is often prompted entirely by agents of destruction instead of the quieter forces of harmony. A great deal of the merriment of the world is produced by satire. Some of this, which is the most amusing, is the most abusive and hardest to bear for the individual or society at which it is aimed. The dubbing of a man or a number of individuals with a name which sadly detracts from their dignity or credit may for the moment force a laugh, but when we think of this name sticking to its recipient throughout life it should certainly give us pain. With the pleasurable emotions arising from such methods of provoking laughter it may be acknowledged woman is not as highly affected as man. But this is not because of her failure to see the ludicrous, but rather because of the difficulty she finds in taking pleasure in what she knows gives pain to others. Her disinclination to this species of humor is not accidental. It is not the characteristic of any one woman. It is partaken of to a very large extent by the whole sex. Her actions prove this. She has shone in every other kind of writing, but there never was a great woman satirist.—Chicago Times-Herald.

A Cook Who Earns \$10,000 a Year. There is a celebrated cook in London about whom it is said that he makes an income of over \$10,000 a year. He is attached to no house, but in his own brougham sets out toward evening for the house of some rich man who is going to give a dinner at which every dish must be above criticism. Here he alights, and, making for the kitchen, goes through the process of tasting all the soups, sauces and made dishes—advising when his palate suggests a little more salt here, a pinch of herbs there, a dash of sugar in this entree, a suspicion of onion in that salamis, etc. This done, he pockets his fee of \$25 and drives on to the next dinner-giving patron who has bidden him to his feast in this strange fashion. His nightly list comprises many houses all through the London season.—Philadelphia Press.

A CHRISTMAS LOVE SONG.



CHRISTMAS again! heigho, my lass, How sweet the silent seasons pass! The plans we made but yesterday These same swift years have laughed to scorn; The ship whereon our hopes set sail Hath seldom met a friendly gale; The haven where our longings bide Is still upon the farther side. But, thank the Lord! time's wisdom turned Its glow upon us when we learned That bare rooms bloom beneath the touch Of love that makes the little much.

THE FIDDLETOLD.

IT WAS the close of a day in the early part of December. The governor sat alone in his private office. His clerk had just left him.

The Christmas season was a busy and responsible one with him, for he chose that time to investigate thoroughly the criminal records of the state and pardon such prisoners as good conduct or extenuating circumstances placed within the pale of executive clemency.

If questioned as to his selection of the holiday season for the exercise of the "benign prerogative" he was wont to answer: "Oh, I may be helping to turn the tide in the soul of some Paul, and I have a fancy to do it when peace and good will are most likely to be at the flood; that is all."

Whether this were all, and it were not in response to some deeper sentiment those who knew him best alone could say.

To-night, as he looked at the piles of mail matter on his desk yet to be disposed of, he pushed back his chair with a smothered groan and started to the door, moved by a wild impulse to get outside and turn the key on it all.

An obstruction in his path caused him to stumble, and he saw a curious-looking bundle in brown paper, clumsily tied with a coarse twine string, lying on the floor at his feet.

He remembered the clerk's having mentioned a package from the state prison—this must be it—and pushed it impatiently to one side; but as he did so something in the coffin-shaped outlines made him stoop and tear away a part of the cover.

He found, to his amazement, a violin, and appended to it a soiled pencil-written note, evidently an appeal of some kind.

Curiosity conquered fatigue. He had handled many and various petitions, but never one in shape like this.

Detaching the note from its fastenings, he crossed the room to the window, and by the waning light of the winter's day deciphered the following illiterate text:

"To the Gubner: They tel me thet yer Hart gits tender to Prisoners at christmas time and you listens to what they has to say. I've ben Hear 20 years fer kille a man and I've ben Sorry evry day sence I done it. I was a hot headed Boy uv 22 and the man called pap a Liar and sed things agin mam. I could naways stand thet and I nocked him down. he was a pale sickly compected tender foot and he never got up agin. I never ment to kill him but my fist was hevvy and sum mad thing inside uv me sicked me on. they never give me no sort uv a Trial but jes put me in Hear fer life. his folks was rich and mine was pore and I couldnt pay no lawyer. pap is gone blind and mam is old and they aint got no body to look after em but Joesel. Joesel is the gal thet was goin to marry me. she left her home when they sent me Hear and went to look after the old folks sames they was hern. ef I could git back to Joesel never lif my han agin no man agin ceptin twas to help him so help me God."

"They tel me as how you kin make a Fiddle talk til the children puts down their Playthings and follers yer. Gubner I sents you mine along uv this what I made when I was a Boy back in the mountains, the sames I kotes my gal with and played fer mam and pap round the fire sunday evnins. shes aged along with me but she kep her voice sweet and stiddy yit."

"ABNER HILL." When the governor turned away from the window there was a look on his face that few had ever seen there except his wife. He lifted the violin carefully from the floor, tore away its wrappings and looked at it long and curiously. It was roughly made of native pine and maple and varnished with the homemade varnish of the mountains, but the strings gave back the true viol tone, clear and ringing.

Bringing his chair closer to the grate, he placed the instrument in position, drew the bow, and there "in the still of the evening let her talk to him."

He was a mountain boy himself, and as the first soft notes fell on the air, plaintive and piercing like the cry of the whippoorwill in early spring, he felt the youth stir in him and heard again the far call of the hills.

He saw the log cabin high up against the side of the mountain, where the laurel and the sumac grew and the ash made bright the scene with its dark fruit; where the breeze came laden with the odor of pine from the forest, and the birds touched the highest notes in their shrill treble.

He saw the boy with his sturdy limbs, his bold blue eyes and his waving hair, barefoot and scantily clad, searching for the earliest berries in summer and the first nuts in the fall—free, joyous, innocent, happy.

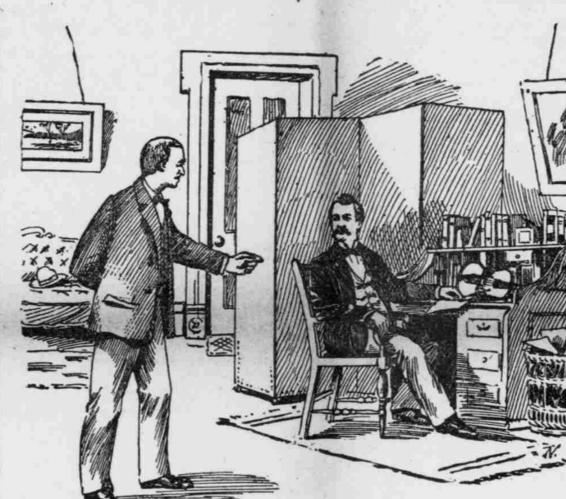
He followed him in the "long, long thoughts" of a lad across the distant crest of the "Devil's Backbone" and wove with him mystic dramas amid the shades of the haunted ravine.

He sat with him at the feet of the mountain lass and listened while he poured the crude poetry of his awakened soul into the sensitive instrument which alone could interpret the mystery within him.

He stood beside him and watched the blazing pine knots roar up the cabin chimney, while the old folks in the corner looked at each other across the boy with that surreptitious tenderness of the eyes which takes place in those grown gray, and sure of each other, of the more open demonstration.

He saw the whole 22 years of clean, humble living; the unsparring, pastoral life of the southern mountaineer, companioned of nature; simple, fearless, brave; scornful of the false, reverent of the true; tender to weakness, fierce to wrong; and, alas! uncontrolled as the elements around him; crushing, in some mad output of strength, the obstacle in his way, to stand afterwards in awful recoil before the unknown potentialities of his own organism.

Full and swelling were the strains that issued from the throat of the violin as it told this idyl of the hills; passionate harmonies pulsating like the over-charged heart; long, tender, yearning notes; sweet, caressing adantes; the very spirit of love in the guise of sound.



"WHAT DID MY OLD FIDDLE TELL YOU?"

But now the music changes. Youth's glad symphony is lost in the wild major chords of passion. Note dashes against note like hail against a pane. All the tumult of the mountains, the forest, the roaring stream when storms rave the heavens, is sounded in that mad chromatic ascending to its climax.

All of nature's after-pennance breathes in the sighing minor of the descending scale. Surely that was a human sob that rang through the room; a fellow mortal's burst of sympathy. No, it was just the old fiddle, who "knew things 'cause she'd ben lyin' so long agin his heart."

And now from out her quivering strings she sends forth a melody so divinely pure, so immeasurably sweet, the coldest ear must open to greet it.

In it are the prayers of mothers, the tears of wives, the sobs of little children—all of unlanguage pain, all of unlanguage love.

It is the echo of that song which beats forever against the throne of God, in tender, tireless cadence—the united voices of many women pleading for the souls of men.

The violin slips from the governor's hands and his head sinks upon his breast.

The old fiddle has "told her story straight."

When witnesses were found who corroborated the statements of the prisoner, and jail wardens certified to 20 years of exemplary behavior inside the prison walls, the governor sent for Abner Hill to be brought to his private office.

The day he expected him he placed the violin in a conspicuous position on the desk.

There was ushered into his presence a tall, angular man with the worn face and stooping shoulders of three-score years; hair scanty, muscles flabby, eyes dull; nothing to bespeak youth but the faint red that crept into his sunken cheek when the servant announced his name. A single stroke of sin and its after-writing on the brain had done the work of twice 20 years.

He stood inside the door with downcast eyes and nervous, fluttering hands. The governor called his name, and something in the kindly accents gave him courage to look up.

Something else in the homely, humorous face that no man ever looked into without loving gave him courage to speak, and his eye caught sight of the violin.

Reaching a trembling hand out to his dumb friend as though for confidence, he whispered, hoarsely:

"Gubner, what did she tell you fer me? What did my old fiddle tell you?" The governor waited for a moment, perhaps to steady his voice; then, laying both hands on the shoulders of the other, his eyes reading with a father's tenderness the piteous, expectant face, he said:

"Abner, she says—the old fiddle says—that you can go back to the mountains. And, my man, may God go with you!"

The convict stood for a moment like one struck dumb, a womanish pallor overspreading his cheek; then, with a cry which his listener never forgot, he threw his arms around his liberator and sobbed like a heartbroken child.

And the governor was not ashamed to admit that something tightened in his throat and broke out at his eyes, too.—Nora C. Franklin, in Lippincott's Magazine.

ITS TRUE SPIRIT.

Christmas the Festival of Childhood.

Whoso would enjoy it truly must be in heart even as a little child. Its ecstasies are in self-forgetfulness, in the betterment of others. Its highest celebration is in helping our neighbors to be happy and thus sharing our happiness with them. There is no happiness comparable to love, and the happiness grows greater as the love embraces more and more our fellow-beings. That is the best Christmas time in which one feels most acutely the actuality of kinship with all the world. It is the child that is the real democrat, for, as Emerson has it, he makes children of all the adults that gather around him, levels them to his own simplicity. The man who has the child-heart is the man whose interest in himself is most merged into interest for his fellow-creatures. Though one may have felt sin and shame and sorrow he may assuage them all in the promotion of the happiness of others. Love is the only antidote, and giving it out it returns upon us as manifold as the objects upon which it is bestowed. That man who awakens the Christmas spirit in the hearts about him will find it subtly stealing from them to his own, and

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