CLAIBORNE GUARDIAN.

VOL. 1.] HOMER, LA., WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 22, 1877. [NO. 1.

Terms of Subscription:

One year in advance.....$2 50
Six months " 1 50
Three " " 1 00

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August 22, 1877.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Write upon pages of a single size.
Cross all your t's, and neatly dot your i's;
On one side only let your lines be seen—
Both sides filled up announce a Verdant Green.
Correct—yes, re-correct—all that you write;
And let your ink be black, your paper white;
For spongy foolscap of a muddy blue
Betrays a mind of the same dismal hue.
Punctuate carefully, for on this score
Nothing proclaims the practised writer more.
Then send it off, and, lest it merit lack,
Inclose the postage stamps to send it back;
But first pay all the postage on it too,
For editors look black on "six cents due."
And murmur as they run the effusion over,
"A shabby fellow, and a wretched bore!"
Yet ere it goes, take off a copy clean—
Poets should own a copying machine;
Little they know the time that's spent and care
In hunting verses, vanished—who knows where!
Bear this in mind, observe it to the end,
And you shall make the editor your friend.

OLD JOHN RADDLE.

BY COL. J. W. DE FOREST.

I.

Not an old man; not more than forty-five at the date of this story; simply "Old John Raddle" because there had been a young John Raddle, his son; bloated in figure, crimson in face, eyes bloodshot, hair long and unkempt, breath always fragrant with whisky; no attire Summer or Winter, week or Sunday, but gray or butternut homespun. Such was my hero in the period of his grandeur.

His grandeur consisted in this, that, having been born a "lowdown" white of South Carolina, he had shown a certain degree of intelligence, industry, and enterprise; had gained money both in decent and evil fashions, had developed a character which if not nice was at least vigorous, and had become, if not a gentleman, at least something far better than a vagrant or a pauper.

He had made his fortune of ten or fifteen thousand dollars by nocturnal and illegal dickering with pilfering negroes; then by more open but scarcely more praiseworthy dealings across the whisky-stained counter of a cross-roads grocery; but he had made it, he had kept it, he had it.

Now, even in the patrician South Carolina of the olden time money was reputable; if it was not "good blood" it was tacitly regarded as the very next noblest species of circulation; and thus John Raddle was considered not so low as he had been. In short, he had lifted his family as far toward social respectability as the most gifted and fortunate Cracker stock usually could climb in one generation.

One step in his gradual rise had been the conversion of his grocery into a tavern, with accommodations for man and beast. For man there were two bedrooms, small, carpetless, rudely furnished, and as breezy as hencoops; a dining-room with a narrow pine table, which proffered fried bacon and eggs, fried chicken, fried corn bread, and sweet potatoes; a bar-room flowing with white, crude, fiery whisky, suitable for boozing farmers and crackers; a private closet containing a Karrel of old, mild amber whisky for gentry. For beasts there was a ramshackle barn, showing through countless rents great store of cornhusk fodder, and imperfectly sheltering from the rain some scant piles of maize nubbins.

The tavern consisted of a low, unpainted, and even unbarked log shanty, the original grocery; and of a broad-fronted, shallow, two-story, yellow clapboard wing, the modern addition. Puddles in wet weather, powdery dust in dry weather, and heaps of uncleanness always, made the approach unpleasant. There was no sign; no such ostentation was necessary; the place was widely notorious as *Raddle's*. Twice a week the up mail, and twice a week the down mail, between Columbia and Greenville, stopped here to change horses, occasionally bringing passengers for dinner, and at long, long intervals, one for the night.

Besides the tavern, Old John had several hundred acres of more or less evil land, a dozen or so ragged negroes, and some loans with neighboring farmers. The richest man in the "settlement," and one of the richest for five miles around, he was not only beginning to be held respectable, but also to acquire a certain measure of self-respect, notwithstanding his low origin, his regular weekly sprees, his stumbling knowledge of reading, and his total ignorance of writing. A rough, unschooled, intemperate, backwoodish place was Somerville; such a place as you might expect to find in a thinly-settled region which fifty years before had not been settled at all; a place which had not yet acquired extravagantly fine notions as to what constitutes morality and gentility; just the place for a prosperous Cracker to try to grow into "a gentleman of the old school."

On a day pregnant with future adventure for Old John Raddle he was reeling up and down before his tavern, his bloodshot blue eyes moist with whisky, his great cushions of cheeks glowing like a pair of sunsets, five or six drops of perspiration rolling down his broad, red forehead, his iron-gray hair towzled toward all points of the universe, his threadbare woolen broad-brim in one hand, and a stout canvas bag in the other. Shaking his bag and violently jingling its metallic contents, he was delivering something like a stump speech to three gaunt, seedy, cross-roads politicians, who, sitting in a row on a wooden bench under the eaves, listened to him with a "meeching," wheedling grin, knowing that his peroration would be, "Come in, boys, an' licker."

"He's on a bender, ain't he?" whispered a barefooted, sallow, yellow-haired urchin to a solemn, wilted, grizzled negro, who was leaning out of one of the bar-room windows. "Allays gits his money-bag out when he's on a bender, don't he?" continued Strawhead; and received an owlish, assenting wink of a bleared eye in response. Although life is short, and many great mysteries remain unconsidered and unrevealed, we must consume one moment in stating that Old Sol was famous in Somerville for his dexterity in winking.

Perceiving a cigar stump on the ground, which had been swept out of the bar-room, Strawhead picked it up with his naked toes, and attempted to transfer it slyly to his pockets, with the intention of smoking it at some convenient opportunity. But seeing that the gaze of Old Sol was upon him, he asked, with an humble grin, "Kern't I hev this?" and obtaining a favorable nod, departed on a joyful canter.

Such was the scene at Raddle's when its fate reached it. There was a rumble of wheels on the wooden bridge over the Saluda, and all present exclaimed, "The stage!" Soon a long yellow wagon, with leather curtains and rattling doors, rolled up to the tavern behind two gaunt, mud-splashed horses. The driver, gnarly Jim Dallaby, who had whipped more men and been whipped oftener than any other being known to Somerville, leaped to the ground and made straight for the bar-room. Old Sol opened the finger-stained door of the stage, and bowed obsequiously to the only passenger. He was a tall, well-dressed, handsome youth of nineteen or twenty, whom John Raddle at once recognized as a "high-tone gentleman."

"Mornin', stranger," he said, making such rude reverence as a born Cracker owed to a scion of planterdom. "Hev a room, stranger?"

"Yes, I think I may as well take a room," answered the youngster, after a moment of meditation. "I think I had better stay over night with you."

"Best room in the house, stranger," declared old John. "I Allays keep it for your style. Yere, Sol, take the gentleman's trunk up to No. 1. An', Sol, see ef everything is straight thar. An', Sol, call Luce to see ef everything is straight thar—for, by ——! you won't know."

Followed by the guest, the negro limped up stairs with the trunk, dropped it in the best front chamber, and shuffled away to summon Luce. But he had hardly reached the top of the stairway ere he met the girl ascending, hurried up by the impatient John Raddle.

Luce, or Lucy, the only daughter of old John, was his trusted housekeeper, the "old woman" being sickly and the "niggers" stupid. Eighteen, well-grown, and prettily shaped, with features, that were well enough, rosy cheeks, and merry blue eyes, she was what people call a tempting piece of flesh and blood. That was just Luce. There was nothing spiritual or intellectual about her; there was nothing of that fine charm which we think of when we say "lady," but, as flesh and blood, she was an attractive spectacle. Her checkered home-spun frock, cut in the simple fashion of a "baby waist," showed her firm, full figure to advantage. There was a little timidity and more awkwardness in her manner as she entered No. 1. She was not afraid of being left alone with this young gentleman, but she was slightly anxious as to what he might think of her appearance, and she felt ill at ease because of his "store clo'es," so much grander than homespun.

While she straightened the coarse brown counterpane and propped a rickety table against the whitewashed wall, and looked to see if the floor had been swept since the exodus of the last lodger, she glanced two or three times at the stranger, and thought that he was "mighty hansum." So he was. A fine, tall, slender shape; a dark, aquiline, spirited, and yet gracious face; abundant long black hair, curling over his coat-collar—on the whole, a first-class "high-tone" Southern type. She stood at the window, seemingly in a state of abstraction; and Luce did not know that he had surveyed her carefully by stealth.

Turning from her work to leave the room, she was puzzled, rather startled, to find that he had closed the door and was advancing toward her. A little sparkle of inquiry and amusement danced in her eyes, while he took both her hands in his; but she was not scared, nor was there even much thrill in her veins as she thought, "Is he going to kiss me?"

Yes, he was going to kiss her; he was bending graciously for that very purpose; he was putting his courtly face close to her rustic one. Luce had often been kissed; for manners were pastorally free in Somerville, and forfeit games were current among the young people, not to mention that she had had a beau or two. She tittered and turned away her head until one cheek touched her shoulder, but in the same agreeable moment the other cheek felt the touch of his lips.

"You dear, good little beauty!" he murmured, in a tone which was full of gratitude, and so of flattery.

There was still a smile on her lips when she stole a look at him; but her eyes had suddenly taken an expression of great and tender surprise. Of all the men—or boys, rather—who had hitherto been thus bold with her, not one had uttered such sweet words. They were priceless; they seemed not only to pay his debt, but to make her profoundly his debtor; and when she faced him she meant that he should kiss her lips if he wished. He did so, and whispered other entrancing words in her bewitched ear; then, with his hand on her waist, he led her to the door and opened it for her. Had Luce known what a princess was, she would have felt that she was one, and that she had found the true prince.

How she eagerly longed for dinner, when it would be her sweet duty to superintend the table and see that this royal guest was suitably fed. Not that she sat at the head of the board—no, she had no higher part to play than that of upper waiter; she overlooked and scolded the "niggers." It was a pleasure to her to show the young gentleman to his chair, and she was not painfully aware that it was a humble pleasure. There was a little flatter in her heart, and she could not at first raise her eyes to his; but when she did presume to glance at him she found that he was looking at her with an air of interest. Then a happy sparkle shot from under her lashes, and the least flicker of a smile danced about one corner of her mouth. She remembered the two kisses, and she was no more ashamed of them than he. She was only a little more shy, a little more "in a gitabout," as she would have phrased it. Of course she served him with the best bit of "chicken" that was fried that day at Raddle's, and wished that there had been for him hopping-john, or some other exceptional delicacy.

Meanwhile Old John pumped the guest as to his business and personality: "Never met up with you before, stranger; what mought your name be?"

"I am from Oakland District, and I am the son of Col. Mayfield," said the youth, with a rising accent, as if it were a grand thing to be of Oakland District, and a still grander thing to be a Mayfield.

John Raddle looked all the respect that he could through his bloodshot optics, not doubting that he had before him the heir of some great low-land planter.

"After lan', or niggers?" he continued, speaking out of the depths of his dickering spirit.

"No," answered the lordly guest, internally scornful of the query, but calmly civil on the surface; "student at Columbia College. I have been rusticated," he explained, with a laugh.

Old John had heard of college. The parson was a college man, and Squire Somers and Col. Thornton. He had a vague idea that it was high-toned to go to college. But "rusticated" was beyond his tether, and he repeated the word inquiringly.

"I am sent up here as a punishment," said Mayfield, "for playing jokes on the tutors."

"Oh, been raisin' the devil!" guffawed John Raddle, his heart warming at once toward the youngster.

Of course, Mayfield related the cause of his misadventure in full; for what rusticated student is not at first proud of his peccadillo? We have not space for the story, but we can assure the undergraduate public that it was as delicately humorous as such things usually are, in proof of which may be alleged the fact that old John laughed uproariously.

"Stranger, you're a long suit an' five trumps," he declared in his delight. "I'm durn glad I met up with ye. Come, let's blow a cloud. Luce, bring the bes' cigars an' some closet whisky. Stranger, I've got some whisky as 'ill make yer baird grow. Wal, whar yer gwine ter stay? Not yere! Not with Ole John Raddle! Lor bless ye! we'd raise the devil every day."

"I am to board with a clergyman, a Rev. Mr. Seymour," said Mayfield.

"Oh—Parson Seymour—Presbyterian Parson. Wal, I reckon he's middlin' peart at book larnin; folks tell so. He ain't one of my sort; fact is parsons never be. I don't believe in religion; durned ef I do. Don't know much 'bout it, but what I do know don't believe. A bag full of dollars an' a yard full of niggers an' a jug full of whisky, that's my religion. What d'ye say to that? Them's what make a gentleman—them an' fightin'. The' ain't healthy, them pious. Parson Seymour's a little, lean, scrimped, yaller-faced man. He's so narvous he can't stay still a minute. Oneasiest creatur I ever see. He'll set in all the chairs in the room while you're tellin' him a story. I'd as lief talk to a basket of grasshoppers. And pions! whew! You'll have mornin' prayers three times a day. Wal, when ye get yer ambition up for a shindy, come round an' see Ole John. He'll take a turn with ye; he'll show ye 'bout the districk. Stranger, ketch another holt o' that whisky. Nothin' like whisky, is thar? How d'ye raise high-tone gentlemen without it?"

Here, for the third or fourth time, Old John lighted his cigar from that of his listener. He always had a cigar in his mouth, but seldom smoked much of it, for he had a habit of "talking constant." After chewing one end of the luxury to a pulp, and relighting the other until it would no longer take fire satisfactorily, he threw it away half consumed, and commenced the same wasteful process upon another.—Those were the days, be it remembered, when Havanas sold at three for a dime. By the way, his smoking and talking did not altogether prevent him from chewing.

Meanwhile he drank copiously. He had not taken his "bender" out when the young man arrived, and his inflamed stomach now insisted that he should go on with it. Drunk he could not get. For years he had been above the highest tide of whisky; for years he had not been seen to stagger. But at last he fell asleep in his arm-chair, snoring, with open mouth and half-shut eyes, an object of envy to Old Sol. Mayfield was also overcome, and took a long nap upon a wooden settee, while Luce sat near and watched him with admiration. When the youth awoke, late in the afternoon, he sent a negro to the Reverend Seymour, with his letter of introduction and a note stating that he would present himself in the morning.

"Ole Sol shall tote ye roun' thar," said John Raddle, when his guest was about to depart. "I've got a Yankee wagon an' a little gray to match. I won't charge ye a dime for the ride. Jest you cast yer eye at little gray as ye go along, that's all. Ef ever ye git her head out fur a shindy, she's the creetur fur ye. Ef ye hev a gal along," he chuckled, "an' want ter go slow through a piece of woods, an' do a little lip-sarvice without bein' jolted, she can trot all day in a bar'l. An' ef ye want to git clar of any other man's dust, she can haul ye right out of it in no time, I don't keer whose dust it is. Jest take a look at her. Some day you'll want ter hire, or we mought want ter trade."

No one who knows the nature of a Cracker hoyden will suppose that Luce Raddle allowed the handsome young stranger to depart without running the pleasant risk of another tete-a-tete with him. As Mayfield was packing his trunk he heard feminine drapery behind him, and, turning at the alluring rustle, he beheld Luce.

"I reckoned you mought want somethin'," she said, with a slight stammer and a very deep blush.

With a promptness which showed precocious experience in flirtations, and with an air of benign confidence which was wonderfully winning, he stepped up to her and took both her hands.

"So I did want something," he said, laying his smooth young cheek against hers. "I wanted to see you, my dear little pet."

It was the antique story of ill-matched love-making; it was the thread-bare European drama of the peasant and the noble. This common-place, half wild, truly low-down adventure would not be worth relating did it not bring face to face those two immemorial types of humanity, the patrician and the plebeian. In our time it seems an anachronism; on the soil of a republic it is an exotic, a monstrosity; and hence the interest of our narrative, if it has any. This girl, who had been made lowly by the breath of slavery, was so happy at receiving a few words of endearment from this boy, who had been made grand by slavery, that she could not speak.

"Do you know what a pet is?" he asked with a smile, holding her out at arm's length.

"Yis, I hev a pet."

"What is it?"

"A pig; a tame pig. She followed me half a mile t'other day."

He could not help laughing at her rusticity, and yet he thought it very charming.

"I am luckier than you," he said. "I have a much nicer pet than a pig. Such a nice pet that I want to kiss it."

Luce did not turn away her cheek and further than would make things perfectly convenient to this wondrous lover; and the frankness, the whole-heartedness, with which she presently put up her lips to his was, to a thoughtful eye, nothing less than pitiful. Patrician as he was, and by birthright a despiser of low-down people, he was stricken with respect for her confiding simplicity, and treated her with the chivalry of youth.

"Good-bye, my dear child," he said, loosing her hands; "I shall see you often while I am here, and I shall never forget you."

Then they walked on tiptoe to the door and parted, both unsatisfied with the interview. Oh, this unappeasable hunger of young hearts for love, and for love, and still more for love.

II.

Parson Seymour soon discovered that his pupil was a person of praiseworthy regular habits. Mayfield studied hard every morning, recited admirably in the hour before dinner, and took a walk every afternoon. The parson admired hard students and persons of regular habits, and consequently he reported favorably of the youth to the college Faculty.

Meantime Luce Raddle was attaining to a much more thorough knowledge of the rusticated one's character without making any report thereof except to that one confidante whom every love-lorn female must have. Every afternoon she met him in a pine grove near her home, and thence stole with him down the secluded course of the Saluda to a grove of oaks, curtained in from the world by a close edging of underwood. There, seated on the bank of the whispering little river, with no spectator but a wooded and uninhabited slope rising from the opposite shore, they passed the time which Mr. Mayfield was supposed to devote to walking for his health. Was it altogether spent in talking, laughing, and throwing pebbles into the swift water? Ah! those were the days of holding hands and waists—days which, as every ancient maiden lady knows, have long since departed; days which the literature of our time cannot treat of without hesitation.

In justice to Luce it must be stated that she did not prefer this clandestine sort of courtship.

"Why don't you come to see me thar at the house?" she repeatedly asked.

"And so I do," he once answered evasively. "I saw you there yesterday."

"Oh! you jest spoke to me—jest as though I was anybody else. You mought set up with me thar. Par and mar wouldn't keer; an' they'd let us hev the big front room."

"I'll come some time," he said. "Don't make up a face at me."

But this promise was not kept, and was not meant to be kept; for Mayfield was thus far advanced in the wickednesses of flirtation; he could assent with the sole intent of performing if convenient.

Sometimes he had compunctions as to his conduct toward the girl. But then she was such a [illegible] thing; the daughter of a Cracker who had made money by selling whisky to niggers; the granddaughter of another Cracker who had been lower than niggers; the representative of a caste which his caste looked upon as purely noxious or contemptible! Surely he was not bound to be as delicate with such pottery as with the fine porcelain of chivalry. So he let her adore him.

"I wish I was as putty as you be," she often said, gazing straight into his Grecian face.

At other times it was, "I lay awake three hours las' nigh', studyin' 'bout you." Or again, "I couldn't git to sleep till nigh mornin' for figurin' what you was up to."

"What you was up to" meant "What your intentions are." For Luce, although she knew that there was a great social gulf between her and her beau, would persist in imagining a future of marriage. She sometimes hoped that her father's property would fill up the separating abyss; and she told Mayfield about it more than once, giving him, with piteous insistence, the number of acres and niggers, and the value thereof in dollars; perhaps, indeed, she magnified the "demnition total" a little.

Above the leafy bank which fronted these two adventuring children, as they sat in their love-nest beside the Saluda, there was a little cleared plateau on which the Congregationalists of Somerville had built their tabernacle and laid out their burial-ground. In that cemetery one breezy March afternoon Parson Seymour performed the last earthly rites over the remains of Martha Fortner, "the lamented and pious consort" of Gowan Fortner, one of the pillars of his little church. On his way from the house of mourning to the grave the minister had been astonished and pained by a remark of the bereaved husband, which showed how little delicacy of soul one may acquire even under the constant droppings of the sanctuary. Mr. Fortner, a short and stumpy old man, being a little lame with rheumatism and having no adult relative present to lean upon, had taken his pastor's arm in order the more comfortably to lead the solemn procession.

"Yes, Parson, I'm left mightily alone," he sighed in answer to some other worldly suggestion. "It's a powerful loppin' off for me. I shall feel the loss of Miss Fortner mightily. An', Parson, I'd be mighty much obliged to ye ef you'd name somebody that you think fitten to fill her place. Not now, Parson. We orter be thinkin' of other things now. At a fitten time, Parson, at a fitten time."

As the clergyman departed after the concluded service, he meditated sadly upon this request, unparalleled even in his large experience of hard and narrow types of humanity. Then he reflected humbly that neither was he free from unworthy thoughts on funeral occasions, calling to mind how, while his mouth was opened in prayer beside the grave, his eyes had dwelt with grief on the neglected exterior of his church, and he had longed for some white paint wherewith to cure its weather-stained leprosy. Grieving over such instability of devotional feeling, he felt a need of the solemnity of solitude. Instead, therefore, of walking home by the now babbling highway, he turned aside and descended a lonely path toward the banks of the Saluda.

Imagine him in this serious frame, looking across the black stream as across a Stygian river, and witnessing an exchange of light-minded kisses between his student ward and that wild Luce Raddle. The startled good man felt an hysterical desire to scream aloud over a world which at the moment seemed to him more one of sin than of sorrow. Then he became ashamed for those two, and did not want them to see that they had been discovered in their folly, and reascended hastily the covering shadows of the slope.

[Concluded next week.]

WATER RISING FOR BREAD.—Take a quart pitcher and a spoon, scald them; fill the pitcher half full of boiling water; let the water cool to the temperature of good, hot dish-water; stir in flour to make a batter as thick as for pancakes; add one-half teaspoonful of salt and as much [illegible] cover closely; set where it will [illegible] quite warm, stirring occasion[illegible] will rise in 5 or 6 hours. [illegible] this to hup [illegible] brewers [illegible]

BLACK P[illegible] FOR W[illegible] A tabl[illegible] will prevent [illegible] spotting, if [illegible] ter in which [illegible]