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The Colfax Chronicle.
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Mark Twain's Duel.

The only merit claim for the following narrative is that it is a true story. It has a moral on the end of it, but I claim nothing on that, as it is merely thrown in to court favor with the religious element. After I had reported a couple of years on the Virginia City (Nev.) Daily Enterprise, they promoted me to be editor-in-chief, and I lasted just a week, by the way. But I made an uncommonly lively newspaper while I did last, and when I retired I had a duel on my hands and three home-whippings promised me. The latter I made no attempt to collect. However, this history concerns only the former. It was the old "flush times" of the silver excitement, when the population was wonderfully wild and mixed. Everybody went armed to the teeth, and all slights and insult had to be atoned for with the best article of blood your system could furnish. In the course of my editing I made trouble with Mr. Lord the editor of a rival paper. He flew up about some little trifle or other that I do not remember now what it was. I suppose I called him a thief or a body snatcher, or an idiot or something like that; I was obliged to make the paper readable, and I couldn't fail to do my duty to a whole community of subscribers merely to save the exaggerated sensitiveness of an individual. Mr. Lord was offended, and replied vigorously in his paper. Vigorously means a great deal when it refers to a personal editorial in a frontier newspaper. Dueling was all the fashion among the upper classes in that country, and very few gentlemen would throw away the opportunity of fighting one. To kill one man in a duel caused a man to be even more looked on as a hero than to kill two in the ordinary way. Well, out there if you abuse a man and that man did not like it, you had to call him out and fight him, otherwise you would be disgraced. So I challenged Mr. Lord, and I did hope he would

not accept; but I knew perfectly well he did not want to fight, and so I challenged him in the most violent and implacable manner, and then I sat down and snuffed and snuffed till the answer came. All the boys—the editors—were in the office "helping me" in the dismal business, and telling about duels, and discussing the code with a lot of aged ruffians who had experience in such matters and altogether there was a loving interest taken in the matter that made me unspeakably uncomfortable. The answer came—Mr. Lord declined. Our boys were furious, and so was I—on the surface.

I sent him another challenge, and another, and another, and the more he did not want to fight the more blood-thirsty I became. But at last the man's tone began to change. He appeared to be waking up. It was becoming apparent that he was going to fight me after all. I ought to have known how it would be—he was a man who could never be depended upon. Our boys were jubilant. I was not, though I tried hard to be.

It was now time to go out and practice. It was the custom there to fight duels with navy six-shooters at fifteen paces—load and empty till the game for the funeral was secure. We went to a little ravine just out of town, and borrowed a barn door for a target—borrowed it from a gentleman who was absent—and we stood this barn door up, and stood a rail on end against the middle of it to represent Lord, and put a squash on top of the rail to represent his head. He was a very tall, lean creature, the poorest sort of material for a duel; nothing but a line shot could fetch him, and even then he might split your bullet. Exaggeration aside, the rail was of course a little too thin to represent the body accurately, but the squash was all right. If there was any intellectual difference between the squash and his head, it was in favor of the squash. Well I practiced and practiced at the barn door, and could not hit that; and I tried for the squash, and could not hit that. I would have been entirely disheartened but that occasionally I crippled one of the boys, and that gave me hope. At last we began to hear pistol shots, near by, in the next ravine. We knew what it meant! The other party was out practicing too. There I was in the last degree distressed, for of course, they would hear our shots and then send over the ridge, and the spies would find our barn door without a wound or mark, and that would be an end to me; for of course the other man would immediately become blood-thirsty as I was.

Just at that moment a little bird, no larger than a sparrow, flew by, and lit on a bush about 30 paces away, and my little second, Steve Gills, who was a dead shot with a pistol—much better than I was—snatched on his revolver and shot the bird's head off! We all ran to pick up the game, and sure enough, just at that moment some of the duelist came reconnoitering over the little ridge. They ran to our group to see what the matter was, and when they saw the bird Lord's second said: "That was a splendid shot. How far off was it?"

Steve said, with some indifference, "Oh no great distance. About 30 paces."
"Thirty paces! Heavens alive! Who did it?"

"My man—Twain."
"The mischief he did! Can he do it often?"
"Well, yes. He can do it about four times out of five."

I knew the little rascal was lying, but I never said anything. I never told him so. He was not of a disposition to invite confidence of that kind, so I let the matter rest. But it was a comfort to see those people look sick, and see their jaws drop when Steve made that statement. They went off and got Lord, and took him home; and when we got home, half an hour later, there was a note saying that Mr. Lord peremptorily declined to fight. We found out afterward that Lord hit his mark 13 times in 18 shots. If he had put those 13 bullets into me it would have narrowed my sphere of usefulness a good deal. True, they could have put pegs in the holes, and used me for a hat-rack; but what is a hat-rack to a man who feels he has intellectual powers? I have written this true incident of my history for one purpose only—to warn the youth of to-day against the practice of dueling, and to plead with them to war against it. I was young and foolish when I challenged the gentleman, and thought it very fine and grand to be a duelist, and stand upon the "field of honor." But I am older and more experienced now, and am inflexibly opposed to the dreadful custom. I am glad, indeed, to be enabled to lift up my voice against it. I think it is a bad, immoral thing. It is every man's duty to do all he can to discourage dueling. If a man were to challenge me, I would go to that man and take him by the hand, and lead him to a retired room—and kill him.

OUR RADIX LETTER.

New York, Oct. 10, 1876.
Editor CHRONICLE:

So completely does the great Fair at Philadelphia overshadow all other enterprises of similar character which are ventured on this year, that I had almost entirely overlooked an Exhibition which is now going on in our own city, and which in the absence of its monster rival would be considered an important one. I refer to the annual Fair of the American Institute, the present being the forty-fifth consecutive one. The display is actually a large one, filling a building an eighth of a mile long by over two hundred feet broad, and yet, after one has become used to the huge proportions of the Centennial, it is curious to note one's own feelings of confinement and limitation in this comparatively miniature exhibition.

The articles displayed cover the usual range, including besides over 400 specimens of fruit, machinery, new inventions, all sorts of manufactured articles, fine art, etc., and at the close medals and diplomas will be awarded with all the dignity imaginable; in spite of the inevitable resemblance of such proceedings to a burlesque on a small scale of the recent awards at Philadelphia.

But if we are completely eclipsed by the latter city in the matter of a general show, as much cannot be said regarding the present art displays of the two places. There are now open here two exhibitions of painting, or rather two sections of the same one, under the title of The Centennial Loan Exhibition,

which, while much smaller than the collection at the World's Fair, is of a higher average of merit. It consists of the choicest gems of the principle private galleries in New York temporarily loaned to the Academy of Designs for the purpose, and offers an interesting study to the large class of renegade Americans who having "traveled" are in the habit of turning up their noses at American painters and American appreciation of art generally.

While Tweed with the aid of the U. S. Frigate "Franklin" is speeding o'er the main towards the outstretched arms of his eager countrymen, news reaches us that from the opposite direction another long sought New Yorker is hastening hither to meet his old companion and Boss. The name of this party is Woodward, and his journey hitherward from Chicago is not so much because he wishes to revisit his old haunts as because the deputy sheriff who bears the requisition from the Governor of this State is so pressing in his invitation that he refuses to take no for an answer. Woodward was clerk of the Board of Supervisors during the palmy days of the ring, and was the official who had charge of the division of the spoils, apportioning the shares of plunder of each of that noble band of patriots, Tweed, Sweeney, Connolly and their colleagues. The joyful meeting of the long separated friends in the prisoner's box of the Court they were wont to control, may be better imagined than described.

The late ravages of the yellow fever in Southern cities have thoroughly awakened both the sympathies and the fears of this city. As a result of the former nearly \$20,000 dollars have been subscribed and paid to the treasurer of the Savannah Relief Committee by our citizens. In consequence of the latter a strict quarantine has been established in the case of vessels hailing from infected ports, they being prevented from bringing their cargoes of cotton up to the city, and forced to discharge them into lighters in the lower bay. These precautions together with the reported abatement of the plague, render it probable that New York will escape the fever this year entirely.

After repeated retirements from the amusement field, Barnum once more yields to his irrepressible instincts and announces a Centennial Season in Gilmore's Garden, Gilmore and his tuneful company being ousted for the purpose, and the "Garden" transformed into the "Hippodrome." To show how his native modesty gains on the old man with advancing years, I will quote a little from his preliminary announcement. He bashfully tells us that he will exhibit "The Tropics Transplanted! A Vast and Veritable Zoological Garden Embowering the Rarest of Exotic Creatures! The Jungle Monarch in a Vernal Wilderness of Bloom and Beauty!" He proceeds to enlarge considerably under the above heads and then, fearful lest these simple statements should be insufficient to attract our twenty-five cents, blushing admits that he has "A Brilliant and Varied Centennial of Circus Triumphs Without Parallel in Metropolitan Annals, presenting in a Rapid Succession of Sensational Surprises the Greatest Heroes and Heroines of the Arena!" also "Four Frolicsome and Vocal

Fools!" After this announcement Mr. Barnum evidently feels that he hasn't therein offered any great novelty, the same description being applicable to thousands of ladies and gentlemen in our best society, and therefore plucks up courage to inform the public that "More than Ten Times the Price of Admission in Wonder and Instruction, and Inspiration, Excitement and Amusement is returned by the Greatest Show on Earth!"

The great question now is what are the other poor circus men going to say in their advertisements? Barnum has evidently got up a corner on adjectives—in fact gobbled up the whole dictionary, and it remains to be seen what the rest of the fraternity are going to do about it. RADIX.

Waking Up the Wrong Man.

It was reported to one of the chief physicians in the hospital of one of our almshouses the other day, that there was a man lying in one of the wards in a comatose condition. The nurse declared that he had been insensible for twenty-four hours, and that she had tried in vain to rouse him. The doctor said that it was probable that the patient was under the influence of some powerful narcotic; perhaps had taken a large dose of laudanum. He said it was imperatively necessary that the unfortunate man should be resuscitated at once by some powerful stimulant. Accordingly he directed two of his assistants to take a strong galvanic battery and apply it to the patient until he recovered. The assistants went to the hospital with the battery, while the nurse stopped for a few moments in the laundry. When they reached the man's bedside they placed the battery on the floor, and baring the patient's ankle, they wrapped the wire around it. When everything was ready they turned on the current full head. A second later the prostrate form of the patient brunched about four feet in the air, and, as it came down upon the bed, a second shock sent it up again, the patient meantime exclaiming: "Yow-wow-wow! Oh, murderer-r-r-r! Oh! thunder and lightning! Murder-r-r-r! Yow-wow-wow! Another one of them'll kill me! O merciful Moses! Don't do that again."

When he came down the fourth time the doctors turned off the current with the remark that they guessed that would be enough. Then one of them asked the patient how he felt, and attempted to feel his pulse. But the patient, furious with rage, said:

"You diabolical scoundrel! what do you mean by hitching that thing to me in that manner, say?"
"Now, be calm," said the doctor; "it's all right; you'll be better directly."

"But it isn't all right; I've a mind to knock your head off for blowing me up with that infernal machine. What'd you do it for, anyway?"

"My friend, don't excite yourself," said the doctor. "You've been in a very bad way, and we ran the current through you to bring you back to life."

"Bring me back to life! Why, you must be crazy. Back to life? I was no more dead than you were."

"Now, keep cool. You have been unconscious for twenty-four hours. Narcotic poisoning, so

doubt. We have saved you from an early grave. It was the closest shave I ever saw. It was, upon my honor."

"Well, well, if this don't beat all the— You took me for the man in ward 49. Why, I'm one of the keepers of the asylum, and I lay down on this bed for a nap. The fellow you're after is over yonder. An early grave. Well, now, I have heard of foolishness in my life, but this takes the rag right off. And I give you warnin' that if you come around with your apparatus again, tryin' experiments on me, I'll wrench your brain-pan for you."

The doctors moved off in search of the right man, while the keeper went out to hunt a dog to kick to relieve his feelings.—Wild Oaks.

The Constitutional Amendments.

GREENSBURG, La., Oct. 9, 1876.

Editor Democrat—The Democratic Executive Committee of the parish of St. Helena, La., having met at the Courthouse on Saturday, the 1th day of October, 1876, the president thereof, in the due course of their proceedings, called up for their consideration the question of the adoption or rejection of the proposed amendments to the constitution of Louisiana, to be voted on at the ensuing election in November, when, after discussion by several members thereof and due deliberation, the committee unanimously voted recommending the adoption of said amendments to and by the qualified voters of St. Helena parish at the coming November election, and empowered the undersigned to convey to you and the entire press of the State the result of their deliberations on this very important question of these constitutional amendments.

The Executive Committee of this parish deem these amendments as measures of eminent and practical reform, and now they have an opportunity (which they may not have again soon) they propose to put into practice their professions of "economy, retrenchment and reform," which they, as Democrats, have been preaching for the past six years.

The adoption of these amendments, when carried into practical effect, will save to the taxpayers of the State annually and directly from the State Treasury some \$160,000, and at the same time no public interest will suffer, but all will be subserved and advanced better and more satisfactory than now, or at any rate the public burden in the way of taxation will be materially lightened, and we honestly trust that the taxpayers and voters of the State, both Democratic and Republican, will be fully aroused to the magnitude and importance of this question, and by their ballots adopt at least the first, second, third and fourth of these amendments.

The fifth amendment in reference to the perquisites of District Attorneys and the Attorney General, does not affect the State Treasury but only the accused, and its rejection would, in my opinion, conduce to the public interest, and hence I shall advocate its rejection, but for all the other amendments, I shall, and do cheerfully and earnestly vote and labor. Respectfully yours,

Wm. C. Pusis.
Ex-United States Senator Revels, of Mississippi, is supporting Tilden for President.