

Highland Messenger.

LIFE IS ONLY TO BE VALUED AS IT IS USEFULLY EMPLOYED.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

FASHIONABLE WINE DRINKING—ITS EFFECTS.

When I was a boy, there was a family residing not far from my father's house, whose members were the object of my admiration, and even envy. The head of the family was a lawyer of high standing, and honored with some of the highest offices which the city or the State could bestow. He was also possessed of large estates, and lived in a style of almost baronial profusion and ostentation. His boys, about my own age, went to the same school, and carefully trained in genteel accomplishments by their mother, far outshone their comrades in manners and personal appearance. Often in my youthful days did I revere and envy, while comparing my plain dress, unpolished manners, and petty resources of pocket money, with their expensive apparel, prepossessing appearance, and ample supplies of cash. For many years the prosperity of this family seemed uninterrupted and unassailable. Death did not enter the house. The boys grew up to be elegant and intelligent young men. Wealth placed them apparently beyond the reach or possibility of want. Extensive family connections and influence promised them success in any profession they might adopt. All of them were youth of good talents, and pleasant natural dispositions.

In their father's genteel establishment, wine was considered an indispensable daily accompaniment to the dinner table. At a very early age, these boys were taught, as a graceful and necessary accomplishment, the art of passing the wine, "taking a glass" with the ladies and gentlemen around them, and sipping it with ease and elegance. Considering the permission to do this as a proof, both of gentility and manhood, they quickly became proficient in the art of taking wine, and skillful judges of its quality and flavor. When members of college, as water only was allowed on our table, these young men could only indulge their acquired fondness for the dangerous stimulant with company invited in the evening to their rooms, or to some neighboring hotel. This they were accustomed to do with a frequency alarming to those who reflected on the tendency of such habits, but fearfully illustrative of the truth—train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

We left college; our paths in life diverged; and saw them no more for many years. I heard incidentally that, soon after completing their collegiate course, they were all married to the elegant and accomplished girls, whose hands they had gained by their polished manners, great wealth, aristocratic family connections; but that some of their acquaintances indulged sad forebodings of the future character of these young men, and of the wretchedness in store for their brilliant and happy partners. But distance and business shut them for a long time from my view.

But a few weeks since, I was stepping from the rail road cars, at the beautiful city of N—, when a face attracted my notice, as resembling that of my old-school mate, Henry Douglas. His downcast eye, hunched and hunched features, and neglected dress, indicated but too plainly his present state and character. "Can it be possible?" thought I, as I scrutinized his face, "the dignified form, elegant appearance, beaming eyes of the adored, and envied Henry Douglas, have sunk into such fearful degradation!" It was true; and a little inquiry among my friends brought out the following melancholy facts.

Soon after leaving college, he married the beautiful Jane Colborne. She had been the queen of love and beauty among collegians; her slight but elegant form, her affectionate disposition, too good for coquetry, and yet winning all hearts, her winning manners and conversation, drew around her a crowd of admirers. But, unlike those beautiful but heartless things who selfishly care for personal admiration, her gentle and lovely character rendered her the joy, pride and life of her father's house. She gave her hand and heart to Henry Douglas. They stood before the altar, so bright, so elegant, that even envy must have shrunk from a single wish of future ill.

His early habits had given him a fondness for good dinners and good wine. He gratified this taste freely in his own establishment, supported principally by the liberality of his father. He gathered his friends around his table, and with them habitually "carried long at the wine." But fashion sanctioned it; parental example pleaded for it, and neither he nor his wife dreamed of danger amid so much elegant conviviality. Even when the flush of unnatural excitement was often on his cheek at the close of his entertainments, she ascribed it as much to the glee and feeling resulting from animated society, as to the

effect of the wine cup. For months the same fond security and bright anticipation which shone on their union, lighted up also the habitation of wedded life.

The first event which startled her from her dreams though others had noticed painful indications of gathering ruin, was his appearance one evening on his return from an absence of a few hours. He had not dined out; but his face, his breath, his idiotic fondness and laugh, told the horrible tale. Who can describe the mingled torrents of surprise, horror, shame, fearful anticipation, wild despair, and bitter disappointment, which like streams of fire swept over the soul of a pure minded, refined, and affectionate woman, when the terrible certainty flashed on her mind, that she is forever and hopelessly united with a drunkard; that he whom she loved and idolized is a beast; that she must take to her bosom one fit only for the sty. No pen can describe the anguish of that night under the roof of Henry Douglas. Could tears, could loveliness, could the prospect of present misery and everlasting woe, could the sight of his own injured babe—the first pledge of love—have moved his heart, that night would have terminated his vicious indulgence. But habit had long been winding about him coils stronger than bars of iron; and now like a fiend, hurried him, bound hand and foot, to swifter destruction.

He at first met, not with moody silence; then with sullenness and rage. Discovery acted on him like breaking down the barrier before a pent up stream. He swept on in a more brutish and stubborn course of degrading indulgence. His home was forsaken, his respectable acquaintances forsook him; his wife received only abuse, and even blows, from the hand protected before the altar to cherish and protect her; and his father, after long remonstrance, withdrew the support from which his successes were supplied. At length, the young, lovely Jane Colborne, whom once a hundred youthful hands would have rejoiced to protect from the breath of insult, took refuge from her unnatural husband in the house of her father broken hearted: like the fresh morning flower, broken from its stem, and withering in the sun.

He sunk lower and lower; frequented the places of lowest debauchery; lounged with the sots of the street around the doors and counters of grog shops; and most greedily swallowed the most cheap and fiery stimulants. Poverty came upon him like an armed man. No supplies of money or clothes were of avail, for all went to satisfy the hellish cravings for rum. His friends ceased to support him. Henry Douglas is now in the poor house! The elegant, accomplished Douglas, just in the prime of his days, when, at the bar, or in the senate, he might have influenced a whole community for good, is a drunkard in the poor-house.

The reader may draw his own inferences, as he traces this terrible catastrophe to the rich wine, and elegant conviviality, where this wretched man formed the habits of intemperance. There is sound philosophy, as well as divine authority in the precept, "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright; at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."—[Canada Temp. Adv.]

A MELTING STORY.

No other class of men in any country possessed that facetious aptness at inflicting a good humored revenge which seems to be innate with a Green Mountain boy. Imposed upon or injured a Vermontor, and he will seem the drollest and best-natured fellow you ever knew in your life, until suddenly he pounces upon you with some cunningly devised offset for your duplicity; and even while he makes his victim smart to the core, there is that manly open-heartedness about him which infuses blame even while the wound is opening, and renders it quite impossible that you should hate him however severe may have been the punishment he dealt out to you. These boys of the Green Mountains seem to possess a natural faculty of extracting fun from every vicissitude and accident that the changing hours can bring; even what are bitter vexations to others, these happy fellows treat in a manner so peculiar as completely to alter their former character and make them seem to us agreeable, or at least endurable, which was before in the highest degree offensive. Another man will repay an aggravation or an insult by instantly returning injury, cutting the acquaintance and shutting his heart forever against the offender; but a Vermontor, with a smile upon his face, will amuse himself with obtaining a far keener revenge, cracking a joke in conclusion, and make his former enemy forgive him and even love him after the chastisement.

One winter evening, a country store-keeper in the Mountain State was about closing his doors for the night, and while standing in the snow outside putting up his window shutters, he saw through the glass a lounging, worthless fellow within, grab a pound of fresh butter from the shelf and hastily conceal it in his hat.

The act was no sooner detected than the revenge was hit upon, and a very few moments found the Green Mountain store-keeper at once indulging his appetite for fun to the fullest extent, and playing off the thief with a facetious sort of torture for which he might have gained a premium from the old inquisition.

"I say, Seth," said the store-keeper, coming in and closing the door after him, slapping his hands over his shoulders, and stamping the snow off his shoes.

Seth had his hand upon the door, his hat upon his head and the roll of new butter in his hat, anxious to make his exit as soon as possible.

"I say, Seth, sit down; I reckon, now, on such a *z-lar-nal* night as this, a leetle something warm wouldn't hurt a fellow; come and sit down."

Seth felt very uncertain; he had the butter and was exceedingly anxious to be off, but the temptation of "something warm" sadly interfered with his resolution to go. This hesitation, however was soon settled by the right owner of the butter taking Seth by the shoulders and planting him in a seat close to the stove, where he was in such a manner cornered in by barrels and boxes that while the country grocer sat before him there was no possibility of his getting out, and right in this very place, sure enough, the store-keeper sat down.

"Seth, we'll have a little warm Santa Cruz," said the Green Mountain grocer, as he opened the stove door and stuffed in as many sticks as the space would admit—"Without it you'd freeze going home such a night as this."

Seth already felt the butter settling down closer to his hair, and jumped up declaring he must go.

"Not till you have something warm, Seth; come, I've got a story to tell you, too; sit down, now;" and Seth was again pushed into his seat by his cunning tormentor.

"Oh! its tu darn'd hot here," said the petty thief, again attempting to rise.

"Set down—don't be in such a playgy hurry," retorted the grocer, pushing him back in his chair.

"But I've got the cows tu fodder, and some wood to split, and I must be agoin'." continued the persecuted customer.

"But you mustn't tear yourself away, Seth, in this manner. Set down; let the cows take care of themselves, and keep yourself cool, you appear to be fidgety!" said the roguish grocer with a wicked leer.

The next thing was the production of two smoking glasses of hot toddy, the very sight of which, in Seth's present situation, would have made the hair stand erect upon his head had it not been well oiled and kept down by the butter.

"Seth, I'll give you a *toast* now, and you can *butter* it yourself," said the grocer, yet with an air of such consummate simplicity that poor Seth still believed himself unsuspected.

"Seth, here's—here's a Christmas goose—(it was about Christmas time) here's a Christmas goose well roasted and basted, eh? I tell you Seth, it's the greatest eating in creation. And Seth don't you never use hog's fat or common cooking butter to baste with; fresh pound butter, just the same as you see on that shelf yonder, is the only proper thing in nature to baste a goose with—come take your *butter*—I mean Seth, take your toddy."

Poor Seth now began to *smoke* as well as to *melt*, and his mouth was as hermetically sealed up as though he had been born dumb. Streak after streak of the butter came pouring from under his hat, and his handkerchief was already soaked with the greasy overflow. Talking away as if nothing was the matter, the grocer kept stuffing the wood into the stove, while poor Seth sat bolt upright, with his back against the counter, and his knees almost touching the red hot furnace below him.

"Darnation cold night this," said the grocer. "Why, Seth, you seem to pre-spire as if you was warm! Why don't you take your hat off? Here let me put your hat away!"

"No!" exclaimed poor Seth at last, with a spasmodic effort to get his tongue loose, and clapping both hands upon his hat, "No I must go; let me out; I aint well; let me go!" A greasy cataract was now pouring down the poor fellow's face and neck, and soaking into his clothes, and trickling down his body into his very boots, so that he was literally in a perfect bath of oil.

"Well, good night, Seth," said the humorous Vermontor, "if you *will* go;" adding, as Seth got out into the road, "neighbor, I reckon the fun I've had out of you is worth a nippence, so I shan't charge you for that *pound of butter*."—N. O. Pic.

A SHOOTING EXPLOIT OF SHERIDAN.

Tom Sheridan used to tell a story for and against himself, which we shall take leave to relate.

He was staying at Lord Craven's, at Benham, or rather Hampstead, and one day proceeded on a shooting excursion, like Hawthorn, with only "his dog and his gun," on foot, and unattended by companion or keeper; the sport was bad—the birds few and shy—and he walked and walked in search of game, until unconsciously he entered the domain of some neighboring squire. A very short time after, he perceived advancing towards him, at the top of his speed, a jolly, comfortable-looking gentleman, followed by a servant, armed, as it appeared, for conflict. Tom took up a position, and waited the approach of the enemy.

"Hello! you sir," said the squire, when within half-a-bar shot, "what are you doing here, sir, eh?"

"I'm shooting, sir," said Tom.

"Do you know where you are, sir?" said the squire.

"I'm here, sir," said Tom.

"Here, sir!" said the squire, growing angry, "and do you know where here is,

sir?—these sir, are my manors; what d'ye think of that, sir, eh?"

"Why, sir, as to your manners," said Tom, "I can't say they seem over agreeable."

"I don't want any jokes, sir," said the squire; "I hate jokes. Who are you sir—what are you?"

"Why, sir," said Tom, "my name is Sheridan—I am staying at Lord Craven's—I have come out for some sport—I have not had any, and am not aware that I am trespassing."

"Sheridan!" said the squire, cooling a little, "oh, from Lord Craven's, eh? Well, sir, I could not know that, sir—I—"

"No, sir," said Tom, "but you need not have been in a passion."

"Not in a passion, Mr. Sheridan!" said the squire; "you don't know, sir, what these preserves have cost me, and the pains and trouble I have been at with them; it's all very well for you to talk, but if you were in my place, I should like to know what you would say upon such an occasion."

"Why, sir," said Tom, "if I were in your place, under all the circumstances, I should say—I am convinced, Mr. Sheridan, you did not mean to annoy me; and as you look a good deal tired, perhaps you'll come up to my house and take some refreshment."

The squire was hit hard by this nonchalance, and (as the newspapers say) "it is needless to add," acted upon Sheridan's suggestion.

"So far," said poor Tom, "the story tells for me—now you shall hear the sequel."

After having regaled himself at the squire's house, and having said five hundred more good things than he swallowed; having delighted his host, and more than half won the hearts of his wife and daughters, the sportsman proceeded on his return homeward.

In the course of his walk, he passed through a barn yard; in the front of the farm house was a green, in the centre of which was a pond—in the pond were ducks innumerable, swimming and diving; on its verdant banks a motly group of gallant cocks and pert partridges, picking and feeding—the farmer was leaning over the batch of the barn, which stood near two cottages on the side of the green.

Tom hated to go back with an empty bag; and having failed in his attempts at higher game, it struck him as a good joke to ridicule the exploits of the day himself, in order to prevent any one else from doing it for him; and he thought that to carry home a certain number of the domestic inhabitants of the pond and its vicinity, would serve the purpose admirably. Accordingly up he goes to the farmer, and accosts him very civilly—

"My good friend," says Tom, "I'll make you an offer."

"Of what, sir?" says the farmer.

"Why," replies Tom, "I have been out all day fagging after birds, and haven't had a shot; now, both my barrels are loaded, I should like to take home something; what shall I give you to let me have a shot with each barrel at those ducks and fowls—I standing here, and to have whatever I kill?"

"What sort of a shot are you?" said the farmer.

"Fairish!" said Tom, "fairish!"

"And to have all you kill!" said the farmer—"eh?"

"Exactly so," said Tom.

"Half a guinea," said the farmer.

"That's too much," said Tom. "I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll give you a seven shilling piece, which I'll give to be all the money I have in my pocket."

"Well," said the man, "hand it over."

The payment was made—Tom, true to his bargain, took his post by the barn door, and let fly with one barrel, and then with the other; and such quacking, and splashing, and screaming, and fluttering, had never been seen in that place before.

A way ran Tom, and, delighted at his success, picked up first a hen, then a chicken, then fished out a dying duck or two, and so on, until he numbered eight head of domestic game, with which his bag was nobly distended.

"Those were right good shots, sir," said the farmer.

"Yes," said Tom; "eight ducks and fowls are more than you bargained for, old fellow—worth rather more, I suspect, than seven shillings—eh?"

"Why, yes," said the man, scratching his head, "I think they be, but what do I care for that—they are none of mine!"

"Here," said Tom, "I was for once in my life *beaten*, and made off as fast as I could for fear the right owner of my game might make his appearance—not but that I could have given the fellow that took me in seven times as much as I did, for his cunning and coolness."

Decay.—An unknown word in an old maid's vocabulary.

Compliment.—A palpable lie.

Economy.—Buying a camel hair brush to paint a house.

Epitaph.—A recital of imaginary virtues.

Libel.—A disagreeable truth.

Mert.—A disadvantage to a man in search of political preferment.

Miser.—One who lives upon nothing and lays by the half of it.

Nonsense.—Anything you can't understand.

Oracle.—One who knows less than his neighbors, but has more impudence.

From the St. Augustine News. NOTES OF THE PASSAGE ACROSS THE EVERGLADES.

Col. Harney, 2d Dragoons, with Captain Davidson, Lieuts. Rankin and Ord, 3d Artillery, Dr. Russel, and myself started from Fort Dallas with 90 men and sixteen canoes. We left on the 4th of December, at night, and proceeded up the left prong of the *Miami River*. The night was very dark and rainy, and we met with considerable difficulty in ascending on account of the rapidity of the current and the shoal and rocky bed of the river. About a mile above the forks we came to a body of high *saw grass*, this continued for about a mile and a half, when we came in open view of the *Everglades*, and the grass became more scattered. The pine barren was kept close on our left, until we came to a small island on our left, when our course became more westerly; thus we continued until about eight miles from the mouth of the river when Capt. Davidson becoming separated from us we halted to the leeward of an island which was entirely overflowed, and waited until he came up, where the night was passed in our open boats. It continued to rain nearly all night, and our situation was any thing but comfortable.

Dec. 5.—By daylight this morning, we were up and at it with our paddles; our course was generally West-South-West, but this varied according to the direction of the channels, and our depth of water, till about 1 o'clock; the men being very much fatigued, having had to pull their boats through the mud and grass a greater part of the way, we insisted on John, our guide, carrying us to some high land, where we might encamp, and give the men a little rest. The officers had almost lost confidence in his knowledge of the country, as at one time he could not tell us in which direction the sun rose; and as we concluded not to follow him in the direction he was going any longer, he insisted that he was right, and that his object was to carry us where he could find the greatest depth of water, and that he could carry us a nearer way; but that it was very shoal; which proved in the end to be correct, as he had not gone more than a few miles when it was with the greatest difficulty we could move the boats. The Col. called to him to stop, as he would go no farther in that direction; but he insisted that the island was not more than a mile distant, and the Col. suffered him to proceed. Sure enough, contrary to the expectations of all, he in a short time halted at a low turf of bushes, about half a mile in circumference, which seemed to us all to be entirely flooded with water, but after penetrating about 300 yards we came to a magnificent little spot in its centre, about 150 yards in circumference, here we found an old Indian camp which evidently had been deserted for some months. It was encircled by a number of shrubs of the wild Pappaw; and two large curious wild fig trees, about ten feet apart, decorated its centre. This is a remarkable tree; it first makes its appearance as the creeper, and seizes on the largest tree it can find, continuing to encircle it in its meshes until it deprives it of life, when it feeds upon the decayed matter and becomes a beautiful tree. These had each attacked a palmetto, and one of them was dead, but the top of the other was still blooming in the centre, although completely surrounded. We halted with a great deal of pleasure, the touch of dry land, as we were wet to the skin; it having rained all day, and the wind blowing from the North. As soon as it became dark, we kindled a large fire—dried ourselves—got a good supper; cut it with a great deal of gusto—talked over what we had undergone, and what we intended to do—stretched ourselves on our blankets, and slept soundly and sweetly, 'till daylight warned us to be up and doing.

Dec. 6.—After getting some hot coffee, again started on our course. The day has cleared off beautifully, and we are moving slowly and silently along, in momentary expectation of falling in with some Indian canoes. John can see from the top of a tree the field from which he escaped, and we will come up to it about 12 o'clock. He says it is only one day's row from that place to where all the Indians are encamped, and we expect to have a devil of a fight when we get there. Nothing now presents itself except one boundless expanse of saw-grass and water, occasionally interspersed with little islands, all of which are overflowed, but the trees are in a green and flourishing state. No country that I have ever heard of bears an resemblance to it; it seems like a vast sea, filled with grass and green trees, and expressly intended as a retreat for the rascally Indians, from which the white man would never seek to drive them. We have plenty water at present and go along with at great deal of ease. We reached the island, as expected, about 12 o'clock. When we came in sight, the Colonel took four canoes, with Lieut. Rankin, and went ahead, having first painted himself and men so much like Indians, that they could scarcely, themselves, detect the imposition. He directed Lieut. Ord to follow with the rest of the canoes, and Capt. Davidson, as he was unwell, to remain behind with the large boats. I was in the next canoe to Lieut. Ord, who, as he was turning to give some order to his men, lost his balance, and such a pretty summer set "I never did see;" he carried boat, provisions, ammunition, and guns all with him. When his head appeared on the surface of the water he said to

me, "go ahead with the boats; I inserted my handkerchief in my mouth and evaporated. The order was to keep just in sight of the Colonel, and in case he should not be able to manage the force on the island, to come to his assistance; but the delay threw me behind, and I soon lost sight of, and with the greatest difficulty found the island. We had to wade through mud and water three or four hundred yards, up to our waists, before we gained dry land; here we found a cornfield of about an acre, and the richest land I have ever saw, being one black heap of soil of endless depth. This island is called from the Indian name of the wild fig, "*Ho-co-mo-thocco*." It being early we did not remain here long, but pushed to another island, about seven miles distant, the usual stopping place of the Indians, when they visit *Sam Jones*, or go from his camp to the Spanish Indians; we arrived early in the evening, and had to wade 200 yards before we gained a footing; we found here signs of a few days old, where they had been cutting bushes. I ascended the top of a fig tree with John, and he pointed out to me our course, and the direction of the different islands. We could see far to the South, the pine barren skirting the Everglades, and the tops of the grass and bushes burnt to make out the trail. The island *Ho-co-mo-thocco*, bears about East-South-East from this, and the island where we go to-morrow about South-West and by South. This island is called "*Eja-moc-co-chee*," from a dog having died which was left here; it contains about half an acre of cleared land, but has never been cultivated, and is used alone as a camp ground.

Dec. 7th.—Off again; our course for a short time was about north, then changed it to north west, and continued in this direction until we reached another island which is called *Cochokeymchaje*, from the name of an Indian who cleared and cultivated it. It is distant from *Ejanococchee* about six miles, and its course is about north west. We found on this island the figure of an Indian drawn on a tree, and the figures A and B, which is the first indication of a white man's being with them. Being early when we arrived here, the Colonel, contrary to the opinion of the guide, determined not to remain here until night, but took Lieut. Ord ahead with him, and two canoes to surprise the next island. Following on with the rest of the boats we had not gone more than a mile, when we lost the trail of their boats, and continued to wander to every point of the compass until late in the evening, when we made out to reach the island from which we started about sun-set, and found John, who had returned for us. Considered ourselves very fortunate to reach this island again, as we could not follow with any certainty our trails for one hundred yards. To the westward of this island the main body of water seems to change its course, and flow with some current to the south-west, which induces us to think we are in the centre of the Everglades. It was late at night when we reached the island, where Lieut. Ord had gone. But notwithstanding the thousand channels which flowed and wound in every direction, and although it was so dark that we could not distinguish land from water, John never once missed the track. Found on this island, which is called by its owner *Intaska*, a large hut built of cypress bark, and under it a bed made of boards, coming in play very timely and was quickly appropriated. It is the largest and richest island we have yet seen, and had various vegetables growing on it, such as pumpkins, beans, corn, &c.; and deer tracks were very numerous. Its course from *Cochokeymchaje*, N. N. West.

Dec. 8th.—We shall remain on *Intaska* until 4 o'clock this evening, when we will proceed to another island, which bears north 10° west from this, where we expect to surprise some Indians, as we can now see a large smoke in that direction. When we visit this, our course will then change to the southward, and we will make for their strongholds on the sea board.

Dec. 9th.—Yesterday about 12 o'clock, when some were asleep and silent, awaiting the time of starting, the Colonel called out from the top of a tree, that two canoes were approaching the island on the south side. In a moment, all were up with their guns in hand; the boats were silently approaching, and we being on the north side, Lieut. Rankin was immediately ordered to man four canoes, and move slowly along to meet them. The grass was so high that the Indians did not discover him until within a few hundred yards, when they immediately wheeled their canoes and made off with all their strength. But there was no eluding our snake-like boats, and our tried soldiers. They made the boats fairly jump out of the water. When within a short distance, the Indians approaching a deep body of saw-grass, our soldiers commenced a running fire, and soon disabled one of the men and overhauled him. The boats halted at the saw grass and the Indians leaped out; but our men were as quick as they were, and pursued them through it for some distance to a pond, where they disabled another, and accidentally wounded a squaw, who was endeavoring to escape with her child on her back. In another direction, they overhauled a squaw with a girl about 12 years old, and two small children; making in all, eight persons. None of them were killed; and as soon as we could get them through the mud to the boats, we returned. Col. Harney was looking on at the race from the top of a tree, and made the island ring with his cheering.