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The People's Press,

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BY L. V. & E. T. BLUM,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

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Miscellaneous.

THE SMITHS,

And their Adventure with a Robber.

BY PAUL GREYTON.

The Smiths of Smithville had for a long time been very much annoyed by the depredations of some unknown individual, whose confused idea concerning the rights of property led to the frequent abstraction of diverse goods and chattels from the premises of the said Smiths in a furtive and mysterious manner. Bags of wheat and oats vanished from the granary, pork from the cellar, and corn from the crib; in one night a sheep that had just been slaughtered coolly trotted away, and on another occasion several gallons of maple-sugar evaporated in a night time. Milking stools went off on three legs, and Mr. Smith's best axe was found to have "cut sick." Chains became rattlesnakes and crept; iron wedges made splits in the Smith property; boots walked away, and "jack" rode on the "saw-horse."

Vain were all the efforts of the elder and younger Smith to discover the mystery of these disappearances and to entrap the offender. Despairing of bringing him to justice, the Smiths found that they could do nothing more than to take measures to ensure the safety of their property. Accordingly they built a new granary, with strong walls, a narrow grated window and a heavy oak door, to which was attached a formidable padlock. The prison-like portion of the barn was sufficiently large to allow the Smiths to lock up with the grain a great deal of portable property, such as was most likely to tempt the cupidity of thieves.

After the granary was finished, a month passed, during which time the depredations of the robber or robbers was confined to the orchards and hen coots, when, late on Sunday evening, the elder Smith, as he was sitting, tipped against the kitchen wall, smoking his pipe, preparatory to retiring, betwixt him that he had neglected to lock the granary before leaving the barn. This was by no means a singular circumstance, considering that the granary was usually locked by the younger Smith, who had that night "gone a courting."

It was a moonlight evening, and Mr. Smith on approaching the barn, was considerably startled at seeing the door ajar. Certain of having shut the door an hour previous, Mr. Smith thought of robbers. His suspicions were confirmed when, on a nearer approach, he plainly heard a movement in the barn. Too cautious to endanger his life by boldly attacking the robber, Mr. Smith, with considerable trepidation, resolved to watch his movements and discover who he was.

Looking through a crack on the east side of the barn, he saw a dim, ghost-like figure glide across the floor towards the granary. A happy thought entered Mr. Smith's brain. Stealing into the barn, he crept softly along the wall until near the granary, when—clap!—he shut the door, adjusted the padlock, turned the key, and was off as for his life.

It was impossible to say what made Mr. Smith tremble so. It might have been the smothering cry of alarm which issued from the granary walls in a way fully calculated to awaken suspicious fears. But Mr. Smith never owned he was as white as a ghost, or as white as they are supposed to be.

Mr. Smith exchanged his slippers for his boots, and ran first to Deacon Naffles' house, where he expected to find the younger Smith who was courting Naffles' daughter. He was surprised to find the house all dark, as if the Naffles had retired to rest and blown the candle out. He knocked, however, furiously, as the occasion required. After some delay, Deacon Naffles came down in his night dress, stared at Smith in astonishment, and demanded his business at that hour of the night.

"Caught the thief—locked up in the granary—where's Increase?"

"Ha! caught the thief?" cried Deacon Naffles, who, having lost some property as well as his neighbors, was interested in the intelligence. "Good enough: keep him till morning."

"'Twon't do!" replied Smith in an excited manner. "He's a desperate fellow—break out—I must raise the neighbors—where's my son, Increase?"

"Oh, Sally is sick to-night, so Increase only courted about an hour, and then went home."

"Went home?"

"Yes," said the Deacon, "about half an hour ago."

The older Smith clapped his hand to forehead, as if he had been struck by an idea of some weighty substance.

"Gracious!" he ejaculated.

"What?" asked the Deacon.

"I believe," stammered the elder Smith, "I have locked up—"

"Who?"

"Increase!"

"I'll bet you have!" cried the Deacon—"I heard him say he had got to carry the buggy cushions into the granary before he went to bed."

"Look here," whispered the elder Smith, "I beg of you never to mention this—I—if it should get out—"

"Oh, I'll keep the secret!" interrupted the Deacon, trying to preserve becoming gravity. "The joke is safe, and I'd advise you to hurry home and let up Increase."

The elder Smith turned upon his heel and vanished, feeling very weak, probably the effect of the excitement he had undergone.

Let us now look upon the younger Smith, who was actually shut up in the granary. It is now impossible to describe his rage on finding himself thus entrapped. After shouting himself hoarse and nearly deaf, he closed his teeth angrily, and sat down on a bag of meal to await the result.

Increase had not been long in this dark dungeon before he heard a noise in the barn. Supposing it was the old man, who, having discovered his error, was coming to liberate him, his anger evaporated, and he could not help but laugh at the ludicrous mistake.

But there was a mystery about the sounds he heard, which caused the younger Smith to doubt whether they were made by his father, after all. He listened. The key turbed cautiously in the lock. Slowly the door opened, while Increase scarcely breathed. Somebody entered noiselessly, he touched young Smith's shoulder as he passed, and began to explore the farther part of the dungeon. Increase dropped on his hands and knees, and taking advantage of the noise made by the robber, he crept out. Then to shut the door and lock it was the work of a moment. Somebody was locked up.

Listening for a moment, and hearing no sound, Increase became firmly convinced that he had committed no error, but caught a real thief, and went immediately for assistance.

Shortly after, and very much ashamed of his mistake, the elder Smith leaked into the barn and approached the granary. It is necessary here to observe that the elder Smith looked up his own son with the key which he had carried with him, and carelessly left it in the lock on entering the granary, and which the younger Smith had carried away.

And now the elder Smith made an attempt to open the door.

"Increase!" he called, putting his head into the granary.

No answer.

"Are you asleep?—Come now, I'm playing any trick with me—it was my mistake—for I really took you to be a robber!"

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Mr. Smith's voice was stopped by a violent blow upon the mouth, and an instant was fumbled down amidst a wilderness of barrels, bags, rakes and shovels. Mr. S. was considerably stunned by the blow and the fall, and when he got upon his legs again, the door was closed and locked. Mr. Smith was a prisoner. I leave the reader to imagine his feelings.

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INSANE ASYLUM.

We have received, says the Raleigh Banner, from Dr. Fisher, Superintendent, the "Report of the President and Directors and Superintendent of the Insane Asylum of North Carolina, for years ending Nov. 1, 1860, and 1860." From it we learn that the patients admitted from Nov. 1, 1858 to Oct. 31, 1860, were 158; of which number 94 were males and 64 females. Patients in the Asylum during the two years, 302; males 186, females 116. Remaining Oct. 31, 1860, 178; males 114, females 65. Patients discharged, including one elopement and death, 128; males 72, females 56. Recovered, 37 males and 17 females. Deaths, 23, of whom 23 died the last year. The Superintendent says:

"The mortality was not only much greater than any previous year, but twice as great as the preceding one, when the deaths reached ten in number. This result is to be attributed to the prevalence of dysentery, in an epidemic form, which made its appearance in the Spring, and continued through the Summer and a portion of the Fall months. * * * Among those who were sufferers from an attack of the epidemic, were some, notwithstanding the many years they had passed with reason destroyed, presented the singular and interesting phenomenon of an entire restoration to mental soundness, during their illness. It was noticed, however, that in each instance of this temporary reaction and temporary of the mind, that a fatal termination attended the disease."

DENSITY OF POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

Some of the facts disclosed by the census are that the non-slaveholding States are twice as dense as the slaveholding States. The Middle States are the densest; next, the New England; then the Northwest; then the South, and lastly the Southwest. The States taken together have a density of about sixteen to the square mile. With the density of Sweden and Norway, which are the least populous of any European States, the United States would have forty-five millions of inhabitants; with the density of Russia, over eighty millions; with that of Spain, two hundred millions; of France, five hundred millions; of Britain, six hundred and sixty millions; of Belgium, eleven hundred and fifty millions.

In population, the United States is probably exceeded only by four of the European Powers, namely, Russia, Austria, France and the British Empire in Europe. It is nearly or quite twice as populous as Prussia, Spain or Turkey, and is equal to the aggregate population of twenty-four out of the thirty-seven States of Europe.

THE TEXAS WHEAT CROP.

The Galveston Citizen, of the 22d ultimo, has the following:
The wheat crop of Northern Texas is represented as unusually promising. A larger amount of land has been devoted to the crop than ever before, while the season has been highly favorable, and the plant is well advanced and thrifty. The crop is now regarded as almost beyond danger, and an early harvest is confidently expected.
The Jefferson (Oas county) Herald, of the 15th ultimo, says:
We are informed by persons recently from the upper counties that the prospect is fine for an unusually large crop of wheat. A greater breadth has been sown than ever before, and the growth is astonishingly luxuriant.

PURITUDITY IN WELLS.

Sometimes the water in wells suddenly acquires a putrid taste and smell, as though some animal matter was undergoing decay therein, yet which upon careful examination is found not to be the case. The Homestead teller of such an instance, and a remedy was found in the thorough agitation of the water, by wringing a chain pump for two hours, bringing the water more or less in contact with the air. The next day the water was sweet as ever; in the case of a cistern of filtered rain water, the same remedy of agitation was resorted to, with equal success.

THE ELECTION IN ARKANSAS.—

The Little Rock (Arkansas) State Gazette of the 23d inst., says that in many parts of the State not more than half the usual vote was polled. Had there been a full vote throughout the State, it adds, the conservative majority, now without for all practical purposes would have been immense.

ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS REWARD.—

Sheriff Ellis has issued his proclamation offering reward of \$1,000 for the arrest of James R. S. Chipman, late of the county of Guilford, who is charged with the murder of Martha Penix, late of the same county. Chipman is described as being 5 feet 8 or 10 inches high, is squarely built, and has black hair and eyes.

TOBACCO STEALKERS.—

One of our Exchange says: "We made last year a better crop of potatoes, manured exclusively with tobacco stalks than we have ever made with a free use of guano. The stalks from four acres will manure one acre abundantly."

REMITTANCES TO IRELAND.—During the six months, ending the 1st of February, the servants girls of Cincinnati sent to their parents and friends in Europe, the sum of \$64,900. The remittances vary from \$3 to \$25.

Give the devil his dues. Certainly, says a contemporary; but it is better to have no dealings with the devil, and there will be nothing due.

A GLIMPSE AT THE LONDON POOR.

Wherever a London paper reaches—and it is hard to say where it does not—there column after column tells of hopeless destitution, starving masses, towns besieged by stern famine, neglected desert, unrequited industry, starvation and nakedness at our very doors, and all that we might expect to hear in the most oppressed regions of the Continent after it had been pillaged by invaders or mis-governed. Famine numbers its thousands. The distress in this metropolis is becoming a fact of European dimensions; it vies with the opening of China, it beats the siege of Gaeta, and occupies a larger place than the fortunes of several seas and empires now hanging on the dial. Crowds appeal to our aid, and crowds still more importunate proffer their arms to ourselves, to police magistrates, to bankers—to almost anybody except the poor-rate collector and the person, both with better claims to administer a nation's charity. Who would not be starting at such a time? Certainly, as we return home in the dusk, feel the frost returning, relax at a good fire, and count the minutes to the dinner bell, it is natural that we should bestow a spare thought on the poor creatures who have to do fire, dinner and everything for selves, wives and families on 10s. or 12s. a week. But they are not the objects in this national calamity, which, somehow, seems to have been got up on the spur of a sharp frost. There are people with absolutely nothing. Yes, in this Christian country, it is assumed, apparently without contradiction, that there are thousands—hundreds at this police court, hundreds at that, 1,500 at the Thames Police Court alone—all said to be without a bit of bread, or of coal, still more necessary just now. It is impossible not to ask, what has become of our Poor laws? Where is the Relieving Officer? Are there not Boards of Guardians? Don't we pay heavy poor rates? Yes, indeed, we do. There is a ring at the bell. "Please, sir, the collector, for the last quarter's poor rates, and he says there are two quarters due."

MR. LINCOLN'S CABINET.

We subjoin a brief sketch of the history of the gentlemen who are to be the "constitution and years" of the President for four years: SECRETARY OF STATE. Hon. Wm. H. Seward is well known to the country, and therefore it is unnecessary to say more than that he was born in 1801. A lawyer by profession, he has served in the New York Senate, and has been Governor of that State. In 1849 he was elected to the United States Senate, where he has ever since continued, and where his course is well known. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY. Hon. Salmon P. Chase is a native of New Hampshire, born in 1808, and at an early age migrated to Ohio, but leaving there after a year's residence, graduated at Dartmouth College, N. H., and studied law in Washington under the celebrated Wm. Wirt. He engaged himself during the years of his professional studies by imparting instruction to a school for boys. He was admitted to the bar at Washington in 1829, and in the following year returned to Cincinnati and entered upon the practice of his profession, in which he soon rose to eminence. He was subsequently elected a member of the U. S. Senate, and upon the expiration of his Senatorial term he was at its nomination for Governor of Ohio, and elected. He was again put in nomination for Governor, and was again elected to that position. Recently he was a second time elected to the U. S. Senate, and took his seat at the dissolution on Monday.

SECRETARY OF WAR.

Hon. Simon Cameron served an apprenticeship to the printing business at Harrisburg, and subsequently worked as a journeyman in Washington city. In 1821, when a young man, he declined the offer of a nomination for Congress; in 1825 was Adjutant General of Pennsylvania; in 1831 he was appointed by General Jackson a visitor to West Point; and in 1835 he again declined a nomination for Congress. For many years he has been prominent in the works of internal improvement in Pennsylvania, and for twenty-seven years was cashier of the Middletown Bank in that State. He was also formerly President of the Lebanon Valley Railroad Company, and President of the Commonwealth Insurance Company.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Hon. Gideon G. Welles is a native of Connecticut, and a well-known contributor to the British press. He formerly held the office of postmaster of Hartford, under Mr. Van Buren's administration, and left the office soon after the election of General Harrison in 1840. He joined a part of Mr. Polk's administration he occupied an important position in the Navy Department. Like many other prominent Northern Democrats, Mr. Welles disagreed with his party on the subject of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. The territorial question being the chief one at issue, he soon separated himself from the Republican party since its organization, and has since been one of its leaders, taking a prominent part in its conventions, State and National. He was a delegate from the State at large to the Chicago Convention, and constituted one of the committee to proceed to Springfield with official notice of Mr. Lincoln's nomination. He was also one of the Presidential electors.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

Hon. Caleb B. Smith is well known in Indiana, and is reported to be possessed of a vigorous intellect, and considerable administrative tact and ability. He has been frequently a Whig member of Congress, and was commissioner in Mexican claims. He is now a Republican of moderate views.

POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

The Hon. Montgomery Blair is a