

THE PEE DEE COURIER.

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Drifting Away.

Drifting away from each other,
Silently drifting apart.
Nothing between but the cold world's
screen,
Nothing to loose but a heart.

Only two lives dividing
More and more every day,
Only one soul from another soul
Steadily drifting away.

Only a man's heart striving
Bitterly hard with its doom;
Only a hand, tender and bland,
Slipping away in the gloom.

Nothing of doubt or wrong,
Nothing that either can cure;
Nothing to shame, nothing to blame,
Nothing to do but endure.

The world cannot stand still,
Tides ebb, and women change;
Nothing here that is worth a tear.
One love less—nothing strange.

Drifting away from each other,
Steadily drifting apart—
No wrong to each that the world can
reach,
Nothing lost but a heart.

A MYSTERY UNRAVELED.

I had been "doing" the continent in a rambling way and had stopped for a few days at Venice.

Here I met my old college chum, Dick Glover.

The latter had become a famous doctor within the last few years.

Having at last married a rich and handsome young widow, he had concluded to take a short period of relaxation, and hence his presence in this distant clime.

Of course he was overjoyed to see me, and having been there long enough to know something of the place, he volunteered to show me around.

"By George!" I exclaimed, suddenly, as we stopped before the piazza San Marco. "There's as handsome a picture as I ever saw. Innocence personified."

A young and most beautiful girl stood before us, engaged in feeding the pigeons.

The birds were mercifully tame, and approached her fearlessly, even lighting on her hands.

"Did you ever see a more attractive sight?" I asked my friend, enthusiastically, as we passed on.

"Him! I don't know," was the rather doubtful reply. "Rumor has been busy about that lady's name of late."

"In what way?" I asked indignantly. I never saw a sweeter face in all my life.

"Well, I'll tell you the story as near as I've heard it. The woman is Countess Ardotti. Her husband, the count, is reputed to be immensely wealthy, while the wife was but a poor peasant girl when he married her. Of course the general belief is that she wedded him for his wealth. This would not amount to much were it not for the fact that she makes no effort to show dislike for her husband's society. I happened to be present at a large ball given here a few weeks ago. On that occasion the countess flirted shamefully with a young Italian, the son of some nobleman. Her conduct attracted universal attention, but she did not seem to heed that in the least. Now you see why I am rather more doubtful of her innocence than you are."

"Still you may be mistaken by your prejudice against her," I retorted gallily.

We arrived home at about four o'clock in the afternoon, and the doctor's wife met us with a look of horror on her face.

"Have you heard the news?" she gasped. "Isn't it perfectly horrible?"

"What news, dear?" asked the doctor, in surprise. "You'll have to enlighten us on the subject, I'm afraid."

"Count Ardotti has been murdered!"

The doctor looked grave at this intelligence, and glanced toward me. As for myself, I was trembling with conflicting emotions.

"Let me hear the particulars?" I asked, quickly.

"I'll tell you all I know," replied

the lady. "The count was found sitting in his chair with a poniard driven in his heart. He must have fallen asleep and been attacked in that state."

"What time did it occur?" asked the doctor, briefly.

"About three o'clock they discovered him, and then his body was not quite cold. The countess was immediately suspected of the crime. She was engaged in feeding the pigeons when they arrested her, and there was blood upon her delicate hands."

"You were rather mistaken in your judgment that time," said the doctor addressing me. "I suppose you'll admit it now?"

"Never!" I replied. "It strikes me that there is some deep mystery at the bottom of this, and that the countess is still innocent."

"Your legal instinct is wrong this time, I'm afraid," said the doctor's wife. "The poniard with which the deed was done belonged to the countess, and has been already identified."

"Pooh!" I retorted; "that is proof positive of her innocence. No one but a fool would have left an article behind that would have convicted them."

"I left the doctor, and proceeded at once to the police officials. I found them in perplexity, some of them believing in the innocence of the countess, and the rest firmly believing her to be guilty. I had provided myself with a letter of introduction from the doctor, and was politely received."

Stating that I was a lawyer by profession, and used to unraveling mysteries, I offered my services in the present case. It was accepted without hesitation, save by one member of the board, who was most bitter in his hostility to the countess.

This man alluded to showed such an amount of strong dislike to me that I resolved to find out the cause. All I could learn, however, was his name, and the fact that he was the father of a half-witted girl.

I had two interviews with the countess, and each of them strengthened my belief in her innocence.

I endeavored to find the young nobleman whose name had been coupled with hers, but he had left the country. Of course this gave a still darker look to the case, but I did not despair.

One night I was proceeding homeward at a late hour, when I heard a stealthy footstep behind me. I turned quickly and just in time to catch my assailant by the arm. A keen stilet to was in his hand, and my prompt action had saved my life.—Snatching out my revolver, I leveled it at his head, and ordered him to move on at the same time keeping a firm hold upon his collar.

The muzzle of my weapon was a convincing argument, and he did not dare disobey. I marched him straight to the house of my friend, Dr. Glover. As I marched my prisoner into the doctor's presence, I, for the first time caught a glimpse of the face beneath the slouch hat.

I started back in astonishment. It was no less a person than my strange enemy among the police officials. I knew then that he was able to throw some light upon the mystery.

"Sss here," I said, assuming my fiercest tone; "you are fairly covered now. Confess what you know concerning the murder of Count Ardotti, and you shall go free, otherwise I shall give you into custody for your attempt upon my life."

The man frightened by my manner, told all he knew. His insane daughter had been made so by the count's former attentions. Having betrayed her, he had cast her off, and she had brooded over her wrongs until she had become dangerously insane.

After the count's marriage she had sworn revenge, and became so violent that she required constant watching. On the day of the count's murder she had succeeded in eluding the vigilance of her friends.

Her father was the first to miss her, and fearing her purpose, had gone straight to the count's entrance. He

had arrived just in time to see his crazy daughter escaping by a back entrance, and shrewdly guessed that the deed had been perpetrated.

His wish for revenge upon the new countess for usurping his daughter's rightful place, and his fear that the crazy girl might have to pay the penalty of her act with her life, and led to his silence.

Strange to say, the sight of her murdered lover had brought back the girls wandering senses, and she was legally liable for the act.

The doctor listened in open-mouthed astonishment, while I drew up the statement in legal form, and compelled the man to sign it; then we accompanied him home, and had the truth corroborated from the unwilling lips of the daughter.

The countess was quickly liberated, and public opinion swung around in her favor. The real murderers were never prosecuted, opinion seeming to be that it was an act of justice.

Such is the story, as told me by a lawyer friend on his recent return from abroad. His wife was the former Countess Ardotti, and was, indeed, a most beautiful woman.

What a State We Are.

Professor Kerr has just returned from a trip into McDowell, Burke and Catawba counties where he has been engaged in looking up iron ores and goldmines. Dr. Powell has just opened some new iron beds on the Catawba and is manufacturing very fine forge iron. He sells it in the neighborhood and supplies the local market with bar iron and plowshares. They have re-opened the old Shuford gold mine near Catawba station and it is worked quite successfully. They wash out the gold in the old fashion style and sell it to the merchants and ship it to Charlotte. In the same neighborhood within a few miles of the gold mine is the largest bed of black lead in the State. It was worked last year by a company who put up machinery for preparing it for market. They are not working it now but Professor Kerr received a letter from a New Yorker a few weeks since enquiring for black lead in the State, and after examining the mines in this county he sent him up there where he is now engaged in prospecting that mine. Another New York party has opened the manganese mines near Lenoir. In the South mountains there is a good deal of gold getting just now in the old Brimble Town mines. All the people at work through that range of mines are getting in the aggregate upwards of one hundred dollars a day. At the time of the discovery of the California mines there were a thousand hands working in those mines and got out several millions of dollars. Over on the Black Mountain in the mica mines the other day Professor Kerr found some very remarkable crystals of feldspar. One weighed not less than six hundred pounds, the largest crystal on record. They are now on the way to the state museum. Mr. Lumsden, a tinner and stove man of this place asked Professor Kerr the other day where he could get some mica and he sent him to Ray's mine on the Black Mountain, a mine which has already made a large fortune for its owner. On Ivy in Madison county the Professor found a bed of iron ore of very fine quality. When the railroad is completed down the French Broad this ore will come into market. Professor Kerr will visit the west again in a few days.—*Raleigh News.*

A negro witness in a trial the other day was asked what he was doing in a certain saloon at a certain time. He explained that he had gone there to "change his brief." The explanation was accepted.

We can't understand why it is that a married man can't go into a store to buy a new rolling-pin without blushing to the tips of his ears, if anybody happens to giggle when he prefers his request.

Does Farming Pay.

[By Cane Run.]

This question is often asked by farmers and agricultural papers. I will try and answer it. There is, perhaps, no better or safer business on the globe than farming, when followed on prudent or scientific principles. Take farmers as a class and compare them to merchants, and compare numbers and capital invested. Then compare number of failures with the number engaged; or, take an equal number of each around you town or village, and then compare notes, and let me know the result. Take the trades-people, and you will find comparatively few who have succeeded in making more than a bare support. And wherever you will find one who has succeeded in laying up wealth, notice that he has attended strictly to his business. Now when you are asked the question, does farming pay? don't say no; but compare it with other pursuits in life, and then make a balance sheet, and you will have the result. I will now try and tell you how farming pays.—Look over the country where you live, and you can pick out farmers who have made fortunes at farming, and others are following on in their footsteps. They are wide-awake; they throw their whole time, energy, and skill into their business; they keep up the fertility of their soil, cultivate no more land than they can cultivate well; they push their work, and don't let their work push them; use the best machinery, sow the best seed, keep the best stock, and keep no more than they can keep in high condition, and nine times out of ten they will sell what they have to sell when it is ready for market. I consider this the true principle. Such read agricultural books and papers—are posted all the time as to the market and crop prospects throughout the country, and sharks rarely get the upper-hand of them.

Now I will tell you why farming doesn't pay. When you travel over the country and see the fence-rows grown up with bushes, briars and weeds, where grass ought to and would grow; where all the crops are planted from two to three weeks too late, and no clover is sown; take then a ride to the barn, and you will find the manure thrown out at the end, the stalls left unclean to produce disease, the owner of the farm spending his time at town or village, may be at the cross-roads blacksmith shop. Every neighborhood has its cross roads. You will there find the poor farmer dealing out gossip and scandal by the square yard. Ask one to subscribe for an agricultural paper, as I asked one the other day to subscribe for the *Home Journal*. He told me he was taking more papers than he could read. I asked him what papers he was taking. He said he was taking the *Ledges*, *Chimney Corner*, *Brick Pomeroy*, and so forth. In conclusion, when you see farmers devoting all their calling and using their capital judiciously, you will find it pays well—perhaps better than any other business, for farmers have less risk than merchants or manufacturers, besides they can enjoy the fruits of their labor to an extent that no other people can. Nor need the farmer be debarred from pleasures, for they are all accessible to him.—*Farmers' Home Journal.*

Mrs. Lincoln is now quietly living with friends in California.

Interesting Facts.

The following curious facts are not generally known.

If a tallow candle be placed in a gun and shot at a door it will go through without injury; and if a musket ball be shot into the water, it will not only rebound but be flattened. If fired through a pane of glass it will make a hole the size of the ball without cracking the glass; if the glass be suspended by a thread it will make no difference, and the thread will not even vibrate. Cork, if sunk two hundred feet under water, will not rise on account of the pressure of the water. In the Arctic regions, when the thermometer is below zero, persons can converse more than a mile distant from each other.

A Horrible Tragedy.

CINCINNATI, Oct. 25.

The *Gazette's* Rusville, Ind., special gives the particulars of a horrible tragedy which occurred last evening about six miles southeast of that place. Chadrick B. Brittain, a young man from Paris, Ky., had married the only daughter of John Rhodes, a farmer, and after living peaceably with the old people nearly a year, he finally demanded the farm.

Upon their refusal, he became abusive and intemperate, and was ordered to leave. He left on Friday, but returned last night, and after an altercation with the old lady, shot her dead. Mr. Rhodes, hearing the shot, hastened to the house, and was fired at, but the pistol missed fire.

Brittain then fired twice into his own body, dying instantly. Brittain's young wife, now approaching confinement, is reported nearly insane over the affair. Brittain left a letter blaming Mrs. Rhodes for making trouble.

Small Farms.

Small farms make near neighbors; they make good roads; they make plenty of good schools and churches; there is more money made in proportion to the labor; less labor is wanted; everything is kept neat; less wages have to be paid for help; less time is wasted; more is raised to the acre, besides it is tilled better; there is no watching of hired help; the mind is not kept in a worry, stew, and fret all the time.—*The Semi-Tropical.*

"The times are getting hard, my dear," said a man to his better half, "and I find it difficult to keep my nose above water." "You could easily keep your nose above water," returned the lady, "if you didn't keep it so often above brandy."

As a stern-wheel steamboat was passing up the Ohio river, the other day, a little girl who was standing on the hotel stoop ran into the house to her mother, calling out, "Mother, mother, come out and see this steamboat—it's got a bustle on."

There's a mining town out West called "Nowhere." That's where a man has always been when his wife lets him in at 2 o'clock in the morning.

A maiden lady, not remarkable for either beauty, youth, or good temper, came for advice to a Mr. Arnold, as how to get rid of a troublesome suitor. "Oh! marry him—marry him!" he advised. "Nay, I would see him hanged first." "No, madam, marry him, as I said to you, and I'll assure you that it will be but a short time before he hangs himself.

On the Use of Mules.

Mules, on a general average, live more than twice as long as horses. They are fit for service from three years old to thirty. At twelve a horse has seen his best days, and is going down hill, but a mule at that age has scarcely risen out of his colt-hood, and goes on improving until he is twenty. Instances are recorded of mules living sixty or seventy years, but these are exceptions. The general rule is that they average thirty. Mules are never exposed to disease as horses are. Immense sums of money are annually lost in the premature death of high-spirited horses by accident or disease. Mules have organs of vision and hearing far superior to those of the horse. Hence they seldom frighten and run off. A horse frightens, but a mule, having superior discernment, both by the eye and ear, understands everything he meets, and therefore is safe. For the same reason he is surer footed, and hence more valuable in mountainous regions, and on dangerous roads. We doubt whether on the Alpine paths a mule ever made a misstep. He may have been deceived in the firmness of the spot where he set his foot, but not in the propriety of the choice, all appearances considered. The mule is much more hardy than the horse. A pair of these animals, although small in size, will plow more land in a week than four horses. Their faculty of endurance is more creditable. Another very important fact is, that in the matter of food, a mule will live and thrive on less than half it takes to keep a horse.

They had a head of cabbage for dinner. Contemplating the steaming vegetable on the table, little three-year-old observed, "Ma, 'is that a head of cabbage?" "Yes, my dear." "Where's its mouth, then?"

The Robesonian.

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16-17.