

# Southwestern Weekly Post.

WILLIAM D. COOKE,  
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WHOLE NO. 171

## SELECT POETRY.

### SONG.

BY CHILAND.

Sweet Sabbath of the year!  
Thy evening lights decay;  
As on Consumption's waning cheek  
Thy parting steps methinks I hear  
—Stal from the world away.

Amidst thy silent bowers  
'Tis sad yet sweet to dwell,  
Where falling leaves and fading flowers  
Around us breathe farewell.

A deep and crimson streak  
The dying leaves disclose,  
As on Consumption's waning cheek  
"Mid ruin blooms the rose."

The scene each vision brings  
Of beauty in decay,  
Of fair and early-fading things,  
Too exquisite to stay.

Of loves that are no more;  
Of flowers whose bloom has fled;  
Of farewells wept upon the shore;  
Of friends estranged or dead.

Of all that now may seem  
To memory's tearful eye  
The vanished raptures of a dream,  
Or which we gaze and sigh.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### A THRILLING SKETCH FROM LIFE.

#### THE HUNTER'S FEAST.

Captain Mayne Reid, in his "Hunter's Feast," gives the following graphic account of a thrilling adventure he had on one of our wild western rivers. While in search of the scarlet ibis, his boat floated away, and left him on a barren island. He tells his story thus:

"I lay in a state of stupor, almost unconscious, how long I know not; but many hours, I am certain. I knew that by the sun; it was going down when I awoke, if I may so term the recovery of my stricken senses. I was aroused by a strange circumstance; I was surrounded by dark objects of hideous shape and hideous reptiles were there. They had been before my eyes for some time, but I had not seen them. I had only a sort of dreamy consciousness of their presence; but I heard them at length; my ear was in better tune, and the strange noises they uttered reached my intellect.

I seemed like the blowing of great bells, with now and then a note harder and louder, like the roaring of a bull. This startled me, and I looked up and bent my eyes upon the objects; they were forms of the crocodile, the giant lizard—they were alligators. Huge ones they were, some of them; and many were they in number—a hundred at least were crawling over the islet, before, behind, and on all sides around me. Their long giant jaws and channelled snouts projected forward so as almost to touch my body; and their eyes, usually leaden, seemed now to glare. Impelled by this new danger, I sprang to my feet, when, recognizing the upright form of a man, the reptiles scuttled off, and plunging hurriedly into the lake, hid their hideous bodies under the water.

The incident in some measure revived me. I saw that I was not alone; there was company even in the crocodiles. I gradually became more myself, and began to reflect with some degree of coolness on the circumstances that surrounded me. My eyes wandered over the islet; every inch of it came under my glance; every object upon it was scrutinized; the moulted feathers of wild fowl, the pieces of sand, the fresh-water muscles (unias) strewn upon the beach—all were examined. Still the barren answer, no means of escape.

The islet was but the head of a sand-bar, formed by the eddy, perhaps gathered together within the year. It was bare of herbage, with the exception of a few tufts of grass.—There was neither tree nor bush upon it—not a stick. A raft, indeed! There was not wood enough to make a raft that would have floated a frog. The idea of a raft was but briefly entertained; such a thought had certainly crossed my mind, but a single glance around the islet dispelled it before it had taken shape. I paced my prison from end to end; from side to side I walked it over. I tried the water's depth; on all sides I sounded it, wading recklessly in; everywhere it deepened rapidly as I advanced. Three lengths of myself from the islet's edge, and I was up to the neck. The huge reptiles swam around, snorting and blowing; they were bolder in this element. I could not have waded safely ashore, even had the water been shallow. To swim it—no—even though I swam like a duck, they would have closed upon and quivered me before I could have made a dozen strokes. Horrified by their demonstrations, I turned back upon dry ground, and paced the islet with dripping garments. I continued walking until night, which gathered round me dark and dismal. With night came new voices of the nocturnal swamp; the qu-quas of the night heron, the screech of the swamp owl, the cry of the bittern, the el-luk of the great water-turtle, the tinkling of the bull frog and the chirp of the savanna cricket, all fell upon my ear.— Sounds still harsher and more hideous were heard around me—the splashing of the alligator, and the roaring of his voice; these reminded me that I must not go to sleep. To sleep! I durst not have slept for a single instant. Even when I lay for a few minutes motionless, the

dark reptiles came crawling round me, so close that I could have put forth my hand, and touched them.

At intervals, I sprang to my feet, shouted, swept my gun around, and chased them back to the water, into which they betook themselves with a sullen plunge, but with little semblance of fear. At each fresh demonstration on my part, they showed less alarm, until I could no longer drive them, either with shouts or threatening gestures. They only retreated a few feet, forming an irregular circle round me.

Thus hemmed in, I became frightened in turn. I loaded my gun, and fired. I killed none.— They are impervious to a bullet, except in the eye or under the fore-arm. It was too dark to aim at these parts; and my shots glanced harmlessly from the pyramidal scales of their bodies. The loud report, however, and the blaze, frightened them, and they fled, to return again after a long interval. I was asleep when they returned; I had gone to sleep in spite of my efforts to keep awake. I was startled by the touch of something cold; and, half-stifled by the strong musky odor that filled the air, I threw out my arms. My fingers rested upon an object slippery and clammy; it was one of those monsters—one of gigantic size. He had crawled close along side me, and was preparing to make his attack, as I saw that he was bent in form of a bow, and I knew that these creatures assumed that attitude when about to strike their victim. I was just in time to spring aside, and avoid the stroke of his powerful tail, that the next moment swept the ground where I had lain. Again I fired, and he, with the rest, once more retreated on the lake.

All thoughts of going to sleep were at an end. Not that I felt wakeful; on the contrary, wearied with my day's exertions—for I had had a long pull under a tropical sun—I could have laid down upon the earth, in the mud, anywhere, and slept in an instant. Nothing but the dread certainty of my peril kept me awake. Once again before morning, I was compelled to battle with the hideous reptiles, and chased them away with a shot from my gun.

Morning came at length, but with no change in my perilous position. The light only showed me my island prison, but revealed no way of escape from it. Indeed, the change could not be called for the better, for the fervid rays of an almost vertical sun poured down upon me until my skin blistered. I was already speckled by the bites of a thousand swarms of mosquitoes that all night had preyed upon me. There was not a cloud in the heavens to shade me; and the sun-beams smote the surface of the dead bayou with a double intensity.

Towards the evening I began to hunger; no wonder at that. I had not eaten since leaving the village settlement. To assuage thirst, I drank the water of the lake, turbid and slimy as it was. I drank it in large quantities, for it was hot, and only moistened my palate, without quenching the craving of my appetite. Of water there was enough; I had more fear from want of food. What could I eat? The ibis. But how to cook it? There was nothing where-with to make a fire—not a stick. No matter for that. Cooking is a modern invention, a luxury for pampered palates. I divested the ibis of his brilliant plumage, and ate it raw. I spoiled my specimen, but at the time there was little thought of that. There was not much of the naturalist left in me. I anatomized the hour I had ever promised to procure the bird; I wished my friend up to his neck in a swamp. The ibis did not weigh above three pounds, bones and all. It served me for a sound meal, a breakfast; but of this *déjeuner sans fourchette* I picked the bones.

What next? Starve? No—not yet. In the battles I had had with the alligators during the second night, one of them had received a shot that proved mortal. The hideous carcass of the reptile lay dead on the beach. I need not starve; I could eat that. Such were my reflections. I must hunger, though, before I could bring myself to touch the musky morsel. Two days more fasting conquered my squeamishness; I drew out my knife, cut a steak from the alligator's tail, and ate it—not the one I had first killed, but a second; the other was now putrid, rapidly decomposing under the hot sun. Its odor filled the islet. The stench had grown intolerable. There was not a breath of air stirring; otherwise I might have slugged it by keeping to windward. The whole atmosphere of the islet, as well as a large circle round it, was impregnated with the fearful effluvia. I could bear it no longer. With the aid of my gun, I pushed the half-decomposed carcass into the lake. Perhaps the current might carry it away. It did; I had the satisfaction to see it float off. The circumstance led me into a train of reflections. Why did the body of the alligator float? It was swollen, inflated with gases. Ha!

An idea shot suddenly through my mind—one of those bright ideas, the children of necessity. I thought of the floating alligator, of its intestines—what if I inflated them? Yes, yes! boys and bladders, floats and life-preservers! that was the thought. I would open the alligator, make a booby of their intestines, and that would bear me from the islet!

I did not lose a moment's time; I was full of energy; hope had given me new life. My gun was loaded—a huge crocodile that swam near the shore received the shot in his eye. I dragged him on the beach; with a knife I laid open the entrails. Few they were, but enough for my purpose. A plume-quill from the wing of the

ibis served me for a blow-pipe. I saw the bladder like skin expand, until I was surrounded by objects like great sausages. These were tied together and fastened to my body, and then with a plunge I entered the waters of the lake, and floated downward. I had tied on my life-preservers in such a way that I sat in the water in an upright position, holding my gun with both hands. This I intended to use as a club in case I should be attacked by the alligators; but I had chosen the hot hour of noon when the creatures lie in a half-torpid state, and to my joy I was not molested. Half an hour's drifting with the current carried me to the end of the lake, and I found myself at the *débarcadere* of the bayou. Here, to my great delight I saw my boat in the swamp, where it had been caught and held fast by the sedge. A few moments more, and I had swung myself over the gunwale and was sculling with eager strokes down the smooth waters of the bayou.

### A THRILLING NARRATIVE.

In the fall of 1846, I was traveling eastward in a stage coach from Pittsburg over the mountains. My fellow passengers were two gentlemen and a lady. The elder gentleman's appearance interested me exceedingly. In years he seemed about thirty—in air and manner, he was calm, dignified and polished, and the contour of his features was singularly intellectual. He conversed freely on different topics, until the road became more abrupt and precipitous; but on my directing his attention to the great altitude of a precipice, on the verge of which our coach wheels were leisurely rolling, there came a marked change of his countenance.— His eyes, lately filled with the light of intelligence, became wild, restless and anxious—the mouth twitched spasmodically, and the forehead was beaded with a cold perspiration.— With a sharp, convulsive shudder, he turned his gaze from the giddy height, and clutching my arm with both his hands, he hung to me like a drowning man. "Use this cologne," said the lady, handing me a bottle, with the instinctive goodness of her sex.

I sprinkled a little on his face, and he soon became more composed—but it was not until we had entirely traversed the mountain, and descended into the country beneath, that his fine features relaxed from their perturbed look, and assumed the placid, quiet dignity that I had first noticed.

"I owe an apology to the lady," said he with a bland smile and gentle inclination of the head to our fair companion, "and some explanation to my fellow traveler, also; and perhaps I cannot better acquit myself of the double debt than by recounting the cause of my recent agitation."

"It may pain your feelings," delicately urged the lady.

"On the contrary, it will relieve them," was the respectful reply.

Having signified our several desires to hear more, the traveller thus proceeded:—

"At the age of eighteen, I was light of heart, light of foot, and I fear, (he smiled) light of head. A fine property on the banks of the Ohio acknowledged me the sole owner. I was hastening home to enjoy it, and delighted to get free from a college life. The month was October, the air bracing, and mode of conveyance a stage coach like this, only more cumbersome. The other passengers were few—only three in all—one an old grey-headed planter of Louisiana, his daughter, a joyous, bewitching creature about seventeen and his son, about ten years of age.

They were just returning from France, of which country the young lady discoursed in terms so eloquent as to absorb my entire attention.

The father was taciturn, but the daughter vivacious by nature, and we soon became so mutually pleased with each other—she as the talker, and I as the listener—that it was not until a sudden flash of lightning and a heavy dash of rain against the window elicited an exclamation from my charming companion, that I knew how the night passed us. Presently there came a low rumbling sound, and then several tremendous peals of thunder, accompanied by successive flashes of lightning. The rain descended in torrents, and an angry wind began to howl and moan through the forest trees.

I looked from the window of our vehicle.— The night was dark as ebony, but the lightning showed the danger of our road. We were on the edge of a frightful precipice. I could see at intervals, huge jetting rocks far away down its side, and the sight made me solicitous for the safety of my fair companion. I thought of the mere hair breadths that were between us and eternity; a single little rock in the track of our coach wheels—a tiny billet of wood—a stray root of a tempest-torn tree—restive horses, or a careless driver—any of these might hurl us from our sublunary existence with the speed of thought.

"'Tis a perfect tempest," observed the lady, as I withdrew my head from the window. "How I love a sudden storm! there is something so grand among the winds when fairly loose among the hills. I never encountered a night like this, but Byron's magnificent description of a thunder storm in the *Jura* recurs to my mind. But are we on the mountains yet?"

"Yes, we have begun the ascent."  
"Is it not said to be dangerous?"  
"By no means," I replied, in as easy a tone as I could assume.

"I only wish it was daylight, that we might enjoy the mountain scenery. But what's that?" and she covered her eyes from the glare of a sheet of lightning that illuminated the rugged mountain with brilliant intensity. Peal after peal of crashing thunder instantly succeeded; there was a volume of rain coming down at each thunder burst, and, with the deep moaning of an animal breaking upon our ears, I found the coach had come to a dead halt.

Louise, my beautiful fellow traveler, became as pale as ashes. She fixed her searching eyes on mine with a look of anxious dread, and turning to her father, hurriedly remarked:—  
"We are on the mountains."

"I reckon we are," was the unconcerned reply.

With instinctive activity I put my head through the window and called to the driver; but the only answer was the moaning of an animal borne past me by the swift wind of the tempest. I seized the handle of the door, and strained in vain—it would not yield a jot. At that instant I felt a cold hand on mine, and heard Louise's voice faintly articulating in my ear the following appalling words:—  
"The coach is being moved backwards!"

Never shall I forget the fierce agony with which I tugged at the coach door, and called on the driver in tones that rivaled the force of the blast, whilst the dreadful conviction was burning on my brain that the coach was being moved backwards!

What followed was of such swift occurrence that it seems to me like a frightful dream.

I rushed against the door with all my force, but it withstood my utmost efforts. One side of our vehicle was sensibly going down, down, down. The moaning of the agonized animal became deeper, and I knew from his desperate plunges against the traces that it was one of our horses. Crash upon crash of coarse thunder rolled over the mountain, and vivid sheets of lightning played round our devoted carriage, as if in gloe of our misery. By this light I could see for a moment—only for a moment—the old planter standing erect, with his hands on his son and daughter, his eyes raised to Heaven, and his lips moving like those of one in prayer. I could see Louise turn her ashy cheeks towards me as if imploring protection; and I could see the bold glance of the young boy flashing defiance at the descending carriages, the war of elements, and the awful danger that surrounded him. There was a roll—a desperate plunge, as of an animal in the last throes of dissolution—a harsh, grating jar—a sharp, piercing scream of mortal terror, and I had but time to grasp Louise firmly with one hand around the waist, and seize the leather fastenings attached to the coach roof with the other, when we were precipitated over the precipice.

I can distinctly recollect preserving consciousness, for a few seconds of time, how rapidly my breath was being exhausted, but of that tremendous descent I soon lost all further knowledge by a concussion so violent that I was instantly deprived of sense and motion."

The traveler paused. His features worked for a minute or two as they did when we were on the mountain; he pressed his hands across his forehead, as if in pain, and then resumed his interesting narrative:—  
"On a low couch, in a humble room of a small country house, I next opened my eyes in this world of light and shade, joy and sorrow, of mirth and sadness. Gentle hands soothed my pillow, gentle feet glided across my chamber, and a gentle voice hushed for a time all my questioning. I was kindly attended by a fair young girl about fifteen, who refused for a length of time to hold any discourse with me. At length, one morning, finding myself sufficiently recovered to sit up, I insisted on learning the result of the accident."

"You were discovered," said she, "sitting on a ledge of rocks, amidst the branches of a shattered tree, clinging to the roof of your broken coach with one hand, and to the insensible form of a lady with the other."  
"And the lady?" I gasped with an earnestness that caused her to draw back and blush.  
"She was saved, sir, by the means that saved you—the friendly tree."

"And her father and brother?" I impatiently demanded.

"We found them both crushed to pieces, at the bottom of a precipice, a great way below where my father and uncle Joe found the lady. We buried their bodies in one grave, close by the clover patch, down in our meadow ground."

"God pity her, indeed, sir," said the young girl, with a dash of heartfelt sympathy. "Would you like to see her?" she added. I found the orphan bathed in tears, by the grave of her buried kindred. She received me with sorrowful sweetness of manner. I need not detain your attention by detailing the efforts I made to win her from her grief, but briefly acquaint you, that at last succeeded in inducing her to leave her forlorn home in the sunny South, and that twelve months after the dreadful occurrence which I have related, we stood at the altar as man and wife. She still lives to bless my love with smiles, and my children with her good precepts; but on the anniversary of that terrible night, she secludes herself in her room, and devotes the hours of darkness to solitary prayer. "As for me," added the traveler, while the faint flush tinged his noble brow at the recital, "as for me, that accident has reduced me to the condition of a physical coward at the sight of a mountain precipice."

"But the driver," asked our lady passenger, who had attended to the recital of the story with much attention, "what became of the driver? or did you ever learn the reason of his deserting his post?"  
"His body was found on the road, within a few steps of the spot where the coach went over. He had been struck dead by the same flash of lightning that blinded the restive horses."

### BISHOP HUGHES CASTING OUT DEVILS.

Among the more ignorant and easily deluded portion of our miserable dupes, the Romish priests often pretend to work miracles. Indeed, as they claim the power at all times to convert a small wafer made of flour, into the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ, and their poor, wretched devotees are required to believe it, we need not be surprised at their faith in any, even the most monstrous imposture.

It seems Bishop Hughes, of New York, some time since, tried his hand at miracle working on a large scale. The following is from the American Protestant, which vouches for its reliability:—

"Being discharged from the United States frigate *Macedonian* in May, 1845, from Brooklyn Navy Yard, and having a hammock, mattress, and other necessary bedclothes, which I did not then need, I concluded, rather than sell them for a mere trifle, I would give them to some of my countrymen who I knew needed such.—I inquired therefore after a certain Michael Sullivan, with whose wife and himself I had been intimate from infancy until they left Ireland.—Sullivan then lived in Water street, and worked in the Screw Dock. In connection with other trials which he had to encounter in past life, he referred to his wife's intemperance. I asked him if he had not endeavored to reclaim her thro' the mediation of a pledge.

"Och sir, all the pledges in New York would have no effect on her."  
"How do you know," said I, "if you have not tried?"  
"I know it well, sir, for I have tried something of greater value, and if you will say nothing to her I will tell you all about it. Last year my life was a burthen with this woman. She drank all I saved from my earnings before I knew it, and, to crown the rest, she pawned my Sunday clothes. I felt convinced she must be possessed of an unnatural spirit. So I took her to the Bishop—"

"What Bishop?"  
"To Bishop Hughes—and told him my woeful tale, and also what I thought was the cause of it. The Bishop assured me she not only had one, but she actually had seven devils. I became frightened almost to death. I firmly believe there was not then on the face of the earth a man more sorrowful, terrified and perplexed than I. My three little children were helpless and destitute, and if I had the benefit of my clergy (extreme unction) I would prefer death to life, that I may not behold their miserable condition. I told his reverence so. He told me I must take courage. In the language of despair I asked him what could be done. He told me he did not at present see that anything could be done. I asked him in the name of Almighty God and the blessed Virgin, to do something for her. He made no answer, which still increased my alarm. From the perplexity of my mind I forgot to make an offering, so I saw at once the reason he did nothing for her. He I suppose did not wish to ask me, and knowing it would have no effect if not paid for, I offered him one dollar. He asked me if I could give no more. I told him I had to borrow that even from one of the men that worked with me. He told me it was not enough; but seeing I had no more and was poor, he would accept it and cure her. He put on his stole, got his book and holy water, got her to kneel down, made the sign of the cross on her forehead, mouth, breast and back. He read awhile, then spoke some words to himself, with his eyes lifted upwards. He then breathed into her mouth, nostrils and ears. She instantly turned pale, and seemed for a moment insensible. In a few moments she seemed to recover. He asked her to show her tongue. She did. He pulled it, and then commanded the lying spirit to come out of her. After this she looked more like an angel than a human being. She then asked leave of his reverence to make an open confession before him and me. He told her to go on. She did, and told some things which astonished me, and she assured me nothing short of the Spirit of God could compel or induce her to tell them. He also got her to sign the pledge of total abstinence, and gave me a medal, and told me I might now take her home, assuring me in the meantime, she would trouble me no longer. I brought her home, and though I had to go to bed without supper, I never experienced a happier night.—What was more strange, not one of the children seemed to want a bit to eat though they were fasting since morning.

The next morning I gave her directions to borrow something from M. Driscoll's wife, that would get us some dinner, and went to work without breakfast, with my heart at ease. I came home at noon, expecting that she had something provided for me to eat. But, as I joyfully opened the door, behold, the first thing that caught my eye was my wife lying full length on the floor, as drunk as ever, and her medial shining among the ashes in the fire place. I have only to say that she was before possessed of seven devils, which is now possessed of seventy."

### FALLACIES ABOUT EDITORS.

BY "ONE OF 'EM."

The popular idea of an editor is, a miserable man, perpetually tormented with the task of finding material to "fill up" a newspaper—a bottomless abyss, that is as incapable of overflowing as the cup of happiness. Out of this yawning gulf there is supposed to issue periodically a devil. Day and night the insatiable fiend is said to haunt him, and scream in his ears for "Copy, more copy."

It is no such thing. There is no such man. There is no abyss, and no devil. It is a humbug—every word of it. The last apprehension that ever flits through the brain of an editor—and there are a great many—is the apprehension that "there will not be enough to fill up with."

Not enough to fill up! Does not Congress sit nine months of the year? Do they not spend three-fourths of the time in making long speeches of not the slightest interest to anybody in the world? No body listens to them when they are made. Nobody reads them afterward. What then are they for? Clearly to print—to fill up newspapers.

Are there not telegraphs in operation all over the land, bringing in important rumors of startling events to-day, to be followed by equally important contradictions of them to-morrow? If there is any one thing the public like better than having a mystery explained, it is being mystified over again with a new one. Now, how could this be done so frequently and effectually as by having newspapers to disseminate telegraphs, and telegraphs to fill up newspapers.

Are there not conventions, and convocations, and assemblies, and meetings—some benevolent, some indignant, some hilarious, and all large and enthusiastic—constantly going on, and devising all manner of short cuts across lots to the millennium, which it is of the utmost importance that the world should take immediately? Do not the eloquent gentlemen who invariably address them always happen to have in their pocket an elaborately-written rough draft of what they said, which they would not have published on any consideration? Do they not always kindly consent to waive their personal feelings, out of regard to the editor and the public, notwithstanding it is so defective? What is this but a method of filling up newspapers?

Are there not piles and piles of exchange papers lying on the table, lying on the chairs, lying on the floor of the editorial sanctum, every one of which presents its readers this week with the very best and latest original and selected matter? Are there not scissors lying at the editorial elbow?

And above all, are there not hosts of kind friends who every day send in long communications, each one of which relates to the most important topic in the world, and therefore the one which ought to be written about first? Do they not generally allow them to be published for nothing? Do they not do all this solely with a view to save the editor trouble, and to fill up his paper?

Instead of there not being enough to fill up, it is just the other way. There is too much.— The trouble is to cut it down, pare off the edges shorn in the ends, and leave out the middle, so as to get it all in. Show me an editor and I will show you a man that, twelve times a day, laments that his paper is so small. More things happen in a day than can be published in a week. There is no limit to news; but newspapers, alas, are bounded by feet and inches.

THE NEW POSTAGE LAW.—Every person being interested in the amended act of the third March, 1855, in regard to postage, a synopsis of its provision will not be unacceptable.

Under this law all single letters mailed for any distance not exceeding three thousand miles are to pay three cents, and for any distance exceeding three thousand miles ten cents.

Half an ounce in weight will constitute a single letter; and double, treble, and quadruple letters to be charged in the same proportion.

All letters must be pre-paid, except such as are to or from a foreign country or those addressed to officers of the government on official business.

The law is to take effect from and after the next fiscal quarter.

After the first of January next, the postmasters are to affix stamps upon all pre-paid letters upon which none are placed by the writers.

A registration of valuable letters is required to be made upon the payment of a fee of five cents in addition to the pre-paid postage, but the Government will not be responsible for the loss of any registered letter or packet.

The franking privilege is to remain as heretofore.

Selling postage stamps for a larger sum than their marked value is to be punished as a misdemeanor.

WHICH HE WOULD TAKE.—A gentleman was once walking in a street, when he met a stone cutter whom he thus addressed:

"My good fellow, if the devil was to come now which of us would he take?"  
After a little hesitation, the man replied:  
"Me, sir."

Annoyed by this reply, the querist asked him for a reason.

"Because, yer honor, he would be glad to ketch meself—sure; and he'd have you at any time."

SLEIGH RIDING.—SQUEEZING THE WRONG HAND.—Remember the girls while the snow lasts. Remember there is no place to make love like the inside of buffalo skin. You can tread on one another's toes, and squeeze one another's hands, without any one being the wiser for it.—*Syracuse Journal*.

It does make some difference, however, whose hand you get hold of. That was demonstrated years since. It is no matter just when the case occurred, nor just when. It was in a cold country, where day after day, the sun upon the south side of the roof, is as unmelting as a miser's heart, and where the smoke stands up solid as if built on the chimney-tops, and the sleigh runners creak upon the tarnished path, as if the happy song and bells were gliding over crushed spirits. It was in a country where there are no formal, selfish cities, but social, happy villages, and winter evenings are bright as day out-of-doors, and light as joy-in-doors.

It is no matter, either, whose experience it was that we propose to relate—the incident is "certain true," and it has a moral. Be sure you know whose hand you hold.

Well, once upon a time, as we said, it was winter, and a happy land were returning in a sleigh from a party. Such a sleigh, a big stage sleigh, with stuffed seats, double curtains, hold sixteen easy, going to a party, and not ruffle a tuck, and hold thirty easy, going home from a party, and not ruffle a tuck either. These were month sleighs, made to run as long as an old fashioned bank accommodating paper, to be used when there was six weeks sleighing in March. Well, the party "was out," and the sleigh was "loading up," and our friend arranged it satisfactorily, so as to be seated by the girl next to him. It was a middle seat, and the back straps are always too high up, and there were a great many "thank-y-marms," in the road. A "thank-y-marm," is one of those cradle lodes, without which, sleigh riding is of no account.— When the sleigh "pitches in," you pitch over the dash-board, and when the horses "jerk" the sleigh out, the whole load goes over into the back seat. [We always preferred the back seat in a thank-y-marm country, so as to keep the girls from "spilling out."] Well, as we were saying, the sleigh was loaded, the light gleamed from the open air, like "ginger-pop," the six horses dashed off, and the jovial load sang—

"'Tis my delight of a shiny night!"

Soon a "thank-y-marm" was reached; our friend knew it was a deep one, and the strap, as we said before, was high up, and of course he put his arm around his next neighbor, and she declared she would have pitched into the snow but for that good strap. That encouraged our friend in his work of love, and a little soft hand grasped his, and he held on, and when the "thank-y-marms" came—and they were very thick on the way home—the little soft hand acknowledged the kindness by a gentle recognition, and our friend was happy. The ride was four miles—how they had shortened since going to the party—how much had been accomplished in that four miles, and our friend said to himself, it is a slander to say that the "course of true love never did run smooth," it is good sledding all the way. But the house of our friend was reached, and a sister who sat next beyond the little soft hand, reached forward and said, "brother, if you will get my hand I'll get out."

A "thank-y-marm," deep enough to bury our friend in, would just then have been welcome.

MORAL.—Be sure you know whose hand you hold before you squeeze it.—*Cleveland Herald*.

A SINGED CAT.—The New York and Erie Railroad Office, in this City, was on Thursday the scene of an incident which is worthy of being recorded with the events of the day—not only because it was a good joke, but because it bears on its face a moral.

An old man enters the office—in age apparently verging on three-score; his clothes are of coarse texture, ventilated in some places, and rather dingy withal; his head, with its long, grey locks, is covered with a hard-worn beaver; his face, the lower part of which is ornamented with a grizzly-grey beard, has an humble appearance, and his dull eyes have an imploring expression; he has a folded paper in his hand, and, advancing to the desk of the first Clerk, he extends it.

Clerk—Go away, sir; I haven't anything for you.

Old man—(Brightening up with a look of surprise)—But, sir—

Clerk—No buts about it; I tell you I have nothing for you. Go out.

The old man, with a mingled look of surprise and indignation, passes on to the desk of another Clerk, and offers the paper.

Clerk—Don't interrupt me, sir; get out of the office; I give nothing to beggars.

The truth begins to reveal itself to the old man's understanding; that last word has re-kindled the fires of his youth; his face glows, and his eyes flash with indignation; he is about to retort sharply upon the man who called him a "beggar," when a third party interferes, and directs him to the Cashier, to whom the old man hands the papers. The Cashier unfolds them, and finds, instead of begging certificates, New York and Erie Railroad Income Bonds to the amount of ten thousand dollars! Cashier looks surprised—the old man demands his money.—Clerk No. 1 takes a seat on the cross-bar