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THE NEWS.

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THE OLD KEEPER'S STORY.

It was a quaint room in which I sat, with the firelight flashing into each corner and the stuffed birds, foxes, and polecats looking like life in the leaping blaze. A quaint cottage-room, but the essence of comfort. As I pulled at the stiff glass of whisky and water and puffed my mierschaum, I felt excessively comfortable. I was in no hurry to get my wet water boots dried, which lay steaming on the ample hearth.

My temporary host sat opposite; a fine, athletic old man, with snow-white hair and whiskers. The cut of his coat and the wary look on his weather-beaten, honest face sufficiently told the ex-game-keeper, had not the retriever pup at his feet and the gun behind him added evidence. A fine specimen of his class, he was well-knit and active even at eighty years of age, and with a frank, cherry look in his eyes that told of straightforward truth and worth.

I had been snipe-shooting on some marshes I rented of the lady of the manor, and having got wet in a deep rivulet of a fall, had sought shelter in the keeper's cottage. To be a sportsman was of course a passport to his favor, added to which his grandson, Tom, was my invariable attendant and bag-carrier. The old man I had seen but once, save when, on my renting the shooting from Lady Linwood, he and her head keeper had shown me the boundaries. The great hall was closed; for Lady Linwood, a childless widow, lived permanently at Nice, and her fair estates were all let. She was the widow of a poor lieutenant-colonel, knighted for gallant service, and had succeeded to the property in lack of direct heirs.

Seaman, my host, was something more than head-keeper. Evidently he had been one of those trusted ancient servants to whom the honor and welfare of a family are as dear as to its own members. And by the sad look on his face whenever he spoke of the squires of Linwood, I fancied some portion of the family history was mournful and unhappy.

'Do you see much of Lady Linwood?' I asked.

'Never, sir. She is always abroad. And there's never been a Linwood here since the last squire died.'

'That was long ago?'

'Yes, sir, long ago. Five and forty years agone, sir,' he said musingly, his eyes fixed on the fire. "Five and forty years agone—and like yesterday.'

I was interested. The keeper's manner, diction, and expression were all unlike his class, and I felt curiosity, as we all do when something tells us of a hidden history.

'I suppose the last squire had a good stock of game?' said I.

'Yes, sir. Hundreds of pheasants he turned out. I was a youngster then—underkeeper—and I used to fetch the sacks of barley for 'em.'

'And he was much of a sportsman?'

'Yes, sir; with gun, rod, and horse he wasn't equalled in all the country round. He was a tall, fine man, with coal-black hair and whiskers, pleasant and kind to the tenants, but with a fearful temper if anything went wrong. He'd rave, and swear, and smash all round him in the room when he was in one of his storms. The only person who could manage him was Miss Dora.'

Here the keeper became silent, and a look of deep sadness came over his rugged face.

'You'll have to stay a longish time, sir, for your things are soaked. So, if you like to hear it, I'll tell you the story. I suppose. I'm like old men, sir, and like to maunder,' he added with a smile of such natural dignity and courtesy as might have befitted a prince.

'Mr. George Linwood five and forty years ago was the squire. He lived here with his mother, a gentle lady. She was always on her sofa, and never well, but as kind as an angel to the poor. Miss Dora Maitland, her niece, came to stay up at the ball with them. Her parents were very poor, and she'd six sisters; so they were glad—Miss Dora's parents, I mean—when Mrs. Linwood said she'd adopt her as her daughter. I heard this, you know, from the lady's maid at the hall who was afterwards my wife. She died years ago.' And the old man sighed, and looked at an empty chair near his own.

'Well, sir,' he resumed, 'Miss Dora came, and Mrs. Linwood was very fond of her. So was every body, for she was so sweet and gentle and her voice was like a blackbird's. Every body about the estate knew Miss Dora, and she'd go about in her broad hat, for all the world like a blackbird in a holly. The cottagers all knew Miss Dora, for whenever any one was ill, there she was, petting and cossetting them.

'So, sir,' resumed the old man, after a pause, 'by-and-by Mr George became fond of Miss Dora. He used to follow her about and watch all her wishes. He broke her in a chestnut filly himself, and used to ride with her. But she seemed always shy of him. His temper was so shifty, and she'd heard his awful curses once when he was bitterly angry, though he didn't know she was hearing; and she seemed to shrink from him. She was such a beauty—golden hair, and eyes, sir, just like the sky on a clear day, such a deep, clear blue, while her complexion the village girls used to call roses and lilies. I've heard it said that a celebrated portait-painter came down to paint her face, and showed the sketch in London as that of the greatest beauty he'd seen anywhere.

'Mrs. Linwood, sir, the servants could see, was very anxious about Mr. George. She'd murmur to herself for hours about him, and she was always looking at him and Miss Dora so wistful-like, as if she did not dare say what was on her tongue. So things went on, till one day a company of soldiers marched into the village. The officer in command was invited by Mr. Linwood to dine, and he did so, but he didn't see Mrs. Linwood or Miss Dora, for they both were ill with colds, and they staid up stairs. The officer was a handsome young man, with keen gray eyes and a quiet manner, and a look like real honesty about him, sir. And Mr. Linwood asked him to come when he could get leave, and shoot.

Well, by-and-by he came—Captain Calton was his name—and he wore the Waterloo medal, for he'd been in the thick of that; and he came late one night, and after dressing (so Polly, my poor wife, then lady's maid, said) he came into the drawing room. There were Mrs. Linwood and Miss Dora. The squire introduced him; when suddenly Captain Calton grew very much agitated, and Miss Dora gave a little shriek, and then looked so charming that half an eye might see, Polly said, where her heart was.

'The squire didn't see this, and fortunately, too, for only the day before he'd asked Miss Dora to marry him, and she'd cried bitterly, and refused. And the Squire had gone off duck hunting with me, but he laid his gun down in the punt, and kept staring sternly at the air and muttering. You may guess, sir, I held my tongue.

'Well, sir, at dinner—so the butler said—nothing much was said, for Captain Calton seemed very silent, as did Miss Dora. The Squire drank a good deal and talked about the shooting and fishing, but now and then he looked at his cousin with such a wild, eager, terrible look, and she blushed like a rose each time he caught her eye.

After dinner, when Polly was putting some embroidery away in the cabinet at the drawing-room, she heard Miss Dora tell Mrs. Linwood enough to find out that Captain Calton was her old lover whom she'd met at Bath with her family, and that they were to be married when he was rich enough. Polly could not help hearing it sir; all women are curious about lovers,' continued the old man, smiling; 'but she loved Miss Dora with all her heart. and wouldn't have said a word for the world.

'Several days went on, and the Squire and the Captain came out shooting, and Dick Smith, the head keeper, and I used to go with 'em.

'One day Miss Dora came down in a little pony-carriage with the luncheon. The Squire was just finishing his beat of a copse, but Captain Calton was outside. When Miss Dora came up, he took her hand and kissed it. But I saw him, though I wasn't such a booby as to show myself. What was worse, sir, the Squire saw it through the hazel bushes, and her pretty face blush and look happy.

'I heard him grind his teeth where I stood, and whisper a curse. Did you ever hear one *whispered*, sir? It makes a man creep all over!

'Presently he came out with a very jolly air, and after luncheon he drank Miss Dora's health, and then the Captain's. Afterwards, when he began beating, he told the Captain that he wanted to speak to him. I was carring the bag, and the Squire spoke in a bluff sort o' way; and so I heard all.

'My cousin's a pretty girl,' said he.

'Yes', said Captain Calton, nervously-like, sir, and I saw his hand quiver.

'Ah, well,' said the Squire heartily, 'I used to be jealous; for I always admired Dora; that I did. But what's the use *now*? Never mind, old fellow, I wish you joy of her; you must excuse my temper, it's a devilish bad one.'

'That was truer than he thought, sir,' said the old man, musingly.

'Captain Calton answered him very friendly and the matter seemed all right.

'The Squire was in a dreadful temper next day with Dick and me because we had not killed some stray dogs that had been driving the woods.

'He was very savage against poachers, and swore he'd have spring-guns put for the dogs in all the open runs of the copses.

"So matters went on till just before Christmas, when a large party of neighbors of the Squire came up to shoot over the pheasant covers.

"We had no peace night or day. All the spring-guns and dog-traps were taken up; damaged raisins put in all the runs to toll the pheasant there, and the woods watched every night. On the night before, we met the Squire, who gave us a curse or two for running against him as he came round the copse; he'd been looking after the raisins, he said; for he was a good hand at seeing his orders carried out.

"The next day all the party went from the hall to the woods; only the Captain he loitered to have a few words with Miss Dora. He drew her back to the hall and kissed her; and I shall never forget the way she clasped his hands and looked—not saying a word—into his eyes. The Squire saw it, and I saw his face. It was dreadful to see, for he had almost bit his lip in two. He pretended not to see them, and walked after the party.

"The Squire, sir, was very particular in his shooting parties about every one going where he wished. If you didn't he'd let you know it in some way. So now he gave everybody instructions where to go. And Captain Calton he told to take a ride which was narrow and through hollies, but a good one for woodcocks. He himself went into the centre of the copse with me, and Dick Smith headed the beaters at the end.

"Well, sir, the beating, and the pheasants got up well, and there were several shots fired. 'Twas odd for me that the Squire never shot anything, though, for all that several birds flew by him. I didn't dare to speak though, for he looked so stern.

"By-and-by, he turned and saw Captain Calton in another part. He swore, but I took no notice.

'We'll beat this wood again before lunch,' he said; so, of course, we all came out after an hour—during which the Squire missed everything. We went back to the woods.'

Here the old keeper paused and drew a deep breath.

'What's coming,' he said. 'has never been out of my mind for fifty years—not a day or night, I assure you.'

"We came back to the copse, and were put in our old positions. The Squire told the Captain to take Holly Ride again.

'I suppose Dora will be here soon with luncheon,' he said, with a laugh.

'Soon enough—soon enough,' said the Squire, with a dreadful sort of laugh, and his black eyes gleaming like coals.

'The shooting went on; suddenly a shot sounded from near the Holly Ride.

'What's that?' said the Squire suddenly.

'Captain's shot a cock, sir, outside the copse,' said Dick Smith, quietly winking at me, for he knew how savage the Squire was at men changing positions.

'Here comes Miss Dora,' said I; 'she's coming through the Holly Ride.'

What!' 'screamed the Squire, as he wheeled round and saw her. 'Dora! Dora! not there! Back, for heaven's sake, back!'

"But she didn't hear him, for the spaniels were in full cry, and the beater's voices drowned the Squire's.

'He flung down his gun and rushed towards her.

'Dora!' he screamed, sir—that's the word—'stop, you're——'

'Before he got the word out, sir, there was a little report like a pistol. A wreath of blue smoke curled upwards from Miss Maitland's feet, and she fell—fell, with her pretty white dress all streaked on the bosom with blood.

'Ah, sir,' said the old man, shuddering, 'it makes my heart cold even now.

'I ran up and lifted her. She never shrieked, only moaned once as we raised her. Her sweet face was all pinched and white with pain.

'But Captain Calton came up like a man struck dumb. He knelt down, and drew her, poor girl, on his breast; and she laid her poor head there as if she was a tired child.

"The surgeon of the village was out with us. He came up, sir, as we stood round, rough fellows as we were, all sobbing. He knelt down and looked at the wound, and then, sir, he shook his head.

'Meanwhile the Squire was being held by two men; cursing, raving, foaming, tearing at the grass, cursing himself and his birth, and calling on somebody to blow his brains out—they dragged him into the bushes, so as not to be heard by the dying girl.

'She looked up once at her lover, with her sweet blue eyes all dim. Do you know, sir, the glazing, filmy look that creeps over the eyes of those dying from gunshots? Ah, it is enough to break one's heart!

'She caught her breath several times. Her lover kept his handkerchief on the wound, but the bleeding wasn't much outwardly; only you could see her going; and she looked so beautiful—like a wax mask, sir—white as a lily.

'Poor, poor Freddy!' she murmured, and put her little hand on his heart.

'My darling!' he said; and then he gave a sob that seemed to tear his heart up, sir.

'Kiss me, my own,' she said, as her beautiful, dimming eyes, with their last look of love, were turned to his. 'I can't see—it is all dark; but I'm on your bosom, Freddy, dear—on—your bosom—love.'

"These words she murmured, one by one, and then she gave a long sigh; and it was all over.

"He took her up, sir, with such an awful look of grief on his face that he seemed turned to stone. He'd let no one touch her, and he carried her in his arms home.

'She said she was on my bosom,' he said, in a voice you wouldn't have known for his; and then he went on like a man in a dream.'

"Well, sir, there's little more to tell. The Squire only lived two years, and died in a mad-house. He set a spring-gun in the Ride, it was found, meaning it for the Captain; he went to the West Indies, I heard, and died there. That's my story, sir.

RAILWAY STORIES.

A paper on "Engine Drivers and their Ways," in Cassell's Magazine, contains the following anecdotes:

"I have alluded to a driver's coolness and resolution in an accident, but no chronicle ever has or ever will be written which will tell one tithe of the accidents which the courage and presence of mind of these men has averted. A railway ran over a river—indeed, it might be called an arm of the sea; as it was an inlet to an important harbor, provision was obliged to be made for the shipping, and so the piece of line which crossed the water at a height of seventy-five feet, was, in fact a bridge, which swung round when large vessels had to pass. I need hardly say that such a point was carefully guarded. At each end at a fitting distance, a man was placed specially to indicate whether the bridge was open or shut. One day as the express was tearing along on its up journey the driver received the usual 'all right' signal; but to his horror, on coming in full sight of the bridge, he found it was wide open, and a gulf of fatal depth yawning before him. He sounded his brake-whistle, that deep-toned scream which signals the guard, and he and his firemen held on, as before described, to the brake and regulator.—Had the rails been in the least degree slippery, any of the brakes out of order, or the driver less determined, there would then have occurred the most fearful railway accident ever known in England; but by dint of quick decision and cool courage the danger was averted; the train was brought to a stand still when the buffers of the engine absolutely and literally overhung the chasm. Three yards more, and a different result might have had to be chronicled.

"Some of my readers may remember an incident in railway history which dates back to our first great Exhibition. I mention it here for its singularity, and for my having known the driver whose coolness was so marked. In ascending a very long gradient, the hindmost carriages of the train snapped their couplings when at the top; the engine rattled on with the remainder, while these ran down the slope, which was several miles in length, with a velocity which was of course increased every moment. To make matters worse, the train next on the same line was comparatively close behind, and, in fact, shortly came in sight. The driver of this second train, a watchful and experienced hand, saw the carriages rushing towards him, divined that they were on the same line. If he continued steaming on, of course, in a couple of minutes he would come in direct collision with them, while, on the other hand, if he ran back, the carriages would probably gather such way that they would leap from the bank. So, with great presence of mind and wonderful judgment of speed, he ran back at a pace not quite as fast as the carriages were approaching, so that eventually they overtook him, and struck his moving engine with a blow that was scarcely more perceptible than the jar usually communicated by coupling on a fresh carriage. When this was done all the rest was easy; he resumed his up journey, and pushed the frightened passengers safely before him until they reached their destination, where the officials as may readily be supposed, were in a state of frantic despair at the loss of half the train.

"These anecdotes could be multiplied to almost any extent, as could the gloomy yet strangely fascinating records of accidents to men."

More Excavations at Pompeii.—A correspondent, writing from Naples, on April 20, says:

On last Friday there was an excavation in the presence of the Minister of the Royal Household, when a wonderful discovery was made. It was a kitchen that was disinterred, and on one of the *fornelli*—small square holes or fire-places, such as are in use at the present day, and are fed with charcoal—was found a copper vessel supported by a tripod. The vessel or saucepan was hermetically closed, and incrusted all over with *lappilli*, so that it required considerable force to open it. But how great was the surprise of those present to find that it was nearly full of water! The interior of the vessel presented no signs of oxidation, so that no one hesitated to taste the water, when it was found perfectly sweet and good. Pompeii, then, which has enriched us, after the lapse of nearly two thousand years, with jewels and paintings, and sculptured marbles; which has almost supplied our tables with bread and honey, eggs and figs, and a variety of other luxuries, has now slaked our thirst with water deposited in a vase so far back as the reign of Titus, and by one of the victims, perhaps, of the fires of Vesuvius. How curious are these revelations of the inner life of a people long since moulded into ashes.

A gentleman once asked a little girl, an only child, how many sisters she had, and was told 'three or four.' Her mother asked Mary, when they were alone, what had induced her to tell such an untruth. "Why, mamma," cried Mary, "I didn't want him to think you were so poor that you hadn't but one child. Wouldn't he thought we were dreadful poor?"

JEFFERSON DAVIS—A REPLY.

To the Editors of the National Intelligencer:

What is history? This inquiry is prompted by finding in the National Intelligencer of April 29th an article headed "An Historical Reminiscence of Jefferson Davis, the great State Prisoner. From the 'Siege of Washington.' By Captain F. C. Adams."

"I happened to know Mr. Davis in the summer of 1850, when he was the moving spirit of a convention of fire-eaters that assembled together in Nashville, Tennessee, and I have a slight recollection of a speech he made on that occasion, in which separation by arms was urged, and no love for the Union advanced. I remember, also, that the speech was rewarded with hisses, notwithstanding the strong disunion elements of the convention."

A few words will suffice to answer this statement. Jefferson Davis made no speech at that convention; he was not in Nashville when the convention was held, was in Washington city, daily occupying his seat in the Senate, the published journals and debates of which body might have served to prevent the historian from making such a statement, as it enables all the world to correct it.

The next sentence in the extract published is as follows:

His dislike of the Union and plan for separating the nation, it is well known, had been the besetting sin of his brain for twenty years.

Now, running back twenty years from 1850 we reach the year 1830. when Jefferson Davis was a second lieutenant, serving in the Indian country of the Northern frontier. His services there and elsewhere, for five years succeeding, were such as to gain for him consideration from his Government, as shown by selections for staff duty, and for promotion into the first new regiment which was organized.

His first appearance in national politics was his entry into the House of Representatives in the United States Congress in 1845—*five, not twenty*, years before the date selected by the author for a period when his "dislike of the Union" was "well known."

But this is not a mere question of time. The Congressional Globe, to which it is supposed a historian writing of the political course of one who had served in the two Houses of Congress would naturally refer, will show that Mr. Davis, after his entry into the House of Representatives, served there until he vacated his seat to join a regiment which had been raised for the war with Mexico, and had chosen him to be Colonel. The same record shows that immediately after his return from Mexico he entered the Senate and served continuously up to the date selected by the author.

An examination of his votes and speeches is challenged to verify and cited to disprove the statement of the historian from whose work the extract is made. It is sufficient to say that such accusation was not made against him by those with whom he served. When it was insinuated that the position occupied by himself and many other Southern men against the so-called "compromise" measures of 1850 was due to the sentiments of disunion, he proudly repelled it as inconsistent with his sense of honor in the relation he held as a Representative of a State in the Congress of the United States. He used the emphatic and often quoted expression, "If any man calls me a disunionist I will answer him in monosyllables."

Equally to the record of many years of civil service, and to that of many of military service, the next historian who shall write of Jefferson Davis is referred for evidence, as well of his acts as of his faithful adherence to the constitutional Union established by our fathers. Whether it was a departure from the faith he had so uniformly maintained to retire from the Senate when notified of the secession of the State which he represented, is outside of the allegation which it was the purpose in these remarks to notice, and would involve the discussion of questions which have engaged the minds of the ablest statesmen of America from a period long anterior to the birth of Jefferson Davis.

VINDEX.

EUGENIE AND HER LITTLE SON.

The young Prince Imperial of France has been transported to St. Cloud on a mechanical bed, and the carriage which bore him was ordered to go at a walking pace over the stones. The two doctors who accompanied the Prince are never to leave him night or day. They still hope on, and reckon upon the change of air as likely to promote a cure, which all their united skill, with that of Nelaton and Bache and Gendron combined, fails to accomplish. Many other reasons beside that hope in the change of air are given for this removal, any of which, when told, fills one with pity for the toilers at the kingly trade. That same evening there was a reception and a ball, and the Empress was doomed to wear her sweetest smile and don her richest robes to receive the company; and anon there was the ceremony of receiving the Commission of the great Exhibition, and her Majesty to exert herself to find pleasant things to say to each of the members presented to her notice, while her thoughts were most likely at Saint Cloud, by the side of the bed whereon that poor, pale sufferer lay, turning his gaze to the Tuileries, whose peaked roofs and sculptured chimneys are visible from the window of his chamber.

Death of a Historic Character.

Death has removed another well known personage from the Parisian boulevard. A correspondent says:

"Do you remember to have seen tricked out in some impossible uniform, bedizzened with all sorts of decorations, an old fellow who hobbled about the boulevard? His name was Lamothe. He was a Belgian by birth. His head was turned by an extraordinary run of luck in one day, although I suspect he was always a weak fellow, and always the laughing stock of his comrades.

"Fortune has some step children whose life is not existence but a pillory. Lamothe lived at the Maubeuge when the Belgian revolution occurred. He became quite notorious in his native town for his activity and continual speeches to arouse the patriotism of his neighbors.

"One evening he was unusually eloquent, and proposed, at the close of an enthusiastic speech, that the young men of the town should arm and take the neighboring town, Mons, by assault.

"Loud hurrahs greeted his proposal.

"I will place myself at your head. Will you meet me to-morrow at Les Quatres Paves, between Maubeuge and Avesnes?

"The mob yelled aye! aye! aye!

"The next day at 12 o'clock Lamothe went to Les Quatres Paves.

He was mounted on a white horse. He wore the most brilliant general's costume he could buy.

"As for his followers, not a man was to be seen.

"Night brings counsel.

"Lamothe, however, was patient, and he waited until the sun went down. A thought struck him.

"Those cowards have abandoned me; what will they say were I to take the Mons alone?

"He drew his sword, put spurs to his horse, and by-and-by entered Mons with dreadful clatter.

"He rode straight to the city hall, and said to the Dutch Commander.

"'Ten thousand French troops are behind me; order the burgomaster to provide at once ten thousand rations, for the French army sleep in this town to-night.'

"The Dutch Commander made a military salute, withdrew, sent his aids-de-camp in every direction to assemble his men and order them to assemble as quickly as possible.

"In half an hour the whole Dutch division were scampering towards Holland as fast as they could go. A pursuing army gives wonderful speed.

"When the last Dutchman's heel had disappeared below the horizon, the burgomaster, aldermen and common council came to Lamothe to thank him for his timely appearance, and inquired what preparations should be made to receive the 10,000 horsemen.

"Raise the draw-bridges," was the answer.

"He at once sent a messenger to the Belgian authorities to let them know that Mons was theirs.

"King Leopold gave him a pension, his orders, and granted him permission to wear a General's uniform the rest of his life."

Exercise in Nervous Disorders.—An English writer and surgeon, Mr. Skey, expresses his strong conviction, in which we heartily join him, that there are many diseases, at least many forms of indisposition, which, with a strong will, may be walked away, provided the exercise be taken systematically and rendered a prominent feature in the daily treatment. Tone is imparted by this means to both mind and body, cheerfulness replaces gloom, and sympathy for others a morbid dwelling on self. The exercise should be *active*, and not consist in either strolling or sauntering out of doors, or even amateur gardening. A good brisk walk should be taken at a pace of at least three miles an hour, but always stopping short of fatigue. People will be often heard to say that they take plenty of exercise about the house, and that they are on their legs many hours of the day. But this is fatigue without exercise. What is wanted for health is exercise without fatigue, for fatigue is exhaustion, and the desired object is only to be gained *on* the terms just stated. The distance walked should be increased daily, and it will be found that increasing strength will give the readiness and wish for increasing exercise. There is an accumulation of excitability in those who are afflicted with what are vaguely called nervous disorders, which renders such persons restless, fidgety, irritable, and full of strange fancies, and that is best brought down to a healthy standard by exercise in the open air, and its concommitant change of scene and new trains of thought.

Philadelphia Ledger.

The Panama Railway.—Since the construction of this road across the Isthmus it has carried nearly 400,000 passengers and $675,000,000 of treasure, the latter from the Pacific to the Atlantic side of the Isthmus from the Pacific coast of South America. Of freight the road has transported 614 525 tons, but this year it is estimated the traffic will amount to 1500,000 tons. America now controls the road, which runs through the territory of New Grenada, but England is making great exertions to get possession of it.