

THE ANSONIAN.

FEARLESSLY THE RIGHT DEFEND—IMPARTIALLY THE WRONG CONDEMN.

VOLUME I.

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To Spring.

With dewy locks, who lookest down
Through the clear windows of the morning,
Turn
Thine angel eyes upon our western isle,
Which in full choir, hails thy approach, O
Spring!

The hills tell each other, and the listening
Valleys hear; all our longing eyes are turned
Up to thy bright pavilions; issue forth
And let thy holy feet visit our clime.

Come o'er the eastern hills, and let our minds
Kiss thy perfumed garments; let us taste
Thy morn and evening breath; scatter thy
pearls
Upon our lovesick land that mourns for thee.

Oh, deck her forth with thy fair fingers; pour
Thy soft kisses on her brow; and put
Thy golden crown upon her languid head,
Whose modest tresses were bound up for
thee.

THE FOX TRAP.

When I was a boy I lived in one of those rustic neighborhoods on the outskirts of the great "Maine woods." Foxes were plenty about all those sunny pioneer farms birch-partridges breed by thousands, as also field-mice and squirrels, making plenty of game for Reynard.

There were red foxes, "cross-grays," and "silver-grays," even black foxes were reported. These animals were the pests of the farmyards, and made havoc with the geese, turkeys, and chickens. In the fall, the year, particularly after the frosts, the clearings were overrun by their night and morning. Their sharp, ear-like barks used often to rouse us, and of a dark evening we would hear them out in the fields, "mousing" around the stone heaps, making a queer, squeaking sound like a mouse, to call the real mice out of their grass nests inside the stone heaps. This, indeed, is a favorite trick of Reynard. At the time of my story, my friend Tom Edwards (ten years of age) and myself were in the turkey business, equal partners. We owned a flock of thirty-one turkeys. These roosted by night in a large butternut tree in front of Tom's house—in the very top of it, and by day they wandered about the edges of the clearings in quest of beech nuts, which were very plenty that fall.

All went well till the last week in October, when, on taking the census one morning, a turkey was found to be missing; the thirty-one had become thirty since nightfall the previous evening. It was the first one we had lost.

We proceeded to look for traces. Our suspicions were divided. Tom thought it was "the Twombly boys," nefarious Sam in particular. I thought it might have been an owl. But under the tree, in the soft dirt, where the potatoes had recently been dug, we found fox tracks, and two or three long little wads of feathers with one long tail feather drift. They were concluded that the turkey had accidentally fallen down out of the butternut—had a fit, perhaps—and that its fallings had attracted the attention of some passing fox, which had, forthwith, taken it in charge. It was, we were regarded, one of those unfortunate occurrences which no care on our part could have well foreseen, and a casualty such as turkey-raisers are unavoidably heirs to, and we bore our loss with resignation. We were glad to remember that turkeys did not often fall off their roosts.

This theory received something of a check when our flock counted only twenty-nine the next morning. There were more fox tracks, and a great many more feathers under the tree. This put a new and altogether ugly aspect on the matter. No algebra was needed to figure the outcome of the turkey business at this rate, together with our prospective profits, in the light of this new fact. It was clear that something must be done, and it was, of course, to be done at once, and it was done.

Rightly or wrongly, we attributed the mischief to certain "silver-gray" fox that had several times been seen in the neighborhood that autumn.

"It would take far too much space to relate in detail the plans we laid and put in execution to catch that fox during the next two weeks. I recollect that we set three traps for him to no purpose, and that we borrowed a foxhound to hunt him with, but merely succeeded in running him to his burrow in a neighboring rocky hillside, whence we found it quite impossible to dislodge the wily fellow.

Meanwhile the fox (or foxes) had succeeded in getting two more of the turkeys.

Hence, it is said, are born of great prizes. This dilemma of ours developed Tom's genius.

"I'll have that fox," he said, when the traps failed, and when the hound proved of no avail, he still said: "I'll have him yet."

"But how?" I asked. Tom said he would show me. He brought a two-bushel basket and went out into the

fields. In the stone heaps, and beside the old logs and stumps, there were dozens of deserted mouse-nests, each a wad of fine dry grass as large as a quart box. These he gathered up, and filled the basket.

"There," said he, triumphantly, "don't them into 'mousing'!"

They did, certainly; they savored as strongly of mice as Tom's question of bad grammar.

"And don't foxes catch mice?" demanded Tom, confidently.

"Yes, but I don't see how that's going to catch the fox," I said.

"Well, look here, then, I'll show ye," said he. "Play you're the fox; and play I was night, and you was mousing around the fields. Go on now out there by that stump."

Full of wonder and curiosity, I retired to the stump. Tom, meantime, turned out the mass of nests, and with it completely covered himself. The pile now resembled an enormous mouse-nest, or rather a small hay-cock. Pretty soon I heard a low, high-keyed, squeaking noise, accompanied by a slight rustle inside the nest. Evidently there were mice in it; and, feeling my character as fox at stake, I at once trotted forward, then crouched up, and as the rustling and squeaking continued, made a pounce into the grass—as I had heard the said foxes did when mousing. Instantly two spy-brown hands from out the nest clutched me with a most vigorous grip. As a fox, I struggled tremendously. But Tom overcame me forthwith, choked me nearly black in the face, then, in dumb show, knocked my head with a stone.

"D'ye see, now?" he demanded.

I saw.

"But a fox would bite you," I objected.

"Let him bite," said Tom. "I'll seek him when once I get these two broad-shoulders on him. And he can't smell the through the mouse-nests either."

That night we set ourselves to put the stratagem in operation. With the dusk we stole out into the field where the stone heaps were, and where we had often heard foxes bark. Selecting a good one, we dug up a stump of raspberry briars, which grew about a great pine stump, Tom lay down, and I covered him up completely with the contents of the big basket. He then practiced squeaking and rustling several times to be sure that all was in good trim. His squeaks were perfect successes—made by sucking the air sharply betwixt his teeth.

"Now be off," said Tom, "and don't come poking round, nor get in sight, till you hear me holler."

Thus exhorted, I went into the barn and established myself at a crack on the back side, which looked out upon the field where Tom was ambushed.

Tom, meanwhile, as he afterward told me, waited till it had grown dark, then began squeaking and rustling at intervals, to draw the attention of the fox when first he should come out into the clearing, for foxes have ears so wonderfully acute, that they are able to hear a mouse squeak twenty rods away. It is said.

An hour passed. Tom must have grown pretty tired of squeaking. It was a moonless evening, though not very dark. I could see objects at a little distance through the crack, but could not see so far as the stump. It got rather dull, cozy there; and being amidst nice cozy straw, I presently went to sleep, quite unintentionally. I must have slept some time, though it seemed to me but a very few minutes.

What woke me was a noise, a sharp, suppressed yelp. It took me a moment to understand where I was, and why I was there. A sound of rustling and tumbling, as if some one had fallen, assailed my wandering wits, and I rushed out of the barn and ran toward the light. As I ran, two or three dull whacks came to my ear.

"Got him, Tom?" I shouted, rushing up.

Tom was holding and squeezing one of his hands with the other and shaking it violently. He said not a word, and left me to poke about and sniff at the limp warm carcass of a large fox that lay near.

"Bite ye?" I exclaimed, after satisfying myself that the fox was dead.

"Some," said Tom; and that was all I could get from him that night.

We took the fox to the house and lighted a candle. It was the "silver-gray." Tom washed his bite in cold water and went to bed. Next morning he was in a sorry and a very sore plight. His left hand was bitten through the palm, and badly swollen. There was also a deep bite in the fleshy part of his right arm, just below the elbow, several minor nips in his left leg above the knee, and a ragged "grab" in the chin. These numerous bites, however, were followed by no serious ill effects.

The next day, Tom told me that the

fox had suddenly plunged into the grass, that he had caught hold of one of its hind legs, and that they had rolled over and over in the grass together. He owned to me that when the fox bit him on the chin, he let go of the brute, and would have given up the fight, but that the fox had then actually attacked him.

"Upon that," said Tom, "I just determined to have it out with him."

Considering the fact that a fox is a very active, sharp-biting animal, and that this was an unusually large male, I have always thought Tom got off very well. I do not think that he ever cared to make a fox-trap of himself again, however.

We sold the fox skin in the village and received thirteen dollars for it, whereas a common red fox skin is worth no more than three dollars.

How, or by what wiles that fox got the turkeys out of the high butternut, is a secret—one that perished with him. It would seem that he must either have climbed the tree, or else have practiced sorcery to make the turkey come down.

—Scribner.

Burn the Old Letters.

The fact that in almost every case the ends of old letters are used in evidence, induces an exchange to say: There is no higher appeal to "honor" than which a confidential letter implies. The word "word" may be lost forever, but the written word remains. It is the most unquestioning love which puts itself at the mercy of a correspondent, which writes what it would hardly whisper, and takes its chances of being discovered and trumpeted to the four corners of the earth. Does not such tender frankness demand even a nervous case and caution upon the other side? A blow for a kiss is bad enough. Ingratitude is the opprobrium of our nature. But what blow can be better for a sensitive woman than to find confidence misplaced, trust disregarded, and the sanctum sanctorum of her soul thrown wide open for the curious to stare at its contents? Such mockery of good faith is a tragedy pure and simple when it poisons the peace of woman. Did she write this loving sentence for the whole world to read? Did she spread out all the tenderness of her soul upon the blistered page, that coarse jesters might translate it into their own foul dialects, and construe it according to the uncleanness of their own besotted natures?

Yes! it is certainly better to burn letters of affection than to hand them in this most uncertain world. Burn, if you would not have the deepest secrets of your soul made the sport of attorneys! Burn, if you would not have your friend pained by even an accidental disclosure of kindness! Burn, if you would have your most secret secrets continue undivulged! Burn for your own sake and for the sake of others! Give trembling hopes and gentle assurances, the first faltering promise, the last welcome ad-versation, the golden and silver sentences, the record of dreams and of doubts, the lines traced when all was being bitter—give the sweet and bitter and the bitter-sweet, earnestness and playfulness, deep appeal and trivial jest—all to the friendly fire!

The Civil Rights Bill.

When the House got through with the Civil Rights bill, says the New York Times, there was not very much left of it. The amendment offered by Mr. Kellogg, of Connecticut, and accepted by a very large vote, striking out all that related to schools, took from the bill its most important feature. By the bill as it passed the House, all persons within the jurisdiction of the United States are entitled to the equal enjoyment "of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of inns, public conveyances on land or water, theaters and other places of public amusement." The bill provides for its own enforcement, first, by means of suits by persons wronged against persons guilty of the wrong for damages to the amount of five hundred dollars for each offense; and second, by a criminal suit for a penalty of from five hundred dollars to one thousand dollars for each offense, and imprisonment for not more than one year. The successful employment of either one of these bars the other. Jurisdiction in cases arising under the act is given exclusively to the Federal courts; Federal commissioners are required to institute proceedings against all who violate the act, and district-attorneys are directed to prosecute such proceedings under a penalty of from five hundred dollars to five thousand dollars, or a forfeiture of five hundred dollars to the party aggrieved. The fourth section of the bill prohibits extension of Federal jurisdiction on account of color, and makes any officer charged with getting a jury violating this section liable to a fine of not more than five thousand dollars.

RETRIBUTION AT LAST.

A "Wild Man" in the Woods of California Found to Be the Author of the "Wayside Murder" in Ulster County, N. Y.

J. N. Masten, of Wurtsboro, N. Y., has received a letter from a relative in San Francisco, Cal., formerly a resident of Ulster county, N. Y., giving the particulars of the killing of a desperado in that State known as the "Wild Man of Colusa," who proves to be Jeremiah Smith, the perpetrator of what is known as the "wayside murder," near Homosassa, Ulster county, in the fall of 1868. Smith murdered his wife and child in the road, near his residence, by pounding them to death with a stone. He then fled, and a large reward was offered for his capture. At least twelve men answering his description were arrested in different parts of the country, but none of them proved to be he. He was traced by detectives as far as Utah, and there all trace of him was lost.

About three or four years ago there appeared in the sage brush in Colusa county, California, a strange human being. He was dressed in the skins of animals, and was always armed. His hair and beard were of extraordinary length. He haunted small settlements, and when there were no men around made raids on the houses, securing whatever plunder was to be had. He came to be the terror of the county, and narrowly escaped with his life several times when surprised by men who were hunting him. A few weeks since he made one of his visits to a house where the inmates refused to comply with his demands, and the door was barred against him. He emptied the contents of three revolvers in the house, seriously wounding a woman, and then retreated to the swamp. The next day a party went out to capture him and succeeded in doing so. He was lodged in the county jail.

The particulars of this affair were seen by Mr. Masten in a copy of the San Francisco Chronicle. The description of the wild man answered that of Smith in a letter which he had written from one of his hideouts, a letter which he had written to his relative, inclosing a photograph of the murderer. When the letter was received in San Francisco the party to whom it was addressed proceeded to Colusa county, and found that the wild man had escaped from jail. He showed the letter and photograph to several men, who declared at once that there was a great resemblance between the picture and the wild man. A search was at once instituted for the escaped prisoner. Several men, among them Mr. Masten's relative, followed him for days through the thickets, and finally came up with him. He at once showed fight, and commenced firing at the party. The fire was returned, and the man fell. Mr. Townsend, the former Ulster county man, went up to him and recognized him, and was recognized in return. Smith died in a few hours. He had eluded justice for nearly seven years.

"Lady" and "Gentlemen."

A writer says: "Lady" and "Gentlemen" are two adjectives which are used in them, appropriately to be used as predicates, provided they stand alone. But for the same reason it is utterly inappropriate to use them as predicates or in any other form with an adjective attached. The rule is not optional, but one which good sense and cultivated usage have combined to fix with iron strictness. The highest breeding, we know, tends always to approach the utmost simplicity both in manner and in language, and prefers such wholesome, downright terms as man, woman, girl, to any affected substitute. Severe as it may seem, any violation of the rule we have hinted at calls a kind of suspicion on the education and susceptibilities of the culprit. When our neighbor at the hotel table describes a guest opposite as a "very intelligent gentleman" or "a charming young lady," he does no more, it is true, than is common enough among numbers less worthy and amiable people; but he is wrong for all that. The lady of a sensitive hearer easily takes offense at such slight matter, and the sin against style is apt to create a prejudice in regard to more essential things.

All Gone.

Capt. Selden, of the United States revenue steamer Gallatin, saw a signal of distress flying on the Duxbury Pier light-house, and, on approaching as near as the ice would allow, learned that the inmates had had no communication with the outside world for forty-nine days, that their fuel and water were exhausted, and that they had been on an allowance of half a pint of water a day. After two hours vigorous cutting through the ice, the Gallatin's crew reached the light, and furnished relief.

Fixing Up Burned Money.

It will be remembered that a few weeks ago a northern express car was burned near Washington. The government alone had \$5,750,000 in it, and the private property amounted to nearly half as much, including jewelry—enough to fill seven safes.

Up in one of the sunny, well-lighted rooms of the United States Treasury department at Washington, four ladies from the Treasurer's office are at work on these charred treasures, and their process is one of the most interesting features of the service. All the safes were transferred from the cars to the Treasury, and a committee were selected from those most expert at such work. First the private safes were opened, and in these were found about \$100,000 worth of diamonds, a hundred watches, old gold and silver coins, and—alas! for the scarce of true love—a package of love letters and a tress of pretty brown hair. The ladies examine it with magnifying glasses, and after deciphering as much as possible they paste it, face up, on a strip of thin paper; and so, bit by bit, a whole note is pieced out. It is such trying exercise for the eyes that those engaged in it can work only three hours at a time and on bright days. The trust reposed in them is great, for the money is delivered directly to them, and remittances made on their reports without further questioning. After the terrible fire of October, 1871, Chicago sent two hundred and three cases of burnt money, aggregating, at owners' valuation, \$164,997.98. It came in sheets, in bundles, in tiny packages, crumpled and crushed as careless hands had pushed them into a coal was swathed in cotton as carefully as if it were the most precious jewelry, and as the black, brittle packages were unrolled, it seemed really impossible that anything could be made of such cinders. Yet out of that \$164,997.98, \$126,541.33 was redeemed and returned to the owners or banks. Boston profited by Chicago's experience, and packed her burnt money so carefully that nearly all of it was redeemed. Eighty-three cases, containing \$88,812.50, came from Boston, and \$88,290.80 were returned to her, beside a number of policies, notes, bills and other valuable papers. The most skillful person on this committee is a lady who has had much experience in such work. Once she deciphered \$185,000 out of \$200,000 that had been in the hold of a burned ship for three years, and Adams Express Company, which was responsible for the amount, gave her \$500 in acknowledgment of her services. Another time she and her associates worked faithfully and long over some bonds a crazy cashier saw fit to throw into the fire. The bank asked for only \$100,000, but the ladies picked out \$145,000; whereupon the directors, with reckless extravagance, presented the committee with \$20—about four dollars apiece!

School Farming.

Dr. Horace P. Wakefield, principal of the Massachusetts State Primary School at Monson, in an address said that farming has paid well there under his care, the net profits being about \$2,800. His family consisted of 500 children, and he had forty cows, mostly Ayrshires, to feed them. They used nearly all the milk at the school, with three barrels of flour, five or six bushels of meal, and in their season, a cart-load of cabbage, daily. It was a bad policy to sell hay and stave cattle. He found, seven years ago, when he took charge, 1,300 gallons of milk were produced, which has now increased to 35,000. He had endeavored to get a thorough breed of Ayrshire cows, and would rather have them weigh 800 than 1,300 pounds. He detailed his method of feeding, recommending mixed food of bran and water twice a day, hay, roots, etc., good ventilation, and warm barns. He cut his hay from June 10th to the 15th, harvesting 220 tons. Hay at Monson requires more making than in Vermont, being near the sea-shore. The School Farm comprises 230 acres, of which one hundred were pasture and forty woodland. Fifteen acres are dressed from the water-closets and laundry. The soil is some thirty inches deep, twelve of black loam, eight yellow subsoil, and there is a hard pan of blue gravel that will not leach through. If you plow and plant deep, the roots get down to the bottom. A top-dressing of gypsum, one hundred pounds to the acre, he had found most profitable. The pastures now carry nearly double as much feed as six years ago.

What Three Women Said.

The other day, in the cars, I sat behind three women for an hour or two. They were all friendly to each other, and they didn't mind my presence.

"Did you hear about Sarah Lamb?" asked one.

"Goodness! No!" answered the others.

"Well, Sarah's got her pay, I tell you!" continued the first. "You know she was a whole year trying to catch that red-headed widower. Well, she finally married; and what do you think? They say that he swears at her—actually uses oaths—when things go wrong; keeps her from going to church; is set against company, and won't let her use above two eggs in a sweet-cake!"

"Mon-ster-ous!" exclaimed the others.

There was a moment of silence, and then one of the trio spoke up:

"Did you know that Mrs. Lancy had a new empress-cloth dress?"

"You don't say!" exclaimed the others.

"Yes, I do—I know it for a fact, for she wore it past our house the other day. That dress never cost less than seven dollars—the bare cloth—and then there's the making and trimmings thrown in! Just think of a woman in her circumstances going to such an expense! Why, if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes I couldn't believe it!"

"It's awful!" exclaimed the others.

"And the worst of it is, she seems to hold her head so high!" continued the first. "I've heard that her grandfather had to go to the poor-house when he broke his leg, and yet she holds her head up with the best of us! Of course, I don't want to back-bite any one—it isn't my nature to talk behind people's backs—but I will say that I shouldn't wonder if such extravagance brought that family to want for bread before spring comes!"

Nothing was said for the next five minutes; and then one of the two exclaimed:

"I've heard that Ed. Lamb forgot his hat!"

"What! Another?"

"Yes, another; she wore it to church last Sunday! Think of that—a girl having three hats in one year!"

"Shameful!" they cried in chorus.

"I don't know what the world is coming to," continued the first. "When I was a girl—one hat had to last me seven years, while now a girl wants at least two a year—if not three. I tell you, when I sat in church last Sunday and saw Lizzie come shying in with that new hat (must have cost three dollars at the least) I felt queer. The fate of the sinful people of Solom and Gomorrah came to my mind in a second; and I shouldn't have been surprised if Lizzie had been stricken then right down!"

They pondered over it for two or three minutes, and then one of her replied:

"So Mary Jane Doolittle is dead, is she?"

"Yes, poor thing," was the reply

"dead and buried a week ago. Hannah was at the funeral, and she says that Doolittle never shed a tear—never even blew his nose."

"He didn't!"

"No, he didn't. Hannah watched him all through, and she says he has a heart like a stone. If he should be arrested as her murderer I shouldn't be the least bit surprised. Poor woman! I met her only last August, and I could see that she was killing herself. I didn't ask her right out about it, but I could understand that Doolittle was a cold-hearted wretch. He didn't have much to say, but just one remark he made convinced me of his gold-heartedness. He asked for soap to wash himself, and when she handed him a piece he looked at it, sneered like, and says he:

"Mary Jane, you musn't buy any more yaller soap!"

"Did he say that?"

"He certainly did. I'll go before any court in the land and swear to it!"

I had to get off the train then, and missed further conversation.

Wheat as a Feed for Animals.

On an extensive farm in England the horses were fed all through the year's plowing on boiled wheat and cut straw, as their sole food. The farmer reports that his horses were never stronger to labor or looked better. Another farmer fed his store pigs with diseased potatoes, boiled and mashed, to which had been added equal parts of red wheat and tallow barley, ground into meal. He reports: "Never do I remember to have had pigs get on better. I have, also, thirty porkers doing well on the same food. They are not only growing, but fattening rapidly." It is proper just here to remark that wheat abounds particularly with gluten, or muscle-making matter. Hence it is excellent to restore strength, and good for all working animals.