

THE ANSONIAN.

FEARLESSLY THE RIGHT DEFEND—IMPARTIALLY THE WRONG CONDEMN.

VOLUME II.

POLKTON, ANSON CO., N. C., THURSDAY, MAY 6, 1875.

NUMBER 4.

Popping Corn.

And there they sat a popping corn,
John Stiles and Susan Outer;
John Stiles so fat as any ox,
And Susan, fat as butter.
And there they sat, and shelled the corn,
And raked and stirred the fire,
And talked of different kinds of corn,
And hatched their chairs uprighter.
Then Susan, she the popper shook,
The John he shook the popper,
Till both their faces grew as red
As a sauce-pans made of copper.
And then they shelled and popped and ate,
Till both their faces grew as red
As a sauce-pans made of copper.
And still they popped, and still they ate,
John's mouth was like a hopper,
And stirred the fire and sprinkled salt,
And shook and shook the popper.
The clock struck nine and then struck ten,
And still the corn kept popping;
It struck eleven—then struck twelve,
And still no sign of stopping.
And John he ate, and Susan thought—
The corn did pop and patter;
Till John cried: "The corn's a-fire!
Why, Susan, what's the matter?"
Said she: "John Stiles, it's one o'clock,
You'll die of indigestion;
I'm sick of all this popping corn—
Why don't you pop the question?"

A TALE OF THE CATSKILLS.

As the stage that daily makes its trips from the village of Catskill to the Mountain House drove up to the door of the hotel on a pleasant summer forenoon, conveying the passengers who had arrived at the village in the night boat from New York, a beautiful lady, handsomely and elegantly dressed, and displaying that tasteful arrangement of attire that at once strikes the observer with satisfaction, was seen upon the balcony eagerly eyeing and scanning each gentleman passenger as he alighted from the vehicle.

On that morning there were six passengers inside of the coach, and two occupied the seat outside with the driver. One of these passengers was the writer.

As the last gentleman emerged from the coach, the lady drew a jeweled hand across her face, and struck her forehead as if in wild despair; then drawing a comb from her head that confined her hair, she allowed her rich tresses to fall negligently upon her shoulders; and then turning about, she paced the balcony from end to end. At last, apparently fatigued with her walk, she approached the landford, who stood in the doorway, and in a low and plaintive voice, accompanying it with the faintest shadow of a smile, she said: "Not come yet?"

"Not to-day, but to-morrow," returned the host.

"Oh, yes, he'll come to-morrow," the lady replied, then quietly withdrew to her apartment.

"A sad case, sir," said the landford, addressing the writer, who loitered near, "but I dare say he'll be right here in ten days, if you may be deemed so innocent a deception, for really I am doubtful as to the proper course to pursue."

Asking for particulars, he replied that the lady had with her a very intelligent traveling companion, a relative, to whom later in the day he introduced her, and from whom he learned many interesting, though sadening, items of her history and that of her charge.

Lucille Harwood was the daughter of a South Carolina planter of large wealth, who had given her a liberal education, and brought her up in luxury and abundance, sparing no pains to surround her with every comfort that his ample means would allow.

At the age of nineteen Lucille became engaged to be married to a gentleman whom she had long known, and, indeed, had been intimate with from her childhood. Her father favored the match, showing Edward Mansfield to be a gentleman of integrity, of good bearing, and possessing many excellent qualities, besides having some means, and about to inherit more. It was certainly what is commonly called a love-match, for there seemed to be a deal of hearty and heart-felt devotion on both sides. Mr. Mansfield was courteous and attentive to Miss Harwood, and she manifested great pleasure and delight in his society and companionship.

When Lucille was twenty and Edward Mansfield about twenty-five years of age, they married, and, with my narrator, left South Carolina for New York and vicinity on a wedding tour, intending to visit, during their absence, the many varied scenes so popular among tourists in which the North abounds.

They intended to see Niagara, to sail upon Lake George and Lake Champlain, and thence extend their journey to visit the White Mountains, and, returning by way of New York, remain a few weeks in the great metropolis before they again sought their Southern home.

In pursuance of this plan, and full of hope and buoyancy of heart, they left their home and kindred, and reached New York with no special occurrence out of the usual order of events.

Wishing to transact a little business in the city before sailing up the Hudson, Mr. Mansfield saw his wife and relative comfortably seated upon one of the river boats en route for Catskill, at which place he intended to join them in two days.

They parted as the gangplank was being hauled in, and amidst the waving of handkerchiefs, those silent and tender signals which the loving and loved are apt to exchange in like circumstances, each went his way—the husband to transact his business, and the wife and her friend toward the Mountain House, to rest and await his coming.

So far, all was pleasant and agreeable; but as Mr. Mansfield saw the boat receding from the pier, a sigh involuntarily escaped him; but he laughed down his feelings, and became one among the crowd that sauntered along Broadway.

Two days later, Mr. Mansfield followed his friends, taking, however, a night boat, which landed him at the village of Catskill at about three o'clock in the morning. He arrived while the stars were yet shining, and the half-moon was sinking to her setting; and wishing to give his wife an agreeable surprise, he would not wait for the coach that would start at daybreak for the summit of the mountain, but learning the direction to the stage office, engaged a saddle horse, and a companion who was to return the animal to the stable.

Together they started; all was quiet and calm; as the eastern horizon was slowly lighting up with the coming dawn, so the stars, one after another, gradually faded out. Later, they saw with the growing light the morning fog diffused in various patches swept along the different mountain heights, and presently dissolved as the sun arose.

Two-thirds of their journey was accomplished, when a stone or crag that had been loosened from its resting place by a mountain stream, started down with accumulating force, and awakened echoes all around with its noise as it struck against any obstructions that it met in its headlong descent. Surprised and scared by the unusual noise, the horse that conveyed Edward Mansfield sprang from the road and neared the cliff which skirted it, but seeing the danger just in time to save himself, planted his fore feet firmly but suddenly upon the edge. Too suddenly, alas! for the rider. The shock of the sudden stop was too abrupt for Edward Mansfield, who, losing his seat, was thrown clear down the steep descent, only to land, far below the cliff, hundreds of feet below, a mangled and a broken form.

His surprised horse stood a moment trembling and panting on the height, when the bridge rein was taken by the surviving rider of the more quiet companion, who led him back to the stable in the village.

They found the body where it had fallen. It was in no condition to show to the widowed bride, and they buried him reverently and silently in the village churchyard.

"And did you not tell the sad news to the expectant widow?" I asked.

"We did, and the result was nearly fatal. A long and distressing fever followed, and she only recovered to become what you see her to be to-day, and it is about five weeks since the accident occurred."

"What do you propose to do with her?"

"To remain here awhile longer, in the hope that her brighter memories will awaken, and then bear her back to her home in South Carolina."

"Tell me, Miss Flanders, what do you consider her condition?"

"As hopelessly insane, but I think harmlessly so."

"Has she no lucid moments?"

"None that can be really called so. Still she waits her husband, day by day, having no apparent recollection of the news we told her. You may observe that her frame is feeble. It may be that as her body regains its strength, her mind may also be revived and again assume its sway; though let me say, I rather dread such awakening; but at least some weeks must first intervene ere she can gain her wonted vigor and elasticity."

"Does she take any exercise?"

"Oh, yes, daily, and seems to enjoy some things, and to a stranger, ignorant as to her usual condition, appears to be in her right mind; but I, who know her better, cannot vouch for this."

"You are her aunt, I believe?"

"No, sir, her cousin, and her most intimate friend. Her father is now alone. She is his only child, and he is a widower. You shall see her to-morrow if you would like to do so. She walks after lunch along the slope in the rear, and

delights to sit upon those rocks yonder. Should you see her, I will introduce her to you, but allow me to suggest caution in your interview as to the choice of conversation."

"I understand and thank you."

Here, then, is the narrative to the moment of my arrival at the Mountain House, as told me by Miss Flanders. Remaining a guest for several weeks, I naturally became acquainted with many of my fellow boarders, and among them the two ladies. Every day, on the arrival of the stage-coach, Mrs. Mansfield pursued the same scrutiny among the passengers, each day walked the balcony, loosened her hair, turned to the landlord to say, "Not come yet," and heard this reply, "Not to-day, but to-morrow."

Then she would add, "Oh, yes, he'll come to-morrow," and quietly seek her room.

It was a touching and impressive scene, or trying and distressing occasion, to see from day to day the anxious, waiting bride, and to read in her features all her hopes and expectations, and to know how vain were they all. We turned away to conceal our emotions.

"Oh, yes, he'll come to-morrow!" An hour later she would emerge from her apartment, always in company with her cousin, Miss Flanders, eat her lunch with some appetite, and then walk along the cliffs, or sit quietly with her crochet work under a tree, sometimes singing or crooning in a low, murmuring tone, or would, sometimes, on bright afternoons, enter into general conversation, so general and sane that it was impossible, utterly impossible, to observe or remember her weakness of mind.

And so she continued day by day, with little or no change, till as autumn advanced, and the many summer guests began their fittings, I, too, must depart for other places. Mrs. Mansfield had begun to seem quite natural, and her cousin did not hesitate to follow her about, or conduct her wherever her fancy might lead. She sang sweetly, and conversed pleasantly, and often in their ramblings was a study to me, and we Mansfield was a study to me, and we began to hope that she would recover her mental vigor. If that coach would only cease its coming, she might have few and rare reminders of him whom she was awaiting; but it was not to be.

It was to be the last day of my sojourn, and Mrs. Mansfield, with Miss Flanders and myself, were seated near the edge of a precipice where we had often been before, to gaze upon and admire the changing scenery below, as the setting orb behind us showed sun and shade on different objects in the valley, and the retiring rays glanced upon the changing leaves, fluttering in their autumn dress.

It was a beautiful and a glorious sight, the rich autumnal tints illuminated by the setting sun—the far-off villages that dotted along in little patches from place to place—here a little grove of trees, there a pretty stream winding in its course, and everything in nature in perfect keeping. We longed for a spyglass to see even better than we did; but the varied scenery was sufficient, or ought to have been; but when ever was man or woman fully satisfied?

Well, we had sat in this way for nearly an hour; our talk was general, entirely so—mostly in reference to the scenery, comparing the view before us with other prospects elsewhere, and trying to imagine what would be the effect if certain parts were differently arranged and grouped—mere idle wondering, nothing more. In this conversation Mrs. Mansfield seemed to be especially happy and light-hearted. At a time when Miss Flanders was relating to us some interesting occurrence that seemed to chain our attention, Mrs. Mansfield suddenly rose, without warning, cried out, "There he is!" and reaching out her arms as if to embrace her husband, sprang forward into the air.

The jagged rocks received her far below as she fell lifeless among them. We took her up carefully and tenderly, and she now rests by the side of her husband. Years have passed since the tragic occurrence, but the writer never thinks of the Catskills without the scene coming up before him in vivid colors, and a thrill of horror fills his soul as he thinks of the catastrophe he witnessed.

A Funny Blunder.

The *American Patron* gives its readers the following correction, showing what the types, the printer, and the proof-reader can do: An awkward blunder occurred in our last issue, in a communication from Bro. Gander, of Putnam county. He speaks of a public address delivered by Eld. Moorman, but the types made it read "Old Morman." We deeply regret this error, and must apologize to Bro. Gander and Moorman, and we trust no such error will again occur in the composition of our reading matter.

The Army of Tramps.

The hard times of the past year, says the *Solo*, have so increased the number of tramps throughout the country that they are becoming an intolerable nuisance to the inhabitants of interior towns, as well as to the farmers and others who live in isolated dwellings on the great thoroughfares. From Boston through Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey to Philadelphia, is the most popular route of these vagrants, the great mass of whom are not workmen thrown out of employment, but great hulking fellows who would starve before they would do an honest day's work, though they will tramp from one town to another, begging—many of them pilfering when they have an opportunity—and sleeping in police stations in towns and in waste-beds in the country, from one month's end to another without cessation. It is estimated that there are nearly 20,000 of these vagrants roaming about Massachusetts alone, while the Western newspapers describe them as overwhelming that part of the country like vermin. It is curious to watch these fellows in a suburban town on a morning after a snow storm. After a night's sleep in the police station they will hang about the place, refusing all offers to earn a few honest shillings by shoveling snow, and waiting until the sidewalks are all nicely cleaned, they will start off in couples to hunt up a breakfast, frequently visiting two or three houses in succession in order to lay in a stock of provisions that will last them through the day. In Massachusetts a law has been passed for the especial benefit of these gentry. It provides that when they apply to the authorities of any city or town for food or lodging, if their application is granted they may be made to perform a reasonable amount of labor in return for such food or lodging, and may be detained until such labor is performed, but not beyond the hour of eleven in the forenoon. If they refuse to perform the work offered them they can then be prosecuted and sent to the State work-house by law. The nature of the work to be required of the tramps is not specified, but it is fair to presume that ingenuity will result in finding something for them to do which will not only be useful but sufficiently irksome to the professional vagrant to render him undaunted of further trespass upon the unwilling hospitality of the town who have fed and lodged him. The example of Massachusetts in this regard might be imitated to advantage in other States. Of course there are many foot travelers who are in search of employment, and who are really deserving of assistance; but it is easy to distinguish these from the regular tramp.

The Strangest of Murders.

The case of Mrs. Sarah C. Merrigan, the woman who, in September, 1873, was accused of the murder of Miss Maggie Hammill, a rich girl, who had been Mrs. Merrigan's schoolmate in a convent, was before Judge Pratt in Brooklyn. Mrs. Merrigan has been in jail since her arrest, and for a month has been so ill that her death was expected every week. The circumstances of the killing of Miss Hammill are very strange, and yet a city paper says, those most intimate with the prisoner believe her to be innocent. Mrs. Hammill was hanged to the door of Mrs. Merrigan's bedroom, and for two days her body lay under Mrs. Merrigan's bed. Then Mrs. Merrigan got up to the house and the fire was extinguished. Miss Hammill's body was found with a rope tied around the neck.

Mrs. Merrigan was tried last year and the jury disagreed. Her defense is epileptic insanity, and her counsel expect to make it a precedent in criminal practice. The theory is that she was rational up to the moment she saw the dead body of her friend hanging in her room, and then was seized with epileptic mania, from which she had suffered before. It is also urged that Miss Hammill's death was accidental, and that she was trying a gypsy woman's plan of telling her fortune with a rope, when she tossed one end of it over the door while she measured her neck while the other, and that in doing this she slipped from the chair and was strangled.

No Money.

A Minnesota attorney having received from one of the Northern States an account to recover, thus replied to his client: "So it is money you want! Money! I have a faint recollection of having seen it when I was a small boy. I believe it was given me by my uncle on Christmas day. But it has been so long since I have seen any that I quite forget it. Why, sir, we live without money. You're behind the times. It is a relic of barbarism—of ages past. A few small pieces can be seen in our historical society's collection, where they are exhibited as curiosities."

Spring Clothing.

There is no part of the year, says the *Tribune*, when greater care and wisdom in the adjustment of one's clothing to the weather is required than in spring. We are so glad to lay aside thick winter garments and array ourselves in fresh, cheery, light attire, that frequently our inclinations lead us to overstep the bounds of prudence. Not until the end of May, hardly before the middle of June, will it be safe to lay aside flannels next the person. Indeed, children, aged people, and invalids should wear their flannel undergarments during even the hottest season, and even those in the most robust health will find it to their advantage often during the summer to put on flannel during parts of the day or on cold and rainy days. Especially those living near the sea shore and in malarious districts need to keep careful guard over themselves, and adjust their clothing to the rise and fall of the mercury in the thermometer, and to the changes in the direction of the wind. The secret of good health does not lie as some think in total disregard to the demands of the body, in getting toughened to cold, hunger and roughness, but in prompt, uniform, implicit obedience to the laws of hygiene, especially in relation to diet, exercise, sleep and clothing. So we will not be in a hurry to part with our warm wraps and comfortable overcoats, but, taking hints from nature, gradually grow ourselves in garments growing thinner and lighter, as the leaves of the trees deepen from the first tender green of the opening leaf-bud to the rich, full luxuriance of mid-June, and the summer splendor of July and August.

Our stores and grates will not be in haste to put away. Many a cool morning and evening it will be pleasant to watch the firelight and bask in the genial warmth of glowing coals, or the fascinating flames of spicy birch faggots, honest oak and sturdy hickory. Indeed there should be one room in every household where, during the winter months, a coal fire would be kept burning, and the dampness from our houses and chilliness from our persons, we shall stop many a secret drain on health, save doctors' bills, and prevent hours of weariness and pain.

Western desperadoes.

In Missouri there are two desperadoes who appear to regard the constituted authorities of the State with a degree of contempt which may perhaps have justification when it is considered how long they have pursued their criminal career unchecked. They are known as the James brothers, and their home is in Clay county, though their depredations have not been confined to any particular locality. They are the sons of a respectable preacher, but taking the field during the late war as guerrillas, they developed into audacious freebooters after it ended, and by their reckless daring seem to have completely cowed the communities which they have infested. A short time ago a party of private detectives attempted their capture, and resorted to the plan of throwing torpedoes into their house in the night time, with the expectation, probably, that the James boys would rush out if they were in the house, or perhaps be drawn thither if they were secreted in the neighborhood. The expedition failed, though the explosion cost the mother of the outlaws an arm, and a boy, who was half brother to them, his life. This was considered an outrage more atrocious than any committed by the brothers themselves, and created a certain degree of sympathy for them.

At the last session of the Missouri Legislature a bill was introduced to grant these men amnesty for all their misdeeds, and while it was pending they kept tolerably quiet. But as it failed, they have taken to the war path again, their first victim being a neighbor named Askew, an inoffensive farmer who was suspected, though without any sufficient evidence, of having harbored one of the detectives in the torpedo affair. He was shot down in cold blood, and as the man had been threatened, and as there is no reason to suppose that any one else had any motive for the crime, they are accused of it. Whether this new atrocity will have any effect in stimulating the proper authorities to effective action remains to be seen.

ZAKHARA'S JUMP OF

Some men always want to cast a cloud of gloom over a good thing. For example, when Mr. Harrison, of Delaware, found out that he must die he said to his wife: "Jane, you'll have full swing on me, and it won't be a year before you'll be in the posthouse." She didn't take a bit of comfort in the funeral.

Two Kentucky girls have been sentenced to six months' imprisonment for helping their lovers to escape jail.

THE TICKET OF LEAVE.

The New Bill Passed by the New York Legislature and its Effect.

The Ticket of Leave bill passed by the New York Legislature creates no little interest among the prisoners. A section of the bill provides that each convict now or hereafter confined in any of the State prisons at the expiration of New York State under sentence for the term of the natural life of such convict, who shall have been in all respects obedient to the rules and regulations of such prison for the term of fifteen years, shall, at the expiration of such term of uniform good conduct and obedience be released from imprisonment during a probationary period of ten years, if the governor shall, in his discretion, so direct; and at the end of such period (if ten years said convict shall, if released, be fully pardoned by the governor, with the restoration of the rights of citizenship, provided that during the said probationary period of ten years said convict shall not have been convicted of any crime in any court of competent jurisdiction.

In the Sing Sing prison there are two males and three females whom the provisions of the bill would reach at present. Within two years several others would come under it. One of the males is Francis Tarbox, better known as "Nigger Frank," a colored man, nearly ninety years of age, and who, on account of his being by far the oldest and longest inhabitant of the prison, is regarded with almost kind veneration by most of his fellow convicts. For an aggravated case of burglary in the first degree, he was sentenced for life.

The other male convict whose freedom would be secured by the bill is Dr. Lowenberg, who was convicted in New York of murder in the first degree and sentenced to be executed; but, in accordance with the then existing statute, which required that a condemned murderer should be imprisoned for twelve months before the death sentence be carried out, he has been imprisoned in Sing Sing for the year following that in which Lowenberg was incarcerated, leaving, besides himself, Jefferts and two others in the hands of the authorities. Jefferts was subsequently killed by a fellow convict, and the other two alluded to have since died, leaving Lowenberg the only convict in the State who was imprisoned by the terms of this obsolete statute.

In the female prison there are three convicts undergoing life sentences, which the provisions of the bill would also reach. These are Mary Fitch, alias "Polly Fitch" for the murder of her husband, by poisoning; a negro woman, named Brooks, and a white woman answering to the same equipment, both of whom are serving outside terms for the highest crime known to the law. The first mentioned female has been imprisoned about seventeen years. Another female convict (who during her somewhat mysterious existence both before and after her conviction has been the subject of not a little sympathy), Henrietta Robinson, familiarly known as the "veiled murderess," and who is at present an inmate of the State asylum for insane convicts at Auburn, will also be by the bill entitled to the liberty for which she has sighed in vain during the past twenty years.

A Use for Brimstone.

A French scientific paper suggests that brimstone should be carried on board every ship for use in case of fire. Half a hundred weight (thirty kilo) of brimstone would be sufficient to abstract the whole of the oxygen from one hundred cubic meters of air, thus rendering it unfit to support combustion. In a closed space, like a ship's hold, the sulphurous gas produced by the burning of the brimstone would penetrate where water from the deck could not be brought to bear, and the density of the gas would prevent its rising or spreading if care were taken to close the hatches carefully with wet sails, etc. It is suggested that the brimstone should be made up in the form of large matches, the ends of which could be passed through scuttles prepared for them in the decks or bulkheads in case of need. It is asserted that twenty to twenty-five francs' worth of brimstone would be sufficient to stifle and annihilate all traces of combustion in an air space of one thousand cubic meters capacity.

St. Nicholas—Scribner's *St. Nicholas* has heretofore absorbed many of the well known juvenile writers, and now we notice that it has taken into its folds the *Little Corporal* and the *Scholarship Magazine*. At this rate *St. Nicholas* will soon have all the young folks' serials consolidated with it.

Matrimonial arithmetic—Twice one are one.