

# The Leisure Hour.

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From Titan.  
IN HEAVEN LAST NIGHT.

Last night there was a festival in heaven:  
The sky burned with a most majestic light;  
Orion, Aquæ, and the mighty Seven,  
Flamed like the banners of some awful fight.  
The stars hung clustering like white ivy round  
The oriel window of the curtained sky,  
As though God had with festoons gayly bound  
The cloud-drapèd arch through which his Angels  
fly.

Perchance, the Master in some distant place,  
Had hung mid-sky a new-created world  
Or with another sun had garnished space,  
Streaming below like a gay flag unfurled.  
Or it might be some great returning day,  
When an Archangel, by a holy feet,  
Gained for his mighty crown another ray,  
By mastery at the games where Angels meet.

The winds at sunset had an organ's sound,  
And softly played a low religious tune.  
It may be at that hour some saint was crowned,  
Who died when through his window looked the

Whatever was the cause, there was in heaven  
A display rare and grand of pomp last night:  
Perhaps the Saviour and the great Eleven  
Revealed themselves unto angelic sight.

FOR THE LEISURE HOUR.  
LIFE OF AARON BURR.

BY PARTON.

We have recently read this book with a high degree of entertainment—entertainment, because the style of composition is genial and fascinating—satisfaction, because we have for a long while believed that the character of Burr was viewed through jaundiced eyes by the people of our country. The harshness of the judgment of his countrymen towards this unfortunate man, was beyond doubt, more severe than his conduct merited. Mr. Parton's Biography is pervaded by a spirit of impartiality, though at times he obviously palliates, not to say excuses, some of the defects which tarnish the reputation of Col. Burr. He had good and bad qualities of the most conspicuous kind, yet if the mask had been lifted, his character rightly understood, his name would have never been over loaded with shame and obloquy, as it is. While his passions were quick and impulsive, and often led him astray, his generosity was unbounded—overgushing. His purse could hardly be called his own. It was perpetually encashed, when the hand of poverty was out-stretched to him, for help. The name of Burr has seldom been uttered in the United States, without calling up an expression of horror as if he were a demon of the most fiendish propensities and had not a single feeling in common with human nature. Such motions are wide of the mark—kindness and affection in the home circle allude and command. These qualities were displayed by him to a pre-eminent degree. He was kind to his servants, and felt much anxiety for their welfare, and who ever witnessed more attachment—more overweening affection for a child than was manifested by him towards Theodosia—the witty, beautiful and accomplished Theodosia—who was the centre and circumference of his hopes and happiness, after the decease of Mrs. Burr, and who met with an untimely end on the ocean while en route to pay a visit to her father.

Read the following extract from one of Theodosia's letters, and you will see how she reciprocated a father's love. She writes:

"I witness your extraordinary fortitude with new wonder at every misfortune. Often after reflecting on this subject you seem to me so superior, so elevated above all other men; I contemplate you with such strange mixture of humility, admiration, reverence, love and pride, that very little superstition would be required to make me worship you as a superior being; such enthusiasm does your character excite in me. When I afterward revert to myself, how insignificant do my best qualities appear. My vanity would have been greater had I not been placed so near you; and yet my pride is our relationship. I had rather not be born than not be the daughter of such a man."

This heroic woman stood by her father and shared the odium visited upon him until her melancholy fate as mentioned above. Even in the decrepitude of age he would gaze intensely at the likeness of this daughter, while the tears might be seen to trickle down the old man's cheek. Mr. Parton tells of the duel between Burr and Hamilton, and the causes of it, in an interesting manner. The Biographer does not seem to entertain undue prejudice or hostility against the latter; yet the disclosures in this volume seem to be at variance with the current information respecting the origin of the difficulty between the two distinguished rivals—being less favorable to Hamilton. Nearly every one in this country has imbibed unjust prejudices against Burr—matured, chronic prejudices difficult of eradication, but we defy any one to peruse Mr. Parton's work, and not be disposed to throw the mantle of charity over the fribbles of one who possessed a few of the noblest traits that gives tone and dignity to human nature, notwithstanding his frailties during his eventful career often reached a point that excite human sympathy.

We give the following excerpt which we think hits off the character of Burr in a truthful and solicitous manner:

"Phrenology became the town-talk in 1835. It was a new thing with us then, and had few adherents. The young poet Barlow, one of the first practitioners in the science, dined one day at the house where Colonel Burr resided, when it occurred to the landlady to give him an opportunity to test his power of reading character. She said to him, 'We have an old gentleman from the country upon a visit to us, whom I should like you to see. He seems to me to have quite a remarkable head, though he is not a highly educated man.'

The phrenologist having intimated his willingness to examine him, she went below to prepare Colonel Burr for the interview, cautioning him to say nothing, and, above all, to keep still less a bow or a gesture should betray him. He was reclining in a chair, attired in a flannel dressing-gown, when Barlow was ushered into his apartment. His nurse, who was sitting at a table sewing, was to personate him in his old gentleman.

"This gentleman, sir," said the lady, "is a phrenologist, and I have brought him to examine your head."

He nodded, and the examination began.

"What a head!" was the phrenologist's first whisper. "Who is he? Where does he come from?"

"Oh," replied the lady, "he is an old friend of my father's. He lives in Connecticut, and has come to the city for medical advice. But I won't tell you anything more about him till you give us his character. You wouldn't suppose him to be a clergyman, would you?"

"A clergyman!" exclaimed Barlow. "Great heavens! No! I would sooner take him for a man of war than a man of peace. If he had been an educated man, he could have set the world in arms! This is a Van Buren head, only of higher ambition and greater powers."

"He would have made a good soldier, then, if he had been called upon to fight?" inquired the lady.

"Such a head as that," said the phrenologist, "might have led an army, and conquered a world! It is a great head! a very great head! What a pity he should have lived in obscurity! With many noble traits of character, however, he has some bad ones. He is generous to a fault. He takes pleasure in giving, whether in the world's life indeed, or before him no man had known it) he tasted—cracking! Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and surrendering himself to the new-born pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributive cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hailstones, which Bo-bo needed not more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences—he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

"You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you! but you must be eating fire, and I know not what—what have you got there I say?"

"O father, the pig, the pig! do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats."

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he curse' himself that ever he should begot a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the flats of Ho-ti, still shouting out, "Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste—O Lord!"—with such-like barbous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled in every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching of his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same remedy to them, he, in his turn tasted some of its flavor, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretence, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbors would certainly have stoned him for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad daylight, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so was the house of Ho-ti to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assize town. Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in Court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprit stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it; and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charges which judge had ever given,—to the surprise of the whole court, town-folks, strangers, reporters, and all present—without leaving the box, or any other manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest inquiry of the decision: and when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town-house was observed to be on fire

The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fire in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the district. The insurance-offices and all shut up shop. People built lighter and lighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke, who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it.—Then first began the rude form of a grid-iron. Roasting by the string or spit came in a century or two later, I forgot in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind—

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favor of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole mundus edibitis, I will maintain it to be the most delicate—*principes obsoniorum*.

I speak not of your grown pokers—things between pig and pork—those hobbydeys—but a young and tender sucking—under a moon old—guileless as yet of the sty—with no original speck of the *amor immunitiae*, the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest—his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble and a grumble—the mild forerunner, or *præludium* of a grunt.

*He must be roasted.* I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled—but what a sacrifice of the exterior temper!

There is no flavor comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, cracking, as it is well-called—the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance—with the adhesive oleaginous—O call it not fat! but an indefinable sweetmess growing up to it—the tender blossoming of fat—fat cropp'd in the bud—taken in the shoot—in the first innocence—the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food—the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna—or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is "doing"—it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat; that he is so passive. How equably he twirleth round the string!—Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age! he hath wept out his pretty eyes—radiant jellies—shooting stars.—

See him in the dish his second cradle, how meek he lieth!—wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indolency which too often accompany mature swinehood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal—wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation—from these sins he is happily snatched away—

Ere sin could blight or sorrow fade,  
Death came with timely care—

his memory is odoriferous—no clown curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon—no coal-heaver boileth him in seeking souces—he hath a fair sepulture in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure—and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of savors. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent—a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinnering that really a tender-conscience person would do well to pause—too ravishing for mortal taste, she wounded and excoriated the lips that approach her—like lovers' kisses, she biteh—she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish—but she stoppeth at the palate—she meddleth not with the appetite—and the coarsest hunger might be satisfied for her consistently for a mutton chop.

Pig—let me speak his praise—is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batteh on him, and the weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertwined, and not to be unravelled without hazard, he is good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbor's fare.

I am one of those, who freely and ungoudly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest, I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfaction, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "endear Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villain fowl"), capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them,

as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything." I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good favors, to extra-dominate, or send out of the house, slightly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate—it argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing, into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London bridge) a grey-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt, at this time of day, that he was a counterfeit.) I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-delusion, and the very coxcombry of charity, schoolboy-like, I made him present of the whole cake! I walked up a little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger that I had never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I—I myself, and not another—would eat her nice cake.

—and what should I say to her the next time I saw her—how naughty I was to part with her pretty present!—and the odor of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last—and blamed my impudent spirit of finding a star in the sky.

With the consciousness of this newly discovered power, came the new hope of struggle and rivalry with man. In this struggle, disdaining the tender might of tears, she has dared to wield the stern elements in which tyrants live and have their being.—She ascended the throne, and kingdoms quaked. Her voice, which God has set to the tune of nature's melting melodies, became loud in command as the startling blast of the camp-waking trumpet. Under her rule, gained by the invasion of man's rights, one by one, the lights of mercy became extinguished, and gross darkness brooded over the land; and history named her 'the bloody queen.'

Again, she has been seen under tossing plumes and streaming banner, grasping with her own hand the hilt of the sword, waving it over embattled hosts and smoking fields, leading in the thundering van to victory or a grave of blood.

In all this there was a witching spell like an atmosphere around her, which bound man to her shrine as an idol worshipper. Though she had lost the pure light of the sky whence she had fallen, yet there was a brightness about her, call it the *ignis fatuus* if you choose, that dazzled and lured man to her bondage.

If woman would now lift up the sceptre she once bore in primal days, which she yet holds half hidden, but still clothed with power, and wave it over ruder man, she must leave the throne of secular dominion to others; cease to sound the charging trumpet; tune her voice to the harmonies of domestic life; and be herself again.

Then her smile would win man from his apostacy; re-open Eden on the stream of his years; and lure back the world from the crowded path of woe.

What a mystery is woman's heart, woman's tongue, her love, her hatred! Some poetic genius, in the wild rhapsody of a fit of frenzy, has said, 'Love is a tempest in a gale—an ocean in a tear—eternity in a moment.' If there be the least semblance of truth in such hyperbole, its only application is to woman's love.

The world is full of mysteries. Among its enigmas, none is perhaps, greater than woman, if one heaven, clothed with the sun, was a wonder to an inspired man, why should it be thought incredible, that one on earth, clothed without it, should be a wonder to uninspired men?

Her primal enigma is connected with the mystery of sleep; for while the first man lay with his physical sense locked up in deep slumber, she sprang from his side, free from the grossness which attaches to him; whose frame-work was simple modified dust. Her first appearance was amid the bloom and loveliness of Eden, when creation was young, and her presence added a new charm to the enchanting sun.

Man was there, the monarch of earth, with all things, under his dominion. Great as he was and happy in his paradisaical home, he was alone. It was not good that he should remain in this solitude, surrounded by such felicitous circumstances. So said his Maker, and woman came to complete his bliss. She came like an angel of mercy, robed in beauty and dignity, beyond all that poetic fancy ever visioned of loneliness and worth. Her brow, the throne of Divinity; her eye, illuminated from the fountain of light; her tongue, angel touched; her form more perfect than chiselled work of heaven-guided artist; at once the full grown companion and joy of man.

When in her home of bloom, she met temptation, listened, fell, earth had its wonder, and began its woes.

The bowers withered and dropped amid dark weeds; music was lost in discord; gloom wove its shadows around the world; and death went forth to spread his black wing over every dwelling of mortals, and extort the whisper from the pallid lips of myriad victims. 'We are ruined.' The shroud was prepared, the grave dug, and dust returned to dust.

Though woman fell, yet her fall was not like that of a star striken from its sphere, to shine no more. She passed into a lower region of the moral hemisphere, to journey round with man through the cycle of his course, a sharer of his toil, his mingled joy and woe.

She suddenly sank away from her original brightness into a total eclipse; but still she was destined to shine again. Though once unfaitful to her own soul, she was to walk in fidelity beneath roofs of worn and weary ones, to smooth the low couch of sickness, tread the path of pestilence, and bend with affectionate kindness over the bed of death.

Old history, gray with the faded glory of dim and wasted centuries, records her daring and her deeds of blood. While the earth bloomed in the juvenescence beauty of its young days, she sat in its Eden-bower, close by the heart of man, with unshrinking and unabashed dependence. Then she knew her position, was satisfied with it. She had no aspirations to crown or throne, nor once dreamed in her brightest days that both were hers. While innocent, she knew not that in after years the voice of stern multitudes would call her to exercise the prerogative of royalty. But on the selfsame day in which she listened to the tempter, she felt a power she knew not of till that moment; a power to bow man before her, as before old kings they have since often bowed.

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