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D. J. WHICHARD, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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BY

D. J. WHICHARD.

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LODGES.

Greenville Lodge, No. 284, A. F. & A. M., meets every 1st Thursday and Monday night after the 1st and 3rd Sunday at Masonic Lodge. W. M. King, W. M.

Greenville R. A. Chapter, No. 50, meets every 2nd and 4th Monday nights at Masonic Hall, F. W. Brown, H. P.

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Pitt Council, No. 226, A. L. O. E., meets every Thursday night. J. B. Cherry, C.

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Poetry.

THE OLD MAID'S PRAYER.

An old maid knelt beneath a maple tree
With feelings wonderful queer;
She prayed both long and fervently;
"King, Lord, consent my voice to hear;
Thou knowest my wish before my tongue
Can name it; but it doth belong
To me to ask if I'd receive—
So thou has taught, and I believe,
Thou knowest it is not wealth or power
My heart desireth every hour;
For 'tis a husband, Lord, I want!
Wilt Thou the gift in kindness grant?
O, give me one that's kind and clever,
And 'Tine shall be the praise forever!"
A hoot owl sat in the maple tree,
A jovial, happy owl was he.
He had been hid in the leaves all day,
Dozing and sleeping his time away;
But at the sound of the old maid's prayer
The bird awoke with a sudden stare.
Silent he sat till the prayer was through,
Then suddenly cried: "Who! who! who!
Down went the old maid on her face,
"And dost Thou show such amazing grace
As to grant Thy servant Thy voice to hear,
Which has not before greeted mortal ear,
Since Sinai shook to its very base
And its terrible tones? O, wondrous grace!"
Thus to herself did the old maid speak—
So badly scared she was faint and weak,
And lay half senseless upon the ground,
Till roused again by a terrible sound,
For again from the top of the tree was heard
The loud "Who! who!" of the ominous bird.
Then she answered: "Dear me! I hardly
know who,
Most anybody, Lord, will do!"

DISTANCE LENDS ENCHANTMENT.

The sails we see on the ocean
Are as white as white can be,
But never one in the harbor
Are as white as the sails at sea.
And the clouds that crown the mountain
With purple and gold delight,
Turn to cold, gray mist and vapor
Before we can reach its height.
Stately and fair the vessel
That comes not near our beach;
Stately and grand the mountain
Whose height we may never reach.
Oh, distance! thou dear enchantress,
Still hold in thy magic veil
The glory of far-off mountains,
The gleam of the far-off sail.

Selected Story.

Written for the REFLECTOR

"Mar's Ned's Wife."

M. G. McClelland.

"Hysh, honey!"
"But mammy!"
"Hysh, child! 'Taint no use
talkin' now, Bekase you bin
gwine ter school for three or fo'
month's you aint got all de 'light-
enment of de 'postles an' de 'pos-
iting too. Folks whar war grey-
haired befo' yer ma, eben, 'gun
to study 'bout beaux, have got
some sense, I reckon. Debblis kin
git inside of folks. Debblis big
as er horse, an' strong as er horse.
I done seed 'em. What you know
'bout it? You aint nothin' but
chil'uns! Chil'uns done got so per-
junktiky an' torved ole folks 'blec-
ed to scramble 'pon de lum bank
an' gib 'em all de track, keep 'em
gittin' run clear over. Dey know
dis, an' dey 'municates dat, an' you
kyarnt never teach 'em nothin'—
not eben dar own foolishness.
Dey knows all whar's printed 'pon
de main sheet—ebery side—befo'
de type gits set up, an' dey kin
tell all about it, an' sen' out er sup-
plement befo' dar eye toof bulst
thro' de skin. Lordy, lordy! dey-
's so forred!"

The old woman paused in her work, flat iron in hand, and contemplated the child, who had usurped the kitchen chimney-corner, with unqualified disfavor, rolling her eyes and clicking her tongue against her teeth as though language proved inadequate for the expression of disdain. After a moments contemplation, pregnant with rebuke for vain presumption, she turned to the open fire place, deposited her cold iron before the glowing coals, and caught up a hot one. She tested the temperature of this by turning it face upwards and scientifically sitting upon it, before she trusted it upon the

snowy linen, lying in readiness upon her table.

"Chil'uns whar aint got no manners aint got no bizness in folks kitchen," she observed suggestively, as she resumed her occupation. "Aggervatin' konterdickshins chil'uns is de sort I aint got no use fur in do work'. Big an' little, black an' white, I 'spise 'em in my sight. I bin lookin' fur Miss Frances to holler out'n de house, smuthin' nother 'bout dem lessons, befo' now, man."

Rebuke and suggestion, alike, fell on headless ears: the child made neither defense nor rejoinder, indeed, it was doubtful if she heard what was being said to—or rather at—her. Her mind was filled with other matter; was wrestling with its first psychological difficulty. Could there be such a thing as demoniac possession? Was it possible for devils to enter human beings and arrogate to their own purposes the natural powers and intellectual force of the person so possessed? The Bible cited many instances of bodily possession and bodily casting forth: there was the woman who accosted seven at once, and the man among the tombs. But then, Mr. Burton, the clever scientist, who gave lectures on chemistry at the school she attended, maintained that revelation was apocryphal. She had listened to his conversations with her uncle, at whose house she stayed during the school session, when neither of the men knew of her presence in the room, and had endeavored to follow the course of their reasoning, to her great bewilderment.

She was an imaginative child, given to thought, to reading, to quietly hearkening to the conversation of older people. She had collected a queer jumble of facts and fallacies, odds and ends of theories, scraps of information, scraps of erudition, all second-hand for she was still too young to think connectedly, most of it mere junk which the influx of knowledge and experience would sweep away. It was all real to her, at present, and her old plunder was not recognized as such, but considered a fine possession, a vast treasure. This idea of demoniac possession was her last acquisition and she kept it in her pocket, as it were, and kept taking it out and turning it in her hands and puzzling her little brains over it, interested in the thing, but densely ignorant of its nature and properties.

One day she summoned up courage to question Mr. Burton about it, but he simply laughed and bid her not to bother her little head with speculations on matters beyond her present scope; to wait until she should be old enough to understand science, and then the dark places would be light to her, and the rough places made smooth.

But Mab could not wait. She wanted aid to understanding at once; the darkness was dense but she could not help groping, the rough places obstructive, but that only made more intense her desire to press forward. What could be the meaning of "demoniac possession?"

As usual, when in difficulties, she betook herself to the kitchen to confide in her old nurse. Mammy was ignorant, but, as yet, Mab was only vaguely conscious of that fact. She knew that Mammy did not know as much as, for instance, her father or mother, but she was still willing to concede that Mammy might know more than she did herself. Then too, she did not wish to consult her parents, she feared that her speculations might be considered wicked, and she wished to stand well with the higher powers. Mammy was different, Mammy might not be able to explain, but she would not

be shocked. She might grow angry and scold, particularly if Mab should contradict her, or venture an opinion of her own, but the child did not mind that.

As is customary in the South, the kitchen was an out building, standing some little distance from the house, with which it was connected by a plank walk. It was a large, unplastered room, ceiled with pine plank, and heavily beamed above. The winter sunlight streamed in through the uncurtained windows and made patches of light on the dusky floor. On a wooden bench, near the ironing table, stood a big split basket half filled with freshly ironed clothing. In the deep throated chimney the flames, from the burning logs, leaped up and roared and crackled; a big Maltese cat, on the hearth, sat upright, and reflectively stroked his whiskers with his mouse-colored paws. Outside the snow lay deep on the ground.

Mammy pulled out lace and frills and smoothed ruffles and tucks with clever, capable fingers. Her comely brown face was a pleasant thing to look upon, and her bandana turban made a bright patch of color against the dusky background of the wall beyond her.

"You aint got dem lessons, man," she observed, tentatively. "Dis here snow aint too deep fur de cutter nother. I hear yo' Pa tellin' Jerry he nos' git it out ter-morrer an' han' you back ter de 'Academy in de afternoon. 'Cris-tin' run out day befo' yisstiddy an' here you is yit."

"I know all my lessons well enough," replied Mab, indifferently, "and I'm not going back to school until Monday. Mammy wants me to have my heavy dresses to take, and they aint done yet. I wish you'd tell me a story Mammy. I'm so tired of thinking, and it's so dull."

"Why'n't you go in de house an' play wid 't'other chil'uns," suggested Mammy. "Chil'uns an' Jake's in de nursery, an' dey was havin' a mighty good time when I come out."

Mandy and Jake were Mammy's own two grandchildren, merry little coffee-colored monkeys, always in great demand with the white children as playmates, on account of their fertility of resource. Mandy and Jake in the nursery was generally synonymous with fun of an order which even twelve-year-old Mab did not despise. But today she was out or tune; she did not want to play; romping with the children could not solve the problem of demoniac possession for her.

"I don't want to play. I want to sit here with you, Mammy, and see you erump the ruffles on the baby's dress, and listen to a story. Please do, Mammy! Nobody ever tells such delightful stories as you—nobody can. Aunt Kate says that you have the gift of narrative like the ancient inventors."

"What's dat, honey?" questioned Mammy, a grateful look coming over her comely face. Dearly she loved big words and high-sounding compliments, as cunning little Mab well knew. This, that Miss Kate Allison—a young lady from way up in Boston—had said of her gift sounded very fine indeed.

"I don't know exactly," admitted Mab, "but I reckon it's a person that tells the very best stories in all the world, so that everybody wants to listen to them—and that's you. I'll ask Aunt Kate if that isn't it."

"Dat's it, honey, dat's it, you may be sho," asserted Mammy, decidedly. "Miss Kate, she's a lady, an' she don't pay no grudin' compliments. She don't never scrimp de cloth none."

After a moment spent in reflection, during which the last little child's dress was folded and laid in the basket, Mammy stood all her irons in a row on one side of the hearth to cool, and seated herself in a splint-bottomed rocking chair, with an infant's rote in her lap, and a silver knife in her hand for the plaiting of the tiny frills.

"Did I ever tell you 'bout Mars Ned, honey? Yo' Ma's oldest brother way back dar in old Virginia whar we all come from?"

"No," replied the child drawing nearer. "I sho'd like to hear about him."

"Jus' like I was tellin' you, chil'," commenced Mammy, swaying softly back and forth, "we didn't none of us—dat is de white family ('ceptin' 'twas yo' Pa) an' us house people—belongst down here in Mississippi at fust. 'Twas none of us raised down here. We come from up in ole Virginia; in de James river valley dey called it, an' our plantation up dar was another sort o' one to dis one. De lan' wa'n't no better, but de house, an' de yard, an' de neighbors was heap mo' to my saterfaction den what dese is. 'Twas jus' a beautiful place, dat one was, an' dar I reckon we would all of lived an' died same as we had been born and raised, if it hadn't bin fur Mars Ned's wife."

My ole Mars' had six boys, an' only one little gal, Miss Frances—your Ma. Dar was Ned, he was de oldest one, an' proud we all was, bof' black an' white, upon de plantation when he was born, po' fellow, kase didn't nary one of us guess, not from ole Mars'—de prondes' one of all—down to de chil'uns in de quarter, de trouble dat blue-eyed baby was gwine ter see. Den dar was Conway, an' Charles, an' Robert—him dat grewed up to be a doctor—an' Wilkins—Rufus dey used to call 'em, kase his head was as red as de cut ole Mars' gin him when he got big enough to ride—a rale sorrel-top he were. Arter she had five boys Mistic look like she'd go clean distracted arter a gal, and ole Mars' wa'n't no better. When Miss Frances was born you'd er 'lowed dar never had been er baby 'pon de plantation befo', an' when po' little Rolfe, de youngest of all, come de nex' year, why he wa'n't no 'count at all.

Everything went on mighty peaceful 'twell de fo' oldest boys got grow'd an' Miss Frances a pretty slip of a gal 'bout eighteen. Den ole Mistic took sick, an' nothin' didn't seem to do her no good. I mind one night when she was at de wust, she called me to de bedside to her. 'Twas nobody in de room 'cept me and her, kase dat was my spell of watchin', an' I'd made Miss Frances lay down in de nex' room. Ole Mistic had his' up in de bed and was puttin' befo' her wid her white thin fingers, an' shakin' an' tremblin' like a person in an' age. I went up close when she call me, an' pulled de covers round her, an' took hold of her hand, an' tried to make her lay down. Her eyes were wide open but she didn't look like she seed me, an' she kept sayin' over an' over, "Ned's wife! Ned's wife!—don't—don't let—" an' den she sorter mumbled off like so I couldn't understand her. Peared to me 'twas so erus dat I couldn't git my min' roun' it, fur to ketch hold of it good, an' 'skiver what she was aimin' at no way I could fix it. Mars Ned didn't hab no mo' wife, er nothin'. I never even heard tell of his lookin' 'cross de road arter no gal petic'ler. Look to me so similar fur de Mistic to kyar on dat er way.

I couldn't git her pacified nother, all I could do. She kep' er moanin' an' er moanin' 'bout de contract, and nothin' father has been done about building the new house.

It is told in Waterbury, Conn., that a well-known business man of that town prepared to build a handsome dwelling, and awarded the contracts. During a recent kirmess there his fortune was told by one of the alleged gypsies, who warned him to give up the project, else death would claim him. If the house should not be built, long life and happiness awaited him. Next day the merchant withdrew the contract, and nothing father has been done about building the new house.

catch hold of my han' once wid bof' o' her an' said "take care of my boy! take care of my boy!" an' wouldn't res' unt'wail I promised. I done it soon ez I got my senses together good, to soothe her of coase, but I didn't know what I were promisin', nor which de boys she meant, nor nothin'. Peard like to me arterwards when I was studyin' 'bout it dat, dat ar dyin' mother seed things whar was beyant de knowledge an' ezernment of mortal folks, an' dat it had pow'ful kelby on her mind.

'O' lady! She never lived more'n a day or two arter dat night, an' arter her del', peard like de string had bust loose from roun' de family, an' it sorter drapped to pieces. Miss Frances, she war so broke down wid 'strees an' nussin', dat ole Mars' sent her down here to Mississippi, to stay 'long ov her annt 'twell she got rested an' pacified. Dat was yo' Pa's mother, kase Miss Frances took 'en married her own cousin, like Virginia people mos'ly does do. She war a widow den, an' arterwards she went up to de Norf' somewhar an' got her another husband, an' Miss Kate wa' born up dar.

My Sallie, de onliest gal I had, (me an' ole Mistic jus' followed one an' dder, heaps o' boys an' jus' one gal apiece) come down here wid Miss Frances kase she wa' her maid. An' mighty pleased she wa', an' sot up 'bout de change, like gals all is, white an' black.

De young men sorter scattered too, an' de fust winter de Mars' was mos'ly by hissef 'cept when de boys would come down an' go. Toward de spring dar came a mighty change, for Mars Ned he whirled in, he did, an' got married, an' fetched his wife home to de ole place to keep house an' make 'er home fur 'em all.

An' she did. De fust month she was on her Sunday manners an' didn't nary soul 'cept us colored people know nothin' 'tall 'bout de temper she had, but arter dat!—Good Lord hab mussy! don't say nothin'! De tantrums 'da 'ooman could git into would'er made de ve'y ole Satan hissef' open his eye an' uncurl his tail hsteinin', while he harnt how she done 'em.

Eff you was to take dem seben devils Mary had, an' add to 'em de ones dat chased de hogs down de hill, an' de ones whar sot in de tombs wid de tormented man, an' jus' as many mo' as you choses, an' tu'n 'em loose in de big barn to jaw, an' fuss, an' quarl', dey couldn't do no wuss'en she done when her temper was up.

She was mighty pretty in de face too, an' could sing sweeter'n anything you ever heard, an' dance an' be sweet as sugar long as she got her own way, but let anybody cross her, an' dey better take to de woods an' live in er hollow tree 'twell she come roun' agin.

She come of a good ole family too, but dey was bad people, hard-living, hard-swearin', hard-drinkin' folks for generations. Dey used to tell awful tales 'bout dar barb'rous doings, and dar temper. One de fust-ways be hit her, an' she died an' another one shot his own brother in a row dey had one day.

Arter I seed what sort o' 'ooman Miss Mildred was, I didn't blame ole Mistic fur bein' oneasy on her death bed.

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

Newspapers.

Sam P. Ivins, editor of the Athens Post, one of the oldest editors in Tennessee, gets off the following about politicians:

The newspapers by this time know that the average politician is the friend of the newspaper during the campaign and the enemy of the press at all other times. The office-holder in general despises an outspoken newspaper. When in office he wants only an organ to defend him, right or wrong. As a candidate he appreciates the moulder of public opinion and readily allows the necessity of a free press in a government of the people. As an official he considers a free outspoken newspaper a public nuisance. After the election he has no use for the press or people.

The condition of the country has improved within a year. It has been so slow and comparatively so little that it is not easily discerned. But there has been improvement. Railroads have done better, trade has been better this year than last, and failures among merchants are fewer. During the six months of 1886, ending with 30th June, there were nearly 1,000 less failures than for the first six months of 1885. The liabilities are also less, being \$50,434,000, against \$74,722,000 for 1885.—Wilming-ton Star.

PROFESSIONAL CARDS.

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HUGH F. MURRAY, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, WILSON, N. C. Will attend all terms of Pitt Superior Court, from the first to the last day of the session, and devote his best efforts to all business entrusted to him. Mar 27, '85, ff.

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THIS IS IMPORTANT. ALL PERSONS INDEBTED TO THE undersigned either by note or account are earnestly requested to come forward and make immediate settlement, as we are compelled to have the money. Flanagan & Williamson, Jan 6 GREENVILLE, N. C.