

DUST AND ASHES.

She practiced on him all her wiles
Till in love's silken net she caught him,
And showered on him her sweetest smiles
When to her feet she captive brought him.

But when he pleaded with the maid
To be regarded as her lover,
She sighed a little, blushed and said,
"Please wait until the summer's over."

And then began love's golden dream;
To every picnic, every dance he
Took her, bought her lemon cream
And other things that maidens fancy.

At beach hotels with her he hopped,
For she was quite an ardent dancer—
At length the youth the question popped
And waited for the maiden's answer.

It drew the sweetness from his life,
It burned and scorched him like a blister;
'Twas this: "I cannot be your wife,
But I will be to you a sister."
Boston Courier.

AN UNHISTORIC PAGE.

BY FRANK R. STOCTON.

The following story received a prize of five hundred dollars offered for the "best humorous story" in the Youth's Companion.

An elderly negro man, Uncle Enoch by name, short of stature and with hair and beard beginning to grizzle, but with arms and body yet stout and strong, stood back of his little log-house, not far from a Virginia public road, endeavoring to pull his axe out of a knotty black-gum log. Often and often, when his stock of fire-wood had diminished to this one log, had Uncle Enoch tried to split it, and now he was trying again. While thus engaged, there came to him his son Dick. This was a youth rather taller and lighter in color than his father, of an active and good-natured disposition, and hitherto supposed to be devoid of disturbing ambitions.

"Look a-heah, daddy," said he, "won't yuh lemme go to Washin'ton nex' week?"

Uncle Enoch stopped tugging at his axe, and turned round to look at Dick. "What fur?" said he.

"Ise gwine to be a page in Congress."

"What's dat?" asked his father, his bright eyes opening wide. "What yuh want to dat fur?"

"A page is one of dem chaps as runs round and waits on de Congressmen when dey're doing dere work in Washin'ton. Dere's lots of 'em and some of 'em is culle'd. Dey hab to be might' peart and cut around, and fetch de Congressmen eberyting dey wants. And dey don't have to work for no fifty cents a day, nudder. Dey gits sebenteen hundred dollars a year."

"What dat?" exclaimed Uncle Enoch. "Yuh means de whole kit and boodle uv 'em gits dat?"

"No, I don't," said Dick. "Ebery one gits it for hisse'f."

"Yuh shu'h of dat?"

"Yes, sah," replied Dick. "I heard it from a man down at decross-roads, when I took ole Billy to be shod dis ebenin'. He was telling a lot of folks all about it at de stoah. An' won't yuh lemme go nex' week?"

The ole man put his hand on his axe-handle and stood reflectively.

Uncle Enoch had been born a slave, and had been an honest and industrious servant, whose only failing was that he was inclined to think himself better on Sundays, than his companions; and now that he was as free as anybody, he was still honest and industrious, and still went to church with the highest white hat, the biggest shirt-collar, and the longest coat of anybody in the congregation. As he grew older, his opinion of himself did not decrease, and he was very fond of exhorting his fellow-members in church, and of giving them advice in private whenever he saw cause for it, and this very often in the shape of some old fable, which generally became strangely twisted as it passed through the old man's mental organism.

"Look a-heah, Dick," said he, "Ise gwine ter tell yuh a story. It's one uv ole Mashr George's stories, and I've heard him tell it often to de chillun. Dere was a mouse what lived in de city, I dunno 'zactly whar, but jus' as like as not it was Washin'ton, an' he went to see a friend uv his'n who had a plantation. De plantation mouse he were glad to see de udder one, an' put him in de chamber wid de new carpet, an' gib him de bes' he had; but de fine geman he didn't pfer to be satisfy wid nuffin but light bread an' cohn pone for breakfast, an' chicken an' ham for dinner; and he says, says he:

"Yuh don't git canvas-back ducks down heah, I reckon?"

"No, sah! ses de plantation mouse. "Nur tar-pins, stewed in Madary wine?"

"No, sah!"

"Nur oysters, fresh from de bay ebery mawwin'; nur ice-cream, all de colors ob de rainbow; an' little candy-balls, what go off pop when you pull 'em; an' a whole bottle ob champagne to each pusson?"

"No, sah! ses de plantation mouse, a-fannin' ob hisse'f wid hean'kercher."

"Well, now, jus' yuh look a-heah," ses de udder one, gwine out on de poach to smoke his cigar, "yuh come to de city sometime, and when you tase what dem dar tings is like, yuh won't be content fur to stay no more

on dis yere no-count farm, so fur from de railroad."

"So, soon as he sell he 'baccer, de plantation mouse he go to see his city fren'. He glad to see him, an' sot him right down to a pow'ful good dinner, wid all de canvas-back ducks, an' de tar-pins, an' de eysters, an' de cham pain, an' de udder tings dot he done tell 'bout.

"If I'd a-knowned you was a-comin', ses de city mouse, I'd had a reglar cump'ny dinner; but yuh'll have to go 'long and jus' take pot-luck wid us dis time."

"Den you didn't git my letter?" ses de plantation mouse.

"No, sah. Reckin yuhr man done forgot to put it in de pos'office."

"So dey sot an' sot fill dey mos' like to bus, an' de plantation mouse he wonder whar he would a-had if he fren' had done got he letter."

"Jus' as dey was litin' dere cigars, and puttin' dey heels upon two cheers, de dinin'-room open, an' in walk de sheriff ob de county."

"Look a-heah, kurnel," says he, "have yuh got de money ready fur all de ducks, an' de eysters, an' de wine you've had fur yuhsef; an' de slab meat an' de cohn from de West fur yuh han's? Yuh know I said I wouldn't give yuh no longer nur to-day. De city mouse he turn pale, an' he tuk de plantation mouse into one corner, an' ses he:

"Look a-heah, kin yer len' me two or free thousand dollars till to-morrer mawwin', when de bank opens?"

"Den de udder mouse he pull a dreful poor mouf, an' he ses: 'Ise pow'ful sorry, but it rained so much in de low-groun's las' year dat my cohn was all spilt; an' dere wasn't no rain on de high groun's, an' de cohn dere all wilted; an' de fros' done catch my 'baccer craps, an' I didn't have money enuf fur to buy quinine fur de han's.'"

"Den de town mouse he ses to de sheriff, ses he:

"You call aroun' Monday mawwin', an' I'll pay yuh dat money. I was a spectin' my fren' ter-day, and done forgot to k'lect it."

"Dat won't do," ses de sheriff. "Ise heard dat story often 'nuff." An' he rung de auction bell, an' he leebied on eberyting in de house; an' as dey didn't fotch enuf, he sold dat city mouse an' dat plantation mouse fur slaves."

Dick uttered an exclamation of horror at this direful conclusion of the story.

"Now look a-heah, boy," continued Uncle Enoch, "ef yuh tink yuh is gwine down to Washin'ton to git tar-pins an' eysters an' champagne out ob dem Congressmen, yuh won't be tuk an' sold, 'cause dey can't do dat now, but yuh'll find yuhsef gobbled up some way wuss dan dat plantation mouse was."

Dick grumbled that he wasn't a mouse, and he wasn't 'gwine after tar-pins, nur eysters, nudder."

"Jus' yuh go 'long an' pick up some chips an' trash fur to make de fire," said his father, "an' don't talk to me no mo' h'ob dat foolishness."

Dick walked slowly off to do as he was bid, and for a long time Uncle Enoch remained standing by the twisted black gum log without striking a blow.

Uncle Enoch was a skillful ox-driver, working in that capacity for the farmer on whose land he lived. All the next day he walked meditatively by the side of the slowly moving Bob and Blinker, hauling wood from the mountain. He did not shout as much as usual at his oxen but he guided them with all his customary precision around stumps, rocks, and the varied impediments of the rough, woodland road."

"Yuh Dick," said he to his son, in the evening, "is yuh done gib up all dat foolishness 'bout goin' to Washin'ton?"

"Taint no foolishness," muttered Dick.

"Why, boy," said his father "pears to me yuh is too ole for dat sort o' ting."

"It don't make no kind o' difference how ole a page is," said Dick. "Dat man said so hisse'f. He says dey got 'em all ages."

"Dat so, shuh?" asked his father.

"Sartin shuh," said Dick.

"And dey gits sebenteen hundred dollars a year?"

"Yes," said Dick. "An' besides dat, dey can make lots ob money blackin' boots, an' holdin' hosses, an' runnin' arrants fur de Congressmen, when court's out."

Uncle Enoch looked steadfastly at his son for some moments without speaking. Then he said: "Look a-heah, boy: Ise made up my mind 'bout dis yere business. Ef all dat 'ar money's to be got by pagein', I agrees to de notion."

"Hi-ri!" shouted Dick, beginning to dance.

"Yuh needn't cut up sich capers," said his father. "Yuh ain't gwine. Ise gwine mesc'f."

If Dick could have turned pale he would have done so. He stood speechless.

"Yes, sah," continued Uncle Enoch. "Ef it don't make no difference how ole de pages is, I kin step round as lively as any uv 'em, an' kin wait on de Congressmen better'n any boy. I know what the gemmen wants, an' I know how to do it. Ise waited on 'em fore yuh was bawn, boy, an' yuh neber libed 'mong white folks, nohow. Jus' yuh take dat ox-whip ter-morrer mawwin', an' tel Mashr Gregory dat Ise done gone to Washin'ton, and dat yuh've come to drive de oxen. Yuh's ole enuf fur dat now, an' it's time yuh was beginnin'."

Downcast as Dick was when he heard that he was not going to be a page in the halls of Congress, his spirits immediately rose when he was told that he

was to take Uncle Enoch's place as ox-driver. To crack the long whip, and guide the slow progress of Bob and Blinker, was to him a high delight and honor, which impressed him the more forcibly because it was so totally unexpected. The government position had held forth glittering advantages, which had greatly attracted him, but which his mind did not entirely comprehend. But to drive the oxen was a real thing, a joy, and a dignity which he knew all about. Dick was entirely satisfied. As to the page's salary, which his memory or his ears had so greatly exaggerated, he did not even think of it.

Uncle Enoch determined not to announce his intention to his neighbors, nor to take counsel of any one. He went into the house, and after electrifying his family with the statement of his intended step into what was to them wealth and high position, he set them all to work to get him ready for an early start the next morning. Washing, ironing, patching, and packing went on during a great part of the night—his wife, "Aunt Maria," his three daughters, and even Dick, doing their utmost to fit him out for his great undertaking.

"What Ise gwine to do wid dat sebenteen hundred dollars," said Uncle Enoch, as he sat on a low chair sewing up a gap in one of his Sunday boots, "is to buy dis track o' land on de hill back heah, an' make a wine-yard uv it. No use foolin' no more wid little tater patches, an' cabbages, an' 'tree or foh dozen hills o' cohn; I'll sell de grapes, an' buy all dat sort o' ting. At de wine-cellar in town dey'll take all de grapes yoh kin raise, an' ef I have to buy a horse an' wagon to haul 'em inter town, yuh won't see dis yere family walkin' to church no mo' wid de mud up to dere knees and de hot sun brillin' on ter dere heads."

A little after daylight the next morning Uncle Enoch, wearing his tall white hat with the broad band of crape around it which it had on when it was given to him; with his highest and stiffest shirt-collar; a long black coat reaching nearly to his heels; a pair of blue jean trousers rolled up at the ankles; his enormous Sunday boots well blacked; in one hand a very small cowhide trunk tied up with a rope and carried in the manner of a violin-case; a vast umbrella with a horn handle in the other hand; and the greater part of his recently paid month's wages in his pocket started off to walk three miles to the railroad-station on his way to become a congressional page.

Dick assumed the ox-whip, and as there was no one else to take the vacated place, he cracked it in pride and glory over the heads of Bob and Blinker, and although they ran into more stumps, and got into more deep ruts, than was good for himself or the cart, the winter wood of Mr. Gregory continued to be hauled.

One week, and two weeks, passed on without news from Uncle Enoch, and then Aunt Maria began to get impatient. "Look a-heah, Dick," she said, "when you comes home ter-night, an' has had yuh supper, an' has done split up dem ole rails, what's too short fur de fence anyway, fur taint no use fur yuh to try no mo' on dat black-gum log what yuh daddy done went away and luf, an' ef he don't come back soon he won't find no fence at all, I reckon, when he do come. Yuh ju' sot down and write him a letter, an' tell him 'taint no use fur him to be sabin up all dat sebenteen hundred dollars to buy wine-yards while his chillun's gwine about wid sca'ce no close to dere backs."

"Dere's yuhr sis'r Charlotte what has to go to church wid dem light blue slippers Miss Sally gib her, an' no stockuns, an' no wunner de people laf at her. An' dere's yuhr daddy makin' all dat money down dere in Washin'ton wid de Congressmen."

"An' she a gal, too, what's done won de prize tree times in de cake-walk. I spec' he's done forgot what I tole him 'bout de weddin'-ring fur me. I done tole him to buy it wid de fuf's money he got, an' to send it in a letter. Ise neber had none yit, though we was both married long back befoh de war."

"An' it's no use waitin', nudder, fur little Jim's funeral till he comes back. He kin sen' de money fur de cake and wine jus' as well as not, an' Brudder Anderson is ready, he tole me las' Sunday, widde fax an' de tex. Little Jim's been dead now nigh on ter two yeah, an' it's time his funeral was preached."

"I ain't got no 'jections to de wine-yard, seshly ef we hab ter hab a wagon to haul de grapes, but I don't want yuhr daddy to come back heah an' find hissef 'shamed uv his family arter livin' down dar 'mong dem quality folks. I'll send Charlotte dis mawwin' to borrow a sheet uv paper, an' a pen an' ink from Miss Sally, an' see ef she won't let her pick up some apples in de orchard while she's dar, an' praps she'll give her a bucket uv buttermilk ef she's done churned viddyly. An' yuh put all dat in de letter, an' sen' it off jus' as soon as yuh kin."

Dick willingly undertook this business, having made up his mind while his mother was talking to him to put in a few words on his own account; and before he began the important epistle each of his sisters had something to say to him in private in regard to suggestions which they wished to make to the head of the family.

The letter moved more slowly than Bob and Blinker over the roughest road. After three nights work it was only half done, for Dick found a pen much more difficult to handle than a whip, and besides being a very stumbling speller, invariably went to sleep

over his paper after a quarter of an hour's work. Late in the afternoon of the fourth day after the commencement of this literary enterprise, Dick was standing by the black-gum log with the axe in his hand, wondering if it would be better to take another rail from the forlorn fence around the little yard—for what difference could it make when there were so many open places already?—or to split up a solitary post, which, having nothing attached to it, was clearly useless, when he saw upon the high-road a figure approaching him.

It wore a tall white hat with a broad band of rusty crape around it; it had on a high, stiff shirt-collar, and a long black coat; in one hand it carried an umbrella with a rough horn handle, and in the other a little hair-trunk tied up with a rope; it had a bright and flashing eye and a determined step.

It did not go on to the house, but, turning from the public road, came through a gap in the fence, and walked straight up to the astonished Dick.

"Look a-heah, yuh Dick," said Uncle Enoch, putting down his little trunk; "who done tole yuh all dat foolishness about gwine to Washin'ton to wait on de Congressmen, an' gittin' sebenteen hundred dollars a yeah?"

"It was a man at de cross-roads," said Dick, "wid a red beard. He done bring some hosses ober from de Cou't House. I dunno his name."

"Is he bigger nur yuh is?" asked his father.

"Oh, yes," said Dick; "more'n twice as big."

"Well, den, yuh luff him alone," said Uncle Enoch, with great decision and energy; "yuh luf him alone. I hopes, boy," the old man continued, wiping his face with his great blue and yellow handkerchief, "dat yuh's gwine ter learn a lesson from dis yere bisness. It make me tink ob two no-count beasts dat had bin bunched fur a seed patch. Dey was stannin' in de sun to warm deyse'f, bein' too pow'ful lazy to cut some wood and make a fire. One was a gy-raffe, and de udder was a kangaroo. De gy-raffe he look at de kangaroo, an' he begun to laugh."

"It's mighty cur'us," ses he, "to see a poor critter like yuh, wid some legs short and some legs long. Ef I was yuh I'd go to de wood-pile, an' I'd chop dem hind legs off de same length as de foh ones, so yuh'd go about like common folks, an' not be larfed at."

"Dese remarks dey make de har riz on de kangaroo's back, he so mad angry."

"Yuh shu'tinly is a gay boy," ses he to the gy-raffe, "to stan' up dere and preach dat, wid yer hine legs short as plough-hannels an' yer foh legs too long fur butter-bean poles, so dat yuhr back slopes down like de roof of a ice-house. Ef I was yuh I'd go to de wood-pile, an' I'd chop off dat ar long neck close to de head, I'd be so 'shamed."

"Now, boy," continued Uncle Enoch, "dere's lots of stories about one ebery lastin' fool, but dat's de only story I knows 'bout two uv 'em. An' now jes' yuh go inter de house and tell de folks Ise gwine to put a new cracker on de ox-whip an' ef any of dem ses Washin'ton to me, I'll make 'em dance Jerusalem!"

Dick walked into the house to deliver his message, and as he went, he said to himself, "I reckon de plantation mouse done gin up he wine-yard."

Bees Swarm on a Man's Head.

Baltimore American: Mr. J. B. Runkle, merchant at Mount Airy, Carroll County, has a number of beehives in the rear of his house. The bees have been quite lively for the last few days, and the odor of the locust blossoms has had the effect of drawing out the families from every hive. Recently the bee family of one of the hives took a notion to "swarm." Mr. Runkle said they were Italian bees. They got up into the air in a knot and buzzed around. They seemed a little choice about a lighting spot. There was no place around that suited them, and they buzzed away a little longer. Mr. Charles D. Landerkin, telegraph operator, had been to dinner and was coming back to his office. He had to pass right under the bees. It occurred to the bees that Mr. Landerkin's head would be a good place to sit on, and they began descending. When the first bee struck his live end just under Mr. Landerkin's hat-rim he jumped several feet and quickened his pace. He was not quick enough though, and several hundred bees landed on him in a lump, and the balance of the swarm were preparing to do the same thing. Mr. Landerkin ran, and with his hands scraped the bees from his hair and face. Mr. George Crouse, who was coming down the hill behind Mr. Landerkin, seemed to offer an attractive landing-place for the bees, too, and a number of them landed on him. He did not fare as badly as the operator. Mr. Landerkin was so severely stung by the bees that he fainted, and Dr. B. H. Todd was called to attend him. His face was terribly swollen, and he was suffering severely. Mr. Runkle said that one of the bees struck him on the side of the head and knocked him nearly ten feet up a grade.

Gen. T. C. Hindman was assassinated in Arkansas in 1868. A committee was appointed soon after to draft resolutions of respect on behalf of the Helena bar. After seventeen years' consideration they have made a report in the usual stereotyped form, and Arkansas rests easy.

A KISS DID IT.

The Bold Move of a Poor Student Brought Him a Fortune and a Beautiful Wife. From the Boston Transcript.

In the University of Upsala, it Sweden, lived a young student, a lonely youth, with a great love for studies but without means for pursuing them. He was poor and without connections. Still he studied, lived in great poverty, but keeping up a cheerful heart, and trying not to look at the future, which looked so grimly at him. His good humor and good qualities made him beloved by his young companions.

Once he was standing with some of them in the great square of Upsala, whiling away an hour of leisure, when the attention of the young man was arrested by a very young, elegant lady who at the side of an elderly one walked slowly over the place. It was the daughter of the Governor of Upsala, living in the city, and the lady with her was her governess. She was generally known for her goodness and gentleness of character, and was looked upon with admiration by the students. As they young men now stood gazing at her, as she passed on like a vision, one of them exclaimed:

"Well, it would be worth something to have a kiss from such a mouth."

The poor student, the hero of our story, who was looking intently at that pure, angelic face, exclaimed as if by inspiration: "Well, I think I could have it."

"What!" cried his friends in chorus, "are you crazy? Do you know her?"

"Not at all," he answered; "but I think she would kiss me now if I asked her."

"What, in this place, before all our eyes?"

"In this place, before your eyes."

"Freely?"

"Freely."

"Well, if she will give you a kiss in that manner I will give you \$1,000!" exclaimed one of the party.

"And!" "And!" cried three or four others; for it so happened that several rich young men were in the group. Bets ran high on so improbable an event, and the challenge was made and received in less time than we take to relate it.

Our hero (my authority tells me) whether he is handsome or plain; I have my peculiar ideas for believing he was rather plain but singularly good looking at the same time—our hero immediately walked off to the young lady and said: "Mein Fraulien, my fortune is in your hands." She looked at him in astonishment, but arrested her steps. He proceeded to state his name, condition, and aspirations, and related simply and truly what passed between him and his companions.

The young lady listened attentively, and when he ceased to speak, she said, blushing, but with great sweetness: "If by so little a thing so much can be effected, it would be foolish for me to refuse your request;" and she kissed the young man publicly in the open square.

Next day the student was sent for by the Governor. He wanted to see the man who had dared to seek a kiss from his daughter that way, and whom she had consented to kiss. He received him with a scrutinizing brow, but after an hour's conversation was so pleased with him that he invited him to dine at his table during his studies at Upsala.

Our young friend now pursued his studies in a manner which soon made him regarded as the most promising scholar in the university. Three years were not passed after that day of the first kiss when the young man was allowed to give a second one to the daughter of the Governor as his intended bride.

He became later one of the greatest scholars in Sweden, as much respected for his learning as for his character. His words will endure forever among the works of science, and from his happy union sprang a family well known in Sweden at the present day, and whose wealth of fortune and high position in society are regarded as small things compared with wealth of goodness and love.

A Peep into Nature's Laboratory.

From the Phenixville Messenger.

There is in the town of Phenixville to-day an exemplification of the operations of nature as displayed in the formation of coal, where it can be found in actual process of transformation from vegetable matter to a soft, soapy carbonic substance, and the latter gradually changing to lignite and then again into soft coal of the bituminous form. Go along the Pennsylvania Schuylkill valley railroad, between the first passenger station of that system and the new one, and you will find a force of men cutting down the bank there, eighteen or twenty feet high, and amid those rocks, perhaps three feet above the railroad track, you will observe a black seam. That black seam is a laboratory of nature. From above, before the Morgan house was removed and the surrounding bank, big trees sent their roots down through the soil and then through the crevices of the rocks till they reached the seam in question, which in time they filled with roots and fibres. The trees above died, and the roots and fibres entined in the seam began to work, chemical changes took place, carbon was evolved and coal was the result. The laboratory was opened by the building of the railroad before the slow process was fully completed, so that you can find there to-day the vegetable and carbonized matter and lignite and coal altogether, proving, indeed, that the popular thought that coal grows is true.