

A LAMENT.

De frangs in de pon' is singin' every night
Wid der hallelujah camp-meetin' tune,
An' da all peers to try, wid dar heart, soul, an'
 might,
 To tell us o' de comin' o' de June.

De gar wid er splash is er jumpin' fur de trout
Dat's wallowin' near de cypress tree root,
An' de hateful old grinnel wid his jaws so
 stout,
 I er grabbin' o' de croppin' by de snoot.

De ole mud turkle is er layin' mighty still,
Waitin' fur de putty yaller pearch,
An' de gwinne fur ter stay till he's dun got his
 fill—
 Kai leab de ole turkle in de lurch.

Do co'n's growin' fine, an' is ha' leg high
In de fiel' whar de water's dun dried.
But I looks at it all wid er deep-fotch sigh,
 Fur it 'minds me so o' Tidy dat has died.

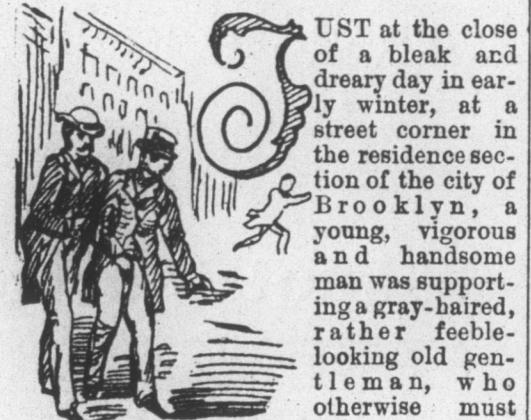
Tidy wuz de wife o' my bosom an' my breast;
Mighty likely, sah, honest' an' smart,
An' when she turned erway frum dis life fur ter
 rest,
 I almos' broke the hame-strings o' mer
 heart.

I wuz wud her in in de day, an' I nus'ed her in
 de night.
An' I'st wid my han' on her head,
When de 'stroyin' angel come in an' turned
 down de light.
An' lef' me in de darkness wid de dead.

Er pain is all fru me like de stobbin' o' er
 dirk—
 My heart peered ter beat ergin' good theo',
 Lemme tell yer, wuz er mighty han'
 ter work,
 An' I'd like to see her plowin' in de co'n.
—Arkansas Traveler

THE KNAVE UNMASKED.

BY HENRY L. BLACK.



UST at the close of a bleak and dreary day in early winter, at a street corner in the residence section of the city of Brooklyn, a young, vigorous and handsome man was supporting a gray-haired, rather feeble-looking old gentleman, who otherwise must have fallen to the ground.

Night was fast approaching, and a blue wreath of pistol smoke above their heads was barely distinguishable in the twilight.

"Are you hurt, sir?" It was the younger one who spoke.

"I can't say; I don't think so," answered his companion.

"Lean on my arm; you seem weak. The villain appears to be making good his escape." As the young man spoke he looked down the thoroughfare, where the fleeing figure of a man was discernible, turning the corner of the next street.

"You have saved my life," murmured the old man, faintly; "but for your strong hand and clear head I would have fallen, the victim of an assassin's bullet."

"I did knock up his arm at about the last moment to have availed you. But what could have been the object of his murderous assault?"

"Robbery, I make no doubt," replied the old gentleman, "for I'm quite certain that I've not an enemy in the world."

At this juncture one of those conservators of the peace, known as policemen, entered upon the scene, and inquired who had fired the shot.

"A large man, with a smooth face, and dressed in dark clothes and a stiff hat," answered the old gentleman. "I can't give you any better description, but I got a good view of his face, and would know him among a thousand. He attempted to take my life, and but for the timely interference of this brave young man, would doubtless have succeeded. Report the matter at headquarters at once, and have the detectives set at work. You know where I live, don't you?"

"Very well, indeed, Mr. Hapgood," replied the officer, "and this gentleman—"

"Can be found through me," interrupted the elder man. "You will accompany me home, my young friend?"

"Certainly, sir," answered the young man, "here, take my arm; you will walk better, so."

"I can never properly thank you for what you have done to-night," said Mr. Hapgood, as they walked slowly along.

"Don't mention it, sir, I beg of you."

"But I must mention it; you have saved my life, and at the risk, the imminent risk of your own—I expected to see the scoundrel shoot you. But you have not yet told me your name."

"My name, sir, is Clifford, John Clifford, and I am a clerk in the New York postoffice. I live in Brooklyn with my aged mother, and was on my way home when your cry for help attracted my attention, and I turned the corner just in time to arrest the murderer's hand."

"Mr. Clifford," said the old man earnestly, "I am pleased in you to find a young man struggling for advancement in the world. I have been through it all and know how to sympathize with you. But here we are at my residence." And they stopped in front of a stately, old-fashioned mansion, with broad steps and a high porch. "You must come in and dine with me. I wish to present you to my daughter Alice, my only child, that she may join me in thanking the man who has done me such a noble service."

"I thank you, Mr. Hapgood," said Clifford, bowing politely, "but I fear I must decline your hospitality this evening, and postpone the pleasure of meeting your daughter. The fact is that my mother is awaiting me. I am always punctual in arriving home, and I fear that she will be much worried if I am long delayed. It's very awkward, sir, and I am very sorry."

"No, sir," broke in Mr. Hapgood, "it is not awkward. It is fit and proper. Filial affection is the noblest thing in our imperfect natures. I have a daughter who loves me, and can appreciate your feelings. Go to your home and the supper your loving mother has prepared for you; you will no doubt enjoy it better than you would my fine dinner. But you must warn your mother not to expect you home early to-morrow, as you must dine and spend the evening with me. Go now, as I would not for the world cause the worthy lady a moment's anxiety."

"Thank you, sir. I will call at this hour to-morrow. Good evening." And, taking Mr. Hapgood's hand, Clifford hurried away.

A month later, a young man of about six-and-twenty, large and finely formed, with a handsome, intellectual face, Harry Winters by name, was seated in Mr. Hapgood's elegant parlor.

"Good morning, Harry," said the owner

of the mansion, abruptly entering the apartment.

"Good morning, sir," said the young man, rising and advancing. "I have called to beg a moment's conversation with you in private."

"Certainly, Harry; come into the library," said Mr. Hapgood, entering that apartment, and motioning the young man to a seat near him.

"Mr. Hapgood," began Harry, "I have known you from my boyhood, and for five years have been a constant visitor at your house. In these five years your daughter has grown from a winsome child to a beautiful and accomplished woman, and I have learned, sir—no hard task—to love her devotedly. You know my family, my condition, and prospects in life. What I ask is no small thing—the hand of your daughter in marriage."

Harry Winters bowed and sat down, while Mr. Hapgood sprang to his feet.

"What is this?" he said excitedly, almost savagely. "Marry my daughter—why, you can't mean it!" Then, softening in his manner, he advanced to the young man's chair and grasped his hand. "You must pardon by abruptness, Harry, but I was taken by surprise. Have you gained my daughter's consent before seeking mine?"

"No, sir," answered Winters; "I could not in honor do that, but I must admit she knows my love for her, and that I have reasons to hope that it is not unrequited."

As Harry spoke the old man turned pale and sank back in his chair.

"This is unfortunate," he murmured, "most unfortunate. You are an honorable young man, Harry. I love you like a son, but you cannot, it grieves me sadly to say it, you cannot marry my daughter."

"And why not, Mr. Hapgood? Pray tell me why not?"

"Because she is promised to another."

"Another!" cried Harry, starting wildly, "she loves another! Impossible! I know she loves me!"

"I did not say that. I said she was promised."

"Might I ask to whom?" faltered Harry. "To Mr. Clifford; you have more than once met him here during the last month. He is an excellent young man. He loves Alice. And then, you know, he saved my life!"

"I understand," said young Winters, sadly. "But Alice—has she consented?"

"She will, young man, at the proper time; have no doubt about that. She knows no will but mine."

"Perhaps you are acting for the best, sir. I know you think you are; but I feel that your daughter can never be happy with that man. Good evening, sir." And, bowing politely, Harry Winters left the Hapgood mansion.

"Alice," said Mr. Hapgood, as his fair daughter, in obedience to his summons, entered the library, "I have something serious to say to you. I have received an offer for your hand."

"An offer for my hand! And how much are you offered? and who is the bidder, papa?" said Alice, blushing, but not with annoyance, for she had seen Harry leave the house not ten minutes before, and surmised his errand.

"The offer, my daughter, which I have accepted for you, comes from a worthy young man whom I respect and esteem and whom you cannot choose but love, Mr. John Clifford."

Alice Hapgood spoke no word, but turned pale, bowed her head in her hands, and sank into a chair.

"The young gentleman," pursued the father, not seeming to notice the daughter's agitation, "loved you at first sight, and had urged his suit upon several occasions. I have given my consent, and he will speak to you on the subject to-morrow."

"But, father, I can never love Mr. Clifford. I feel grateful to him as the preserver of my dear father's life. He is handsome, educated, brilliant, but I distrust him, and as for loving him—" Alice Hapgood shuddered in a manner that



"Alice, I have received an offer for your hand."

finished the sentence more forcibly than could have been done in words.

"My daughter, you do John an injustice; you do, indeed. He is an honest, industrious, and in all respects an exemplary young man, and as a son-in-law he will be entirely satisfactory to me."

"But as a husband he will not be so entirely satisfactory to me." And fair Alice smiled amid her tears.

"But, Alice, I've promised you to Mr. Clifford; you would not have me break my word?"

"No, father, but you have wealth, great wealth; offer him money—"

"Would you have me insult the man to whom I owe my life, daughter?" And Mr. Hapgood frowned severely. "I did offer to loan him ten thousand dollars with which to engage in some business, but he declined it promptly, saying that he could not accept a reward for simply doing his duty; that was before he asked your hand."

"And now he claims a reward in a different form. He doubtless does not know that I am to be your heiress."

"Daughter, your sarcasm fails to please me. But tell me," said the old gentleman, suddenly, "have you any other attachment that makes Mr. Clifford so distasteful to you?"

Alice turned red, then white, and finally burst into tears.

"Don't ask me, father," she exclaimed. "I certainly am not attached to Mr. Clifford. Grant me this one favor. Let nothing be said to me on this subject by this

person for one month, until the fifteenth of January, and on that day, if you still desire it, I will plight my troth to Mr. Clifford."

"But I may tell him this? He will be all anxiety."

"Yes, father, if you choose; but in the meantime, you must do your best to change your mind."

That night Alice wrote Harry Winters a letter, in which she told him that she desired particularly to know something of John Clifford, his character and his record.

"Find out all about him Harry," said she in conclusion. "and report to me on the fifteenth of January, when I will explain all to you. In the meantime don't call on me."

It was the morning of the fifteenth of January.

Within the spacious library of the Hapgood mansion its master and his fair daughter were seated, awaiting the arrival of her suitor, Mr. John Clifford. They had been silent for some time, when Alice spoke:

"About this disagreeable business, father, do you still wish me to marry Mr. Clifford?"

"I certainly do. The more I see of him the better I like him, and the more worthy I consider him of my daughter. I will admit that somehow I would prefer Harry Winters, but then you know, John saved my life from a cowardly assassin. I can't forget that."

At that moment a servant entered and announced Harry Winters.

"Show him in," said Mr. Hapgood, "the son of my old friend will never be denied admission here."

A moment later Harry himself entered and was kindly received by the father and daughter, the latter giving him a look which plainly said, "How have you succeeded?"

"Mr. Hapgood," began Harry, "I have news for you; a man has been arrested charged with firing at you some two months ago, and the officers have brought him here to see if you can identify him."

"Very well, let them come in," said Mr. Hapgood.

Harry left the room as the old gentleman spoke, and returned immediately, followed by two detectives with a smooth-faced, villainous-looking young man between them.

"That is the man. I could swear to him any place," cried the old gentleman. "How did you succeed in finding him?"

"Mr. Winters is entitled to the credit," replied one of the officers. "He found a photograph, from which we identified the prisoner."

"But he had never seen him. How could he know him from a photograph?"

"This man, George Holmes," said Harry, indicating the prisoner, "had been photographed at Sing Sing with his chum and partner in crime, James Costello. I found their picture in the rogues' gallery, number 1921. Here it is." And he produced and handed Mr. Hapgood a card photograph.

"Great heavens!" cried the old gentleman, "what have we here?"

His daughter sprang to his side, and seized the card from his trembling hand. It was a picture of two men in the striped garb of the penitentiary; one, the prisoner before her; the other, the man she had known as John Clifford.

"I always suspected it," she murmured, giving Harry a grateful look.

"And what have you to say?" said Mr. Hapgood sternly to the ex-convict.

"I don't know," he growled. "I suppose I'd better tell, for Jim will if I don't. He always saves himself. I fired the shot, sir, but the pistol wasn't loaded with ball. It was a scheme to give Jim a chance to rescue you. I urged him to take the ten thousand you offered, but he struck for a high stake and we've lost everything."

As he finished speaking a step was heard in the hall, and the next instant the door was thrown open, and John Clifford entered the library.

"Good morning, Mr. Costello," said Harry Winters, "here's your old friend, Mr. Holmes."

"Confusion!" cried Clifford, "what does this mean?"

"It means," cried the old gentleman, "that you are unmasked, you scoundrel, and you thought to marry my daughter! Officers, take him away."

Clifford made no reply, but sprang nimbly through the open window and disappeared.

"After him," shouted Mr. Hapgood.

"Never mind," said one of the detectives, quietly, "he'll find two officers at the street door. He's wanted on half a score of charges, and will go down for a long term. Good morning." And the officers vanished with their prisoner.

"And now, Harry," said Mr. Hapgood, "forgive an old man who has been foolishly deceived. Take my daughter, and be happy."

"Well, father," said Alice, slyly, "if he is your choice for a son-in-law, I'll not refuse him as a husband."

Happy Thought.

"It is too bad," said the managing editor to the funny man; "here's a man in the counting-room desiring to put in a big advertisement, and the editor in chief and the publisher are both at the beach."

"Well, can't you manage that yourself?"

"Well, not very well. Somebody is wanted to swear to the circulation."

"Oh, I see."

"Unfortunate, isn't it?"

"I should say so. What's to be done?"

"Can't you swear to it?"

"Why, man, they won't accept me."

"Misery! Will I do?"

"You! Absurd."

"Too bad! Oh, by the way, is the religious editor here?"

"Gracious goodness, yes! Why didn't I think of it before? He'll be accepted without a murmur."

The thing is done at once.—*Boston Courier.*

Grandpa's Journey.

"Taking a little trip, eh, grandpa?" said a little boy to an old gentleman who was busily engaged in paring his corns.

"I do not know that I can call it much of a journey, going over this infernal corn," replied grandpa.

"You will not take in the entire cornfield, probably, but you will be able to get over one acher, anyway," replied the boy.—*Carl Pretzel's Weekly.*