

The Robber.

BY WILLIAM C. BRYANT.

Beside a lonely mountain path,
Within a mossy wood
That crowned the wild wind-beaten cliffs,
A lurking robber stood.
His foreign garb, his gloomy eye,
His cheek of swarthy stain
Bespoke him one who might have been
A pirate on the main.
Or bandit on the far off hills
Of Cuba or of Spain.
His ready pistol in his hand,
A shadowing bough he raised,
Glared forth, as crouching tiger glares,
And muttered as he gazed—
“Sure he must sleep upon his steel—
I deemed the laggard near;
I’ll give him, for the gold he wears,
A somber slumber here;
His charger, when I press his flank,
Shall leap like mountain deer.”

Long, long he watched, and listened long—
There came no traveller by.
The ruffian growled a harsher curse,
And gloomier grew his eye.
While, o’er the sultry heaven, began
A leaden haze to spread,
And, past his noon, the summer sun
A dimmer beam to shed,
And on that mountain summit fell
A silence deep and dread.

Then ceased the bristling pine to sigh,
Still hung the birchen spray;
The air that wrapped those massy cliffs
Was motionless as they;
Mute was the cricket in his cleft—
But mountain torrents round
Sent hollow murmurs from their glens,
Like voices under ground.
A change came o’er the robber’s cheek,
He shuddered at the sound.

“T’were vain to ask what fearful thought
Convinced his brow with pain:
“The dead talk not,” he said at length,
And turned to watch again.
Skyward he looked—a lurid cloud
Hung low and blackening there;
And through its skirts the sunshine came,
A strange, malignant glare.
His ample chest drew in, with toil,
The hot and stifling air.

His ear has caught a distant sound—
But not the tramp of steed—
A roar as of a torrent stream,
Swoln into sudden speed.

The gathered vapours in the west,
Before the rushing blast,
Like living monsters of the air,
Black, serpent-like and vast,

Writhing, roll, and sweeping o’er the sun
A frightful shadow cast.

Hark to that nearer, mightier crash!
As if a giant crowd,
Trampling the oaks with iron feet,
Had issued from the cloud;

While fragments of dissevered rock
Go thundering from on high,
And eastward, from their eyrie-cliffs,
The shrieking eagles fly;

And lo! the expected traveller comes,
Spurring his charger by.

To that wild warning of the air,
The assassin lends no heed:

He notes the pistol to his eye,
He notes the horseman’s speed:

Firm is his hand and sure his aim—
But ere the flash is given,

Its eddies filled with woods upturn,
And spray from torrents driven,

The whirlwind sweeps the crashing wood—
The giant firs are riven.

Riven and wrenched up from splintering cliffs,
They rise like down in air;

At once the forest’s rocky floor

Lies to the tempest bare.

Rider and steed and robber whirled

O’er precipices vast,

Mong trunks and boughs and shattered crags,

Mangled and crushed, are cast.

The catacomb and eagle made,

At morn, a grim repast.

Light Reading.

Extracted from the "Western Comic Almanac," published at Cincinnati.

FLOWERS OF RHETORIC.

The following patriotic speech was delivered, it is said, at a late meeting in Illinois, called for the purpose of taking into consideration the expediency of getting up a second expedition against the hostile band of Sac and Foxes:

Friends and Fellow-Citizen Sodiers!

We are met here for the purpose of excusing the subject about the hostilities lately committed against our peaceful and blooming frontiers by the condacious red-skins. (A murmur of applause.) I say we have met here to instigate whether we will sit still in our shanties, and see the spoiler whet his deadly, and bloody, and murderous knife against the hearts of our friends and fellow-soldiers—they are fearless spirits who have gone forth with a bold heart and a strong arm to dig ditches and drain the swamps of the west!—and whom we look upon impotently and totally as the pianos of a new world! (Much cheering, and calling out "hear!" "hear!") Whether we will sit still and see their corn fields ravished, their wives violated before their very eyes, and their smiling, prattling infants used up in the most barbaric manner—or whether we will march at once upon this second champagne, and by our timely valorosity, save them from a state of total desolation, and at the same time extinguishing ourselves in eternal fame! (Here the scalp halloo was three repeated.) Ah! my fellow citizen soldiers! I fully propitiate the sympathizing feelings of your hearts. I need but remind you of your duties towards your suffering and distressed and conflicted brethren! Their woes cry aloud for address, and perhaps are heard even now in the reticacy of our firesides and our chimney corners! Behold they lay down at night with a blooming cheek and a ruby lip, and—oh! my fellow soldiers, must I revile the cruel, the dreadful, the fatal catastrophe!—they wake up ere morning in death! (Here the scalp halloo was again sounded, and after a little calling to order by an amateur speaker, who was taking notes with a piece of chalk on a board fence, the orator of the day resumed.) But I cannot dwell upon this horrible, this appalling, this dreadful subject,—a subject, fellow citizen soldiers, whose horrors run ferment the very grain, as I may say, of the soul, without, I say without—(clearing his throat and addressing one of the crowd)—stranger will you hand me a gourd of water with a leathern sprinle of the crittur in it!—without feeling inquisitive thirst for—(tasting the liquor and addressing the individual who brought it)—a leathern more of the critter, if you please—just a sprinle—a mere drap—than—an inquisitive thirst for that vengeance which all the gods of war, Wu-

can, and Plato, and Wesusius claim as their high prerogative, but which I would shower, fellow citizen soldiers, which I would shower in beams of wrath upon them are illegal, unconstitutional, and incivilized savages, which stalks amongst our bottoms, by day and by night, salutes forth to kill and murder our families, and to rob our potato patches! Yes, gentlemen and fellow citizen soldiers! my soul rises spontaneously as I contaminate the glorious event that must extinguish our names in the hearts of our countrymen till time shall be no more! Our success in this expedition is certain—it is a mere sarcasm. The pianos will be aroused, and we will all light on ‘em and tetotally obfuscate them from off the face of the earth! I know you are all the real grit, I myself am particularly a caution—a real snag boat—and will lead you where a good chunk of a fight is certain to be hit aginst. I will flank you into a solemn column, and receding by a retrograde advance, we will away to the field of glory—the field of garnish and of b’od! Yes, my friends and fellow soldiers! we’ll meet the enemy in their own diggings, “and the way we’ll use ‘em up’ll be a sin to Crockett.”

(The scalp halloo again rose to a deafening height, but died away as the whole party, bearing their orator upon a rail, “receded by a retrograde advance,” towards a shanty, where the “critter” had not yet entirely yielded to the ravages of consumption.)

N. B. The orator in question is a candidate for a seat in the next legislature.

GETTING A FLAVOR OF SIN.

“Never, my children,” old Dr. Syntax used to say, lifting his great brown eyebrows, and looking awfully solemn, “never taste of sin; for it hath a deceitful flavor—and I warn you always to beware of the odor of wickedness!”

This was an excellent precept, but the Doctor had such an odd way of saying it, as he crossed his fat hands over his round belly, and rolled up his white eyes, that it grew into a proverb among us; and whenever we went to rob an apple tree, or a melon patch, we used to mock the worthy Doctor, and quote his proverbs about the flavor of sin and the odor of evil deeds.

One summer there came to visit the Doctor, a kind of cousin, an odd sort of a gawky about our age. He wore a homespun, old brown coat, with a tail that nearly swept the ground; he was blind of one eye, had a queer sort of a freckled face, and was as deaf as a haddock. Poor fellow! he was a rare butt for the practical wit of his school fellows, and we were forever getting him into some scrape. At one time we got him and his long coat into a ditch full of filth; another time we managed to tie a fierce old cat between his sheets, and another nailed the tail of his old coat to a bee-hive, and the bees nearly stung him to death.

But the best of all was the egg hunt. The Doctor had forbidden us to enter his barn where his hens resorted to deposit their eggs, because we hooked so many that the worthy Doctor had none left for his custard and egg-nog. But cousin Zach knew nothing of these orders; and finding he was very fond of raw eggs, we determined, one Saturday afternoon, to make one grand crusade in the Doctor’s hay-mow; and placing Zach in the van we scarcely and successfully invaded and entered the barn through the back window.

All was safe and still! We knew where the nests were and crept along towards them—one of the number was under a beam, and the only way of reaching it was by crawling into a hole under the beam just big enough to admit a man. Now the joke was to make Zach crawl into this hole, in hopes the old hen would be on her station—and then for the tail of his old coat to be bee-hive and the bees nearly stung him to death.

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“Dunder and blixum!” exclaimed Mynheer; “Wat’ feff do ye pite me sho for!”

“Why, you darn’d great fool,” said Jonathan, “You didn’t think I was going to swallow yo whole, did you?”

A burst of laughter proclaimed Jonathan the victor, and Mynheer had to pay the toast and toddy.

Tom Lout was once troubled with the fever and ague. A friend asking his physician how he was, he said that the fever still hung by Tom, but the ague had left him, because he was too lazy to shake.

“I’ve broken your rotten wheel-barrow usin’ on’t; you’ll please to get it mended right off, cause I’ll want to borrow it again this afternoon.”

“Friend, it shall be repaired and sent to thee.”

RARE SPORT.

“Do you love to shout!” said Jim Ramrod to his friend Gorbelly one day, after they had been dining together at the Indian Queen.”

“Yes, I’m ‘mazin fond of shoutin when there’s good game.”

“Well, here’s Simon Shine and Peter Dash I know will be glad to join us, and we’ll have some rare sport.”

Accordingly the next morning the whole sporting party started early in search of game, and rambled over hill and dale, and through woods, and brush, and mud, and mire—hunting sometimes in a body, sometimes separately, and sometimes in pairs—but all in vain—not a single living thing could they find.

It was a hot day in July, and the whole party sweat like so many stage horses. Gorbelly, in particular, “larded the lean earth” with the fat that rolled off him. He and Ramrod found themselves at length in the midst of a swamp, sinking into the mud at every step, almost to their knees.

“I can’t stand this no longer,” said Gorbelly, “I have had sport enough for one day, and I move that we make the best of our way home.”

But at this lucky moment, a little solitary wren flew over their heads, and lighted on a dry shrub in the midst of the swamp. Gorbelly’s heart leapt almost into his mouth. “Don’t speak word,” whispered he to Jim, as forgetting his fatigue, he crept slyly along, up to his knees in mud and water, with his friend Jim close behind him. “Why don’t you shout?” said Jim, as they approached within a few feet of the bird. “I can’t find a good rest,” said Gorbelly.

In the mean time, Simon and Peter, who had also discovered the wren, come wading up on the other side. “Do you think I’m near enough,” said Simon. “No, don’t shout,” said Peter, “just let me knock it down with the butt end of my gun,” and making a pass with his gun, he missed the bird, but knocked his friend Peter as flat as a flounder.

Gorbelly, who had at last found a rest, and had been taking aim for about five minutes, shut his eyes just as the wren flew away, and pulling trigger, his fuzee went off and kicked him backwards into the mud. After being raised up with some difficulty, and recovering his lost senses, he ejaculated with an air of triumph, “I come ‘mazin near shoutin said Gorbelly.”

THE YANKEE AND DUTCHMAN.

After some sporting and bantering between Mynheer and Jonathan, who had shown off some common slight-of-hand tricks, the latter declared he could swallow his robust host! Notwithstanding Jonathan had already played off several of his Yankee tricks, which puzzled the good people exceedingly, yet the assertion was too great a mouthful for them to swallow, if the pedlar could.

A bit sufficient to moisten the throats of the whole company was the consequence, though the landlord, in proposing it, had no idea that his customer would accept, when, as he supposed, he must be certain of losing.

Jonathan directed that Mynheer should be divested of his coat and boots, and be stretched longitudinally upon the old oaken table, which had stood in the bar-room for half a century. These arrangements having been made, Jonathan voraciously seized upon the honest landlord’s great-toe, which he pressed rather violently between his teeth, giving the good man a twinge which caused a writhing movement and a groan.

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July 20th, 1833.

STATE OF INDIANA.

DEARBORN COUNTY. { *Set.*

Dearborn Circuit Court.

John Test, { *In an action of debt, \$20 00.*

Michael Cusack. }

WHEREAS, a writ of Domestic Attachment, issued from the clerk’s office of the Dearborn Circuit Court, on the 27th day of August, 1833, at the suit of John Test against Michael Cusack, a non resident, in an action of debt \$20 00—which writ of attachment has been returned to the said clerk’s office by the sheriff of the said county of Dearborn, with the following endorsement thereon, to wit: In obedience to the command of the writ, I have tailed and attached 80 acres of land, being part of the north west quarter of section 20, town 3, range 2 west, in the county of Dearborn, the property of the within named defendant; 30th Aug., 1833.

(Signed,) WM. DILS, sh’ff D. C.

Now, therefore, notice is hereby given, to the said Michael Cusack, that unless he be and appear before the Judges of the Dearborn Circuit Court, at their term on the 4th Monday in September next, then and there to receive a declaration and plead to the action aforesaid, or the same will be heard in his absence and judgment will be rendered against him by default, and the property so attached will be sold for the benefit of his creditors.

Quiz. How, sir!

Quiz. You see my body?

Quiz. With pleasure, sir.

Quiz. Well, it, sir, is a body corporate.

Quiz. Indeed!

Quiz. Ay, sir: there are united in me a complete chain of great and little bowels, that are delegated and empowered to transact business with my stomach, the same as though I had but one organ to perform the office of carrying off my food.

Quiz. This is called a body corporate!

Quiz. To be sure.

Quiz. It is amazing fine; but if you split or burst, you would become a body vacate, like an empty hoghead with the bung out, and a few emptings at the bottom.

Quiz. You’re a blackguard and a fool!

Quiz. I hope no offence, sir; I only inquire for information.

Quiz. Well, sir, having condescended to answer your questions, you will please, sir, take yourself off.

Col. “Why, Cuff, is that you? I’m glad to see you, Cuff. How’s your family? Won’t you take sumthin to drink, Cuff?”

Cuff. “Why, Colonel, I don’t care if I does. Some niggers is too proud to drink with a melishy ossifer; but I think a nigger never ought to feel above a melishy-man—especially when a nigger is dry.”

How does your newly purchased horse answer? said a friend to another. I really don’t know, for I never asked him a question.

Col. “Well, he’s a good horse, I suppose.”

Quiz. “Well, he’s a good horse, I suppose.”