

Her eyes were bright; her figure slight,
And light as any fairy;
Her voice was heavenly-sounding;
Her manners sweet and airy.
Her mouth was like a rosebud;
Her hair was like a flame;
Her voice like any lark;
Her heart was little, and I read
Had very little in it.

But then so artless was her art,
My heart could not resist her;
And, added to her other charms,
She had a pretty sister.

They blushed like any double rose,
They blushed a double pink;
One graced the name of Laura;
The other, Kate, I think.

When left alone with Laura,
Love urged his soft caress;
And in sweet Laura's absence,
I doled more—on Kate.

She took one flower, and leave her
Occupation all alone;
We pine in single sadness,
Would need a heart of stone.

And that's the reason, ladies,
I am still your partisan,
But, being single-hearted,
I could a single man.

A CAGED LION.

He stands behind his iron bars,
Unstained, untameable and proud,
Unscared by servitude and care,
The center of a taunting crew.
Pleas, hints and blows have vanquished him,
Weakened his limbs and dwarfed his size;
All of his woes have failed to dim
The yellow splendor of his eye,
Which now so taunt, far, far away,
But we are, far, far away,
The jungle depths, concealed long,
And deepest parts of Africa.

So long we have enjoyed by chance,
Defeating by time's remorseless score,
And conquer'd by cruel circumstances.

Behind fate's hounding prison bars—
Heedless wife of pride and joys,
Blinked through the unfriendly crowd of years,
The riot tropics of their youth!

—Devin's Month.

THE FATAL CARD.

Some years ago the Mississippi river was noted for its "floating palaces," as the large steamers plying between New Orleans and the ports above were called. Now the railways have driven nearly all the fine-boats off the river, and left the field to the freight-boats, whose accommodations for passengers are by no means palatial. The former class of steamers were in many respects delightful, but they never ceased to be objects of dread to timid people, for if the racing, which was reduced to a system, did not result in the loss of the boat, there was sure to be one or more encounters between the lawless portion of the travelers, in which pistol-bullets would fly rather too thick for the comfort of steady-going people. The cause of such disturbances was generally a quarrel over the gambling-table. The regulations of the boat usually required that all such amusements should be conducted in a saloon provided for that purpose in the "Texas, or officers' cabin," situated on the hurricane deck; but the sporting gentry were by no means careful to obey this rule, and the gaming was most commonly carried on in the dining-tables in the main saloon of the steamer, to the great annoyance of two-thirds of those on board.

Many professional gamblers used to make these boats their home, traveling back and forth with them, and deceiving all who were verdant or foolish enough to fall into their clutches. So well, indeed, was this system managed that the various members of the "craft" seemed to have their different steamers marked out for them by common consent, so that no one would trespass upon the domain of the other. Of course these men were warm friends of the officers of the boat, who were either too sincere in their friendship to put a stop to the practice, or too much afraid of the gamblers to care to provoke a quarrel with them, for in those days it was a common affair for such men to resent any fancied affront with a pistol-shot.

One of the most remarkable men of their class was named Daniel Sturdivant, a Frenchman, the son of a broken-down son of nobility, who had settled in New Orleans before the transfer of Louisiana to the United States. Sturdivant had been raised as a "gentleman" by his aristocratic father, but upon coming of age, and finding his fortune very bad, had taken to cards as a means of bettering them. His success in this field was so great that he was induced to continue it until the time I write, and he was one of most notorious gamblers between St. Louis and New Orleans. He was forty-five years old, but had kept himself so well that he seemed much younger. He was a man of fine personal appearance and of great physical strength. He was also noted for his personal courage. As a gambler he was most expert and successful.

There were dark stories of deeds which he had committed while under the influence of play and liquor, and it was said by some that he had killed half a dozen men in his lifetime. Yet no one cared to speak these stories openly, for no one cared to bring upon himself the anger of such a man. There were few who knew him who really cared to play against him, but they feared a refusal to do so might involve them in a quarrel with him, and rarely declined his invitations.

About fifteen years ago, the time of which I write, he had attached himself to one of the magnificent steamers plying between New Orleans and Vicksburg, and had publicly announced his determination to shoot any man who attempted to encroach upon his some of operations. Of course this left him in undisputed possession of the field, and he reaped a golden harvest from it during the one brief year that he conducted his operations there.

It was my lot at that time to be compelled to make frequent trips between New Orleans and Vicksburg, being heavily engaged in cotton speculations. I gathered the whinner of which Sturdivant

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want had taken possession, inasmuch as it was not only the most comfortable, but also the swiftest, and time was of importance to me. It was known that I carried large sums of money with me, and I was always apprehensive lest Sturdivant should ask me to play. I had fully made up my mind to refuse him, and, if he attempted to draw me into a quarrel, to shoot him without mercy, as I knew that the only chance for my life lay in getting the advantage of him. Strange to say, he did not make any such proposition to me, and I gave him no chance to do so.

One night we had started out from Vicksburg, and were heading merrily down the river, when Sturdivant came up to the group which had gathered around the stove. He had been drinking, and was smoking a fine cigar as he approached. All made way for him.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, in an unsteady tone, "you seem to be terribly dull. Who wants to play for \$20 ante?"

There was no reply. All present seemed to know the man, and no one cared to volunteer to place himself in his clutches.

"Umph!" he exclaimed, with an expression of contempt, "afraid to try your luck against Dan Sturdivant, eh? Or maybe you want a little coaxing. Some of you must play with me. I can't stand such treatment. Come, let's see who it will be."

He glanced around the crowd as if to select his victim. For the first time I noticed the gaze of one of the group fixed steadily upon him. He was a stranger to me, and was dressed in a plain suit of homespun, and his face was partially concealed by a wide-brimmed sombrero which was drawn over it. He was a small, but powerfully-made man, and in the decided expression of his well-shaped head I read an unusual firmness and intensity of purpose.

"Are you Daniel Sturdivant, the gambler?" he asked in a calm tone, without rising.

Sturdivant flushed darkly and gave the stranger a fierce glance.

"Some persons call me so behind my back," he said, insolently; "but no one would dare apply that term to me before my face."

"Nevertheless," said the stranger, "I want an answer—yes or no."

"Well, then," said the gambler, grimly, "I am. What of it?"

"Simply this," replied the stranger. "I have heard it said that you claim to be the best card-player in the Southwest. I have come 200 miles to prove you liar."

Sturdivant strode forward a step or two and thrust his hand into his breast as if to grasp a weapon.

"Stop," said the stranger; "if you shoot me you will simply prove yourself afraid of me. Take your seat at the table, and I will make my word good."

There was something in the calm, stern manner of the stranger that seemed to render the gambler powerless. He hesitated for a moment, and then said, bullyingly:

"I never play with a man whose face I can not see."

"Never mind my face," said the stranger. "If you are not afraid of losing, you shall see it when I am done with you."

"But how do I know you have money enough for such sport?" persisted Sturdivant. "You look seedy enough, my fine fellow."

"There," said the stranger, producing a large pocket-book. "I have \$10,000 there; if you can win it you shall do so."

With an oath Sturdivant placed himself at the table, and bade his challenger do likewise. Those of us who had listened to this singular dialogue now gathered around the table, expecting to see a scene of more than usual interest. The stranger had not yet raised his sombrero, and none of us had seen his face, but we all felt from his general air and manner that Daniel Sturdivant had at last met his match. It did not take long to show that the stranger was an unusually good player. For an hour or more the playing went on in silence. The stakes were high, and the contest marked with rare skill. Sturdivant exerted himself as he had never done before, but, in spite of his efforts, he lost steadily. By the expiration of the time indicated above he had lost \$2,000. I noticed the flush upon his face deepen, and a strange light came into his eyes. At last, with an exclamation of triumph, he drew toward him the heap of notes.

"That was well done," said the stranger. "You are an expert at cheating. But go on. I can beat you whether you play openly or dishonestly."

Sturdivant said nothing, but dealt the cards again. The hand was played, and Sturdivant was about to seize the stakes when the stranger laid down a card and checked him. The gambler uttered a sharp cry and sat motionless, with his eyes fixed on the card, a worn and faded ace of hearts, with a dark-red stain across the face. Sturdivant's face worked convulsively as he gazed at it, the assistance of whose people the Greeks declined in 1821.

around the two, wondering at the strange scene.

"In God's name, who are you?" gaped Sturdivant, his eyes still fixed on the card.

"Look at me," said the stranger, quietly.

As it was powerless to resist, Sturdivant raised his eyes to the speaker. The stranger had raised his hat and sat looking at the trembling man with eyes that fairly blazed with fury. Sturdivant uttered a groan, and sank back in his chair, with his face white and rigid.

The stranger with one sweep gathered up the money from the table and thrust it into his breast.

"That ace of hearts is an unlucky card for you, Daniel Sturdivant," he said, coldly.

"You played it once when you thought it to your advantage. Now, God help you, for that play is returned!"

As he spoke, he raised a pistol which we had not seen, and, before we could stop him, aimed it deliberately at the trembling man and fired. The gambler fell heavily upon the table, a corpse, and the bright blood streamed over it, hiding the fatal card from sight.

This being Mr. Johnson Topp's history, it surprised his friends that he should appear as defendant in the case of Dublin versus Topp; suit for breach of promise.

But the Circuit Court docket of Crittenden county disclosed the fact of the suit, and the affidavit of Mrs. Malinda Dublin set forth the particulars.

The plaintiff was put upon the stand to tell how wickedly she had been led into false hopes by this middle-aged bachelor.

"I live at home with my old dad," she said, "and this feller kept comin' round that makin' believe he wanted to trade mules. After he traded a time or two till that was played out, he come wantin' cotton seed. I knowed he only wanted an excuse to get to see me, and I told Pop when he come again to bring him in, and see whether he'd talk turkey or not if he had a fair chance. And that was just what he wanted. You never see a man set up to a woman peartier than he did as soon as ever Pop introduced us, tellin' him, 'This is my daughter, Malindy.' He was powerfully shy at the offset; but let him git fairly started on mules or shots, and he was dead sure to end with sparkin'! And it appeared like he couldn't wait more'n a minit for a woman to say yes. I didn't feel with the man as lots do, but I said yes; and about the next thing that happened he was tryin' to crawl. That's about the whole story."

But her lawyer did not think it was the whole story, and he was right—there was more to be told.

"Will you state to the jury how it happened that the defendant, Topp, went back on his word after he had asked you to marry him?"

"Well, as I said before, he was the most uneasy man until he got his answer, which was yes. The Fourth of July, I allowed, would be soon enough for the wedding-day, but he knew he couldn't wait till then—it was impossible. I told him to call Pop in and talk it over. I went over to the kitchen to git a square meal, and show the man I could do the tallest cookin' in Arkansas, when I let myself out for it in dead earnest."

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And what happened when your father and the defendant, Topp, talked it over?"

"Before I left 'em I told Pop the man was on the marry, and I reckoned it was all right. Pop allowed they'd best have something to take. I set on the whisky and sugar, and told them that was cookin' to do; if they preferred mint in theirs they knew just where to git it. When I came back I saw things was wrong. The first thing the man said, and he lookin' sober'n a funeral, was: 'Curnel Dublin, I allowed your gal, Malindy, was a single gal till this minit. Is she single, or is she ever been married afore?' And Pop he told the truth, lookin' him plum in the eye: 'She's been married once, but—only a little—only a little.' And I said: 'That's so; he's talkin' the Gospel facts—only a little.' The man lit out then mighty suddenly; and me and Pop thinks if that's all we could do for him."

"And what happened when your father and the defendant, Topp, talked it over?"

"The Turk is an ancient measure taken from the human arm, as measured from the elbow to the end of the middle finger. The Roman cubit is believed to have been seventeen and one-half inches, and the cubit of the Bible somewhat less than twenty-two inches.

The origin of "Dixie's Land" is thus given: When slavery existed in New York, one "Dixy" owned a large tract of land on Manhattan island and a large number of slaves. The increase of the slaves and the increase of the abolition sentiment, caused an emigration of the slaves to more thorough and secure slave sections; and the negroes who were thus sent off—many being born there—naturally looked back to their old homes, where they had lived in clover, with feelings of regret, as they could not find any place like Dixy's. Hence it became synonymous with an ideal locality, combining ease, comfort and material happiness of every description.

In those days negro singing and minstrelsy were in their infancy, and any subject that could be brought into a ballad was eagerly picked up. This was the case with "Dixie." It was first set to music and introduced as a song by Dan Emmett, a clever and popular negro comedian, author of several pleasing negro melodies. It was sung in New York, and assumed the proportions of a song there. Its origin has been described as Southern, but it is now a common affair in the United States.

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A NEW SYSTEM OF WASHING.

Every American visiting one Section will conceive a legitimate pride in the well-merited praise which he will hear from the great European musical critics who constantly swarm around Marse, Mason & Hamlin's Cabinet Organs, and openly acknowledge that nothing in Europe can be compared with them.

The Organ is a masterpiece of workmanship, and is the result of years of labor and care.

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