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A Selected Tale.

THE HUSBAND'S PRESENT.

BY A JOURNEYMAN PRINTER.

It was a bitter cold night on the 24th of December. The snow lay deep upon the frozen earth, and the bright moon, riding half way up the heavens, lent a crystalline lustre to the scene.

In the high road, a short distance from a quiet repose, stood the form of a human being. His garments were scant and tattered—by far insufficient to keep out the biting frost; his frame shook and trembled like the icebound boughs of the weeping willow that grew near him, and his face, as the moonbeams danced upon it, exhibited all the fearful footprints of the demon—Intemperance. Poor, wretched and debased, he looked—and such, in truth, he was.

Before him, at the end of a neatly-fenced and trellised inclosure, stood a small cottage. It was elegant in its simple neatness, and just such a one as the humble lover of true comfort and joy would seek for a home. The tears rolled down the bloated cheeks of the poor, inebriate as he gazed upon the cottage, and, at length, as he clasped his hands in agony, he murmured:

"O, thou fond home of my happier days, thou lookest like a heaven of the past. Beneath thy roof I was married to the idol of my soul, and, within thy peaceful walls, God gave me two blessed children. There peace and plenty were mine, and love and joy were mine. My wife—God bless her gentle soul—was happy then, and my children—may heaven protect them—laughed and played in gleesome pleasure. Gladness played upon us then, and every hour was a season of bliss. But I lost them as a fool loses his own salvation! Six years have past since the demon that I took to my heart, drove us from your sheltering roof. And those six years! Oh, what misery, what anguish, what sorrows, and what degradation have they not brought to me and my poor family! Home, health, wealth, peace, joy, and friends are gone—all, all gone! Oh, thou fatal cup—no, I will not blame thee. It was I—I who did it! Year after year, I tampered with thy deadly steed, when I knew that destruction lurked in thy smile. But, but, and the poor man raised his eyes to heaven, as he spoke, "there is room on earth for another man—and I will be that man!"

Within the only apartment of a miserable and almost broken down hovel, sat a woman and two children—a boy and a girl. The cold wind found its entrance through a hundred crevices, and as its biting gusts swept through the room, the mother and children crouched nearer to the few embers that still smouldered upon the hearth. The only furniture was four stools, a rickety table, and a scantily covered bed; while in one corner, nearest to the fire-place, was a heap of straw and tattered blankets, which served as a resting place for the brother and sister. Part of a tallow candle was burning upon the table, and by its dim light one might have seen that wretched mother's countenance. It was pale and wan, and wet with tears. The faces of her children were both buried in her lap, and they seemed to sleep peacefully under her prayerful guardianship.

At length the sound of footsteps on the snow crust struck upon the mother's ears, and hastily arousing her children, she hurried them to their lowly bed, and hardly had they crouched away beneath the thin blankets, when the door was opened, and the man whom we have already seen before the pretty cottage entered the place. With a trembling and fearful look, the wife gazed up into her husband's face, and seemed ready to crouch back on his approach, when the mark of a tear-drop upon his cheek caught her eye. Could it be, thought she, that nearly drop was in truth a tear! No—perhaps a snow flake had fallen there and melted.

Once or twice, Thomas Wilkins seemed upon the point of speaking some word to his wife, but at length he turned slowly away and silently undressed himself, and very soon after his weary limbs had touched the bed, he was asleep.

Lord and earnestly did Mrs. Wilkins gaze upon the features of her husband after he had fallen asleep. There was something strange in his manner—something unaccountable—surely he had not been drinking; for his countenance had none of that vacant, wild, demonic look that usually rested there. His features were rather sad and thoughtful, than otherwise; and—O, heavens, it is possible! a smile played about his mouth, and a sound, as if of prayer, issued from his lips while yet he slept!

A faint hope, like the misty vapor of approaching morn, flitted before the heart-broken wife. But she could not grasp it, she had no foundation for it; and with a deep groan she let the phantom pass. She went to her children, and drew the clothes more closely about them; she then knelt by their side, and after imprinting on their cheeks a mother's kiss, uttered a fervent prayer in their behalf, she sought the repose of the pillow.

Long ere the morning dawned, Thomas Wilkins arose from his bed, dressed himself, and left the house. His poor wife awoke just as he was going out, and she would have called to him, but she dared not. So would have told him that she had no fuel, no bread—not anything with which to warm and feed the children; but he was gone, and she sank back upon her pillow and wept.

The light of morning came at length, but Mrs. Wilkins had not risen from out her resting-place. A sound of footsteps was heard from without, accompanied by a noise, as though a light sled were being dragged through the snow. The door opened, and the husband entered. He laid upon the table a heavy wheaten loaf, a

small pail, and a paper bundle, then from his pocket he took another paper parcel, and again he turned towards the door. When next he entered, he bore in his arms a load of wood; and three times did he go out, and return with a load of the same description. Then he bent over the fire-place, and soon a blazing fire sparkled on the hearth. As soon as this was accomplished, Thomas Wilkins bent over his children and kissed them; then he went to the bedside of his wife, and while some powerful emotion stirred up in his soul and made his chest heave, he murmured:

"Kiss me, Lizzie."

Tightly that wife wound her arms about the neck of her husband, and as though the love of years had centered in that one kiss, she pressed it upon his lips.

"There—no more," he uttered, as he gently laid the arm of his wife from his neck, "these things I have brought, are for you and our children," and as he spoke he left the house.

Mrs. Wilkins arose from her bed, and tremblingly she examined the articles upon the table. She found the loaf, and in the pail she found milk; one of the papers contained two smaller bundles—one of tea and one of sugary while in the remaining parcel she found a nice lump of butter.

"O," murmured the poor wife and mother, as she gazed upon the food thus spread out before her, "whence came these? Can it be that Thomas has stolen them? No, he never did that? And then that look—that kiss—those kind, sweet, sweet words! O, my poor heart, raise not a hope that may only fail and crush thee!"

"Mother," at this moment spoke her son, who had raised himself upon his elbow, "is our father gone?"

"Yes, Charles."

"O, tell me, mother, did he not come and kiss me and little Abby, this morning?"

"Yes, yes—he did!" cried the mother as she flew to the side of her boy and wound her arms about him.

"And, mother," said the child, in low, trembling accents, while he turned a fearful look to his parent's face, "will not father be good to us once more?"

That mother could not speak, she could only press her children more fondly to her bosom and weep a mother's tears upon them.

Was Lizzie Wilkins happy, as she sat her children round the morning's meal? At least, a ray of sunshine was struggling to gain entrance to her bosom.

Toward the middle of the afternoon, Mr. Abel Walker, a retired sea-captain of some wealth, sat in his comfortable parlor, engaged in reading, when one of the servants informed him that some one at the door wished to see him.

"Tell him to come in," returned Walker.

"But it's that miserable Wilkins, sir."

"Never mind," said the captain after a moment's hesitation, "show him in. Poor fellow," he continued, after the servant had gone, "I wonder what he wants. In truth, I pity him."

With a trembling step and downcast look, Thomas Wilkins entered Captain Walker's parlor.

"Ah, Wilkins," said the old captain, "what has brought you here?"

The poor man twice attempted to speak, but his heart failed him.

"Do you come for charity?"

"No, sir," quickly returned Wilkins, while his eyes gleamed with a proud light.

"Then sit down, and out with it," said Walker, in a blunt, but kind tone.

"Captain Walker," commenced the poor man, as he took the proffered seat, "I have come to ask you if you will own that little cottage beyond the hill."

"I do."

"And is it occupied?"

"No."

"Is it engaged?"

"No," returned the captain, regarding his visitor with uncommon interest; "but why do you ask?"

"Captain Walker," said Wilkins, in a firm and manly tone, even though his eyes glistened and his lips quivered, "I have been poor and degraded—deeply steeped in the dregs of poverty and disgrace. Everything that made life valuable, and I have almost lost. My wife and children have suffered, and God only knows how keenly! I have long wandered in the path of sin. One after another, the tender cords of friendship that used to bind me to the world have snapped asunder; my name has become a by-word, and upon the earth I have been but a foul blot. But, sir, from henceforth, I am a man! Up from the depths of its long grave I dragged forth my heart, and love still has its home therein. I have sworn to touch the fatal cup no more; and in my heart there is no lie. My wife and my children shall suffer no more for the sins they never committed. I have seen my old employer, at the machine shop, and he has even been kind enough to give me an order in advance for necessary articles of clothing, food, and furniture. To-morrow morning I commence work."

"And you come to see if you could obtain your cottage back again to live in?" said Captain Walker, as Wilkins hesitated.

"Yes, sir; to see if I could hire it of you," replied the poor man.

"Wilkins, how much can you make at your business?" bluntly asked the old captain, without seeming to heed the request.

"My employer is going to put me on job work, sir; and soon as I get my hand in, I can easily make from twelve to fourteen dollars a week."

"And how much will it take to support your family?"

"As soon as I get cleared up, I can easily get along with five or six dollars a week."

"Then you might be able to save about four hundred dollars a year."

"I mean to do that, sir."

A few moments Captain Walker gazed into the face of his visitor, and then he asked:

"Have you pledged yourself yet?"

"Before God and in my heart, I have; but one of my errands here was to get you to write me a pledge, and have it made to my wife and children."

Captain Walker sat down to his table and wrote out the required pledge, and then, in a trembling, but bold hand, Thomas Wilkins signed it.

"Wilkins," said the old man, as he took his visitor by the hand, "I have watched well your

countenance, and weighed your words. I know you speak the truth. When I bought the cottage from your creditors six years ago, I paid them one thousand dollars for it. It has not been harmed, and is as good as it was then.—Most of the time I have received good rent for it. Now, sir, you shall have it for just what I paid for it, and each month you shall pay me such a sum as you can comfortably spare, till it is all paid. I shall ask you for no rent nor for a cent of interest. You shall have a deed of the estate, and in return I will take but a single note and mortgage upon which you can have your own time."

Thomas Wilkins tried to thank the old man for his kindness, but he only sank into his chair and wept like a child; and while he sat with his face buried in his hands, the old man slipped from the room. And when at length he returned, he bore in his hand a neatly covered basket.

"Come, come," the Captain exclaimed, "cheer up, my friend. Here are some titties for your wife and children—take them home; and believe me, Wilkins, if you feel half as happy in receiving my favor as I do in bestowing it, you are happy indeed."

"O, God! God will bless you for this, sir!" exclaimed the kindness-stricken man; "and if I betray your confidence, may I die on the instant!"

"Stick to your pledge, Wilkins, and I will take care of the rest," said the old Captain, as his friend took the basket. "If you have time, to-morrow, call on me, and I will arrange the papers."

As Thomas Wilkins once more entered the streets, his tread was light and easy. A bright light of joyousness shone in every feature, and as he wended his way homeward, he felt, in every avenue of his soul, that he was once more a man.

The gloomy shades that ushered in the night of the thirty-first of December, had fallen over the snow-clothed earth. Within the miserable dwelling of Mrs. Wilkins, there was more of comfort than we found when we visited her, but yet nothing had been added to the furniture of the place. For the last six days, her husband had come home every evening, and gone away before daylight every morning, and during that time, she knew that he had not drunk any intoxicating beverage, for already his face began to assume the stamp of its former mien, and every word that he had spoken had been kind and affectionate. To his children he had brought new shoes and warm clothing, and to herself he had given such things as she stood in immediate need of; but yet, with all this, he had been taciturn and thoughtful, showing a dislike to all questions, and only speaking such words as were necessary. The poor, devoted, loving wife began to hope. And why should she not? For six years her husband had not been thus before—

One week ago she dreaded his approach; but now she found herself waiting for him with all the anxiety of former years. Should all this be broken; should this new charm be swept away? Eight o'clock came, and so did nine and ten, and yet her husband came not!

"Mother," said little Charles, just as the clock struck ten, seeming to have awakened from a dreary slumber. "Is not this the last night of the old year?"

"Yes, my son."

"And do you know what I've been dreaming, dear mother? I dreamed that father had brought us New Year's presents, just the same as he used to. But he won't, will he? He's too poor now!"

"No, my dear boy, we shall have no other presents than food; and even for that we must thank dear father. There, lay your head in my lap again."

The boy laid his curly head once more in his mother's lap, and with tearful eyes he gazed upon his innocent form.

The clock struck eleven! The poor wife was yet on her tireless, sleepless watch! But hardly had the sound of the last stroke died away, ere the snow crust gave back the sound of a footfall, and in a moment once more her husband entered. With a trembling fear she raised her eyes to his face, and a wild thrill of joy went to her heart, as she saw that all there was open and bold—only those many features looked more joyous, and proud than ever.

"Lizzie," said he, in mild, kind accents, "I am late to-night, but business has detained me; and now I have a favor to ask of thee."

"Name it, dear Thomas, and you shall not ask a second time," cried the wife, as she laid her hand confidently upon her husband's arm.

"And you will ask me no questions?" continued Wilkins.

"No, I will not."

"Then," continued the husband, as he bent over and imprinted a kiss upon his wife's brow, "I want you to dress our children for a walk, and you shall accompany us. The night is calm and tranquil, and the snow is well trodden—"

"But—"

"Ah, no questions! Remember your promise."

Lizzie Wilkins knew not what all this meant, nor did she think to care; for anything that could please her husband she would have done with pleasure, even though it had wrenched her very heart strings. In a short time the two children were ready; then Mrs. Wilkins put on such articles of dress as she could command, and soon they were on the road. The moon shone brightly; the stars peeped down upon the earth, and they seemed to smile upon the travellers from out their twinkling eyes of light. Silently Wilkins led his way, and silently his wife and children followed. Several times the wife gazed up into her husband's face; but, from the strange expression that rested there, she could make out nothing that tended to satisfy her.

At length, a slight turn in the road brought them suddenly upon the pretty white cottage—where years before they had been so happy. They approached the spot. The snow in the front yard had been shovelled away, and a path led up the piazza. Wilkins opened the gate—his wife, trembling, followed, but wherefore she knew not. Then her husband opened the door, and in the entry they were met by the smiling countenance of old Captain Walker, who ushered them into the parlor, where a warm fire glowed in the grate, and where everything looked neat and comfortable. Mrs. Wilkins turned her gaze on the old man, and then upon her husband.

Surely, in that greeting between the poor man and the rich, there was none of that constraint which would have been expected.—They met rather as friends and neighbors. What could it mean?

Hark! the clock strikes twelve! The old year is gone; a new, bright-winged cycle is about to commence its flight over the earth.

Thomas Wilkins took the hand of his wife within his own, and then drawing from his bosom a paper, he placed it in her hand, remarking as he did so:

"Lizzie, this is your husband's present for the new year."

The wife took the paper and opened it. She realized its contents at a glance, but she could not read it word for word, for the streaming tears of a wild, frantic joy would not let her. With a quick, nervous movement she placed the priceless pledge next her bosom; and then, with a low murmur, like the gentle whispering of some Heaven-bound angel, she fell, half fainting, into her husband's arms.

"Look up, look up, my own dear wife," uttered the redeemed man, "look up and smile upon your husband, and you, too, my children, gather about your father—for a husband and father henceforth I will ever be. Look up, my wife. There—now, Lizzie, feel proud with me, for we stand within our own house! Yes, this cottage is once more our own; and nothing but the hand of death shall take us hence. Our good, kind friend here will explain it all. O, Lizzie, if there be happiness on earth, it shall henceforth be ours! Let the past be forgotten, and with this, the dawning of a new year, let us commence to live in the future."

Gently the husband and wife sank upon their knees, clasped in each other's arms, and clinging joyfully to them, knelt their conscious happy children. A prayer from the husband's lips wended its way to the Throne of Grace; and, with the tears trickling down his aged face, old Captain Walker responded a heartfelt "Amen!"

Five years have passed since that happy moment. Thomas Wilkins has cleared his pretty cottage from all incumbrances, and a happier or more respected family does not exist. And Lizzie, that gentle, confiding wife, as she takes that simple paper from the drawer, and gazes again and again on the magic pledge it bears, weeps tears of joy anew. Were all the wealth of the Indies poured out in one glittering, blinding pile at her feet, and all the honors of the world added thereto, she would not, for the whole countless sum, give in exchange one single word from that pledge which constituted her husband's present.

Miscellaneous.

An Old Fort in Georgia.

In Murray County Georgia, and near its southeastern boundary at the summit of an mural precipice, 1,700 feet in perpendicular height, there stands the remains of an ancient fortification, constructed of solid mason work, covering five acres of ground. Within the enclosure, lofty cypress trees, from two to three hundred years old, rear their heads to the tempest, covering with their verdant foliage ancient occupants; and near it a gushing stream of water issues from the crevice of the rock, of icy coldness, whence the garrison used to obtain their supply. Who were the builders of this immense fort, perched upon a lofty crag of the Conutta Mountain overlooking as far as vision can extend the country surrounding and so well calculated for defence and security against an enemy? That it is the work of a civilized people is beyond the shadow of a doubt, for in no instance where investigation has extended, are we informed that among the barbarous inhabitants of this country has a stone structure been found of material built with lime. Even in the remarkable mounds on the plantation of Judge Messier, of Early county Georgia, gigantic in size, and surrounded by a wall of earth, and which approach nearest to civilization, with positive design for the purpose of worship and defence, can no mason work be found, or the use of the trowel. From the arrangement of those mounds, their builders were probably part of the dispersed Toltec nation in Mexico, who were worshippers of the Sun, and driven from their ancient domain by the Aztec tribes, were dispersed throughout Yucatan; North and South America—and they, in their turn, were subjugated by Cortez in the invasion of Mexico.

Independent of a tradition which has been handed down from father to son for generations among the aborigines of the country, "that a people with long beards dressed in shining armour, of pale complexion, and who possessed the lightning of heaven, erected the fortification years ago," Col. Pickett, in his valuable "History of Alabama," has furnished a clue to the knowledge of its builders. He says: "After a halt of several weeks at Citricahaque—the present Silver Bluff on the Savannah River—De Soto, with the Castilians, broke up his camp, and in company with the beautiful young Queen, whom he retained as a hostage, to insure obedience among her subjects marched up its head waters, and rested for a short time at a town in the present County of Habersham, Georgia."

From this place the expedition assumed a direct western course across Northern Georgia, until they struck the head waters of the Coosa River, when they advanced upon the town of Gauxule, containing three hundred houses, situated between several streams, which had their sources in the surrounding mountains. Gaining much information about the country from the Chief, after four days sojourn he marched to the town of Conasauga, in now Murray County, Georgia."

A glance at the map of Northern Georgia will at once convince the reader that the fortification to which we refer stands on the direct route pursued by De Soto through the Cherokee Nation, and that, most probably, it was by his orders constructed. The object was, no doubt, a means of defence against the Indians, whom he had excited to open warfare by repeated acts of aggression, and for convenience to game, which may have been found in the immediate vicinity to the fortress, for, at the base of the precipice along a gap, through the high mountain, may be seen the route of an old buffalo trail.

The grandeur and picturesque aspects of the country in that elevated region must have been gratifying to those stalwart Castilians, after a long and dreary march over the low, sandy, blue barrens they had crossed, almost uninterrupted-

ly, from the time they landed on the southern coast of Florida.

It is known that the object of De Soto's visit to the mountainous country of Georgia was the search of gold. Whether they were successful the journals of his officers do not inform us, but recent investigation has proved that he passed through or near a country abounding in precious metal. From that rock-bound citadel those grim warriors of Castilia looked out on the world around them with contempt, secure from the attack of their enemies, or descending the craggy and tortuous mountain sides, made foray upon the surrounding country.—Cor. Alabama Journal.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS.—We heartily endorse the following editorial remarks from the N. O. Picayune. Every word therein contained applies as well to South Carolina as Louisiana; and we hope that ere long our State will carry into operation some efficient system of public schools.

"The establishment of a good and efficient system of public schools is certainly the most important enterprise that can engage the attention of the legislator. Public education is, without doubt, the true palladium of free institutions. For in speaking of the instruction of the masses we do not believe it necessary to distinguish between public knowledge and public virtue. An enlightened people will be a virtuous people. Where the masses are well instructed there will be a public virtue. It is where only the few are educated that despotism holds sway; and it is where those few are at the same time corrupt that the rights of masses of mankind are trampled under foot. A people that is both enlightened and virtuous must of course necessarily be free. And in our opinion, an enlightened people will always possess public virtue, and will generally be controlled by considerations of public good.

We regard, therefore, the establishment of a thorough system of popular instruction as both the basis and security of our institutions.—Hence we go, firstly, for establishing and maintaining throughout the State, at any necessary cost, the very best possible system of public schools, as the instrument of unfolding the moral and intellectual energies of the people. Next after this we are in favor of railroads and works of internal improvements, as the means of developing the material resources of our country. With these two systems in thorough operation we have no fears for the future.

If therefore our legislators shall do anything to promote the cause of public education in this State—to break the lethargy which seems too generally to exist, and quicken the interest relative to this subject, they will have accomplished much, and will deserve the thanks of the present and future generation."

THE LIGHTNING.—A FEW HINTS.—It may be well to encourage timid people who are religiously or constitutionally alarmed at lightning, to state the doctrine of chances. As a general thing, the lightning does not strike within the space of a square mile, more than once a year. If the person is a rod distant, he is seldom if ever killed. Now there is 70,400 square rods in a square mile, and if the lightning struck rod after rod, it would take 190 years to go over it; but it smites here and there, and that it will smite any special rod, there is not more than one chance to a hundred billion.

Again, other things being equal, the chance diminishes as it regards a low object, as the difference between the square of its height, and that of a lower; so that with a person six feet, and a tree sixty feet, there is but one chance out of 3,564 of the person's being struck. If he will go close to a tree, or in a house without a rod, his danger is proportionally increased.

Again, objects non conductors when dry, become good conductors when wet. A dry silk umbrella, if not tipped with metallic substance, will ward off the lightning; but if wet, not. Get lightning rods for your houses and see to it that the fastenings be much smaller than the rods—that the rods enter the earth, and fear not the "red artillery."

It is well for persons who are naturally timid to get electrified a number of times. It renders them less electric, and therefore less in danger. Finally, death by lightning is the easiest of all deaths. An electric shock enters, we are instantly filled, and life is gone without a pang. "Ah! but the hereafter! Well, live right here, and it will be all right with you there—if it must be so.

"I DO NOT LABOR."—"I do not labor," exclaimed a haughty aristocrat, as he turned his eyes from a borrowed newspaper, and rested them upon a poor laborer who passed opposite his mansion. But that man forgot that his own father had labored long and wearily, to accumulate the fortune that had descended to so ungrateful a son.

"I do not labor!" said a gay young belle, as she laid down "the latest novel," and scornfully viewed some industrious girls who were then returning from their daily toil. But that thoughtless belle forgot that the leaves of the book that had so interested her, were carefully folded by those self-same girls, whose daily, but illly rewarded work it was.

"I do not labor," mused a drone, as it beheld the never idle bee winging its way about the garden, culling sweets from every flower. But sharply was stung that drone, until it was compelled to leave the hive where its example was despised.

And all, all who scornfully view the activity of their fellows, and exclaim with contempt, "I do not labor!" are, as they have often been termed, "drones in the hive of nature." And though cruel it might be considered to utterly cast them out of society, yet that their idleness should be a source of pride, and command the respect of others, "is strange, is passing strange."

The longer I live, the more I am certain that the great difference between men, the great and insignificant, is energy—invincible determination—an honest purpose once fixed—and then death or victory. That quality will do anything that can be done in the world; and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunity will make a two-legged creature a man without it.

General News.

Correspondence of the Courier.

WASHINGTON, April 16. The calm in the administration of the General Government will naturally be extended over the whole surface of political affairs in the States. We see proofs of this on all sides. Gov. Cobb, of Georgia, and Gov. Rooker, of Mississippi, have both agreed to resign the disagreements of 1850, between the Union men and the State Rights men; to the fourth of oblivion.

The President is rejoiced at the acceptance, by Judge Bronson, of the Collectorship of New-York. He ought to be pleased, for it is one of the best appointments he has made, in every respect. The President, and the administration were a little disconcerted by Mr. Dickinson's rejection of the same office. It is easy to see that between Mr. Dickinson and Gov. Marcy, a deep gulf now exists.

The Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Guthrie is engaged in the investigation and exposure of public abuses, in his own department. He has explored the recesses of political favoritism, established under the late administration, and thinks he has found a den of corruption. It may prove to be so, but, at present, it looks more like a mare's nest. The Secretary has authorized a strict investigation into the subject of the transfer of funds from one Sub-Treasury to another, ordered under the late administration. It is alleged that these were not actual but constructive transfers, and that they were used for the purpose of giving political, or rather, financial, friends, the full benefit of the use of the public money in large amounts. It is alleged also that large funds were taken out of the Sub-Treasury of New-York, and deposited, without security, with individuals in New-York for the professed purpose of purchasing U.S. stocks for the Government. It is not supposed that the Government has lost any money by these transfers or agencies. The stock market has been constantly on the rise until late, and, in real estate, prices have yet suffered no check. The Government will get its own, but not without usury.

The objection is to the principle of these transactions. The Government may corrupt individuals without defrauding the public.

The Sub Treasury system has been under loose administration. Mr. Guthrie will draw more clearly its rules and bonds. Any one who will make a red cent out of his administration of the Treasury, in any way but by proper service, and in strict conformity with law, will be a lucky fellow.

The Secretary of the Treasury has determined to proceed at once to the execution of the act for the establishment of the Assay office in New York. It is settled that under the act, ingots issued from this office, shall be receivable for public dues.

Some interest is felt here and elsewhere in regard to the recent accounts of the discovery and development of mines of copper in Tennessee, together with the statement that the copper ore from these mines, can be transported to Charleston, by rail roads now in progress, at the cost of eight dollars a ton only for freight. If all the accounts as to this matter be true, its importance is very great. Copper is in greater demand in the world now than it ever was, and its price is appreciating, while that of gold is depreciating. Yet, notwithstanding the Lake Superior mines, nothing is more possible if these accounts be true, than Charleston will be the great depot of the copper trade.

SPIRITUAL RAPPING.—In the House of Representatives of Massachusetts on the 15th inst, an order was submitted directing the Committee on Education, to inquire into the expediency of providing legal restraints against the mischief now perpetrated by the mummy known as "Spiritual Rapping." It may appear to some people beneath the dignity of legislative functions (says the Boston Courier) to bestow attention upon a folly so despicable as the charlatany in question; yet when folly becomes the instrument and channel of grave mischief, we see not why the law should hesitate to interere. If this pernicious foolery of "spiritual rapping" cannot be prosecuted as a common nuisance—as it richly deserves to be—or if the knaves who carry on the trade cannot be indicted for obtaining money on false pretences, it certainly does seem necessary to provide new legal protection against this new form of knavery and imposture. No fact is clearer to the understanding of all men of common sense, who have taken the pains to bestow the least attention upon the proceedings of these "rappers," than that they are composed of two classes of people, namely—impostors who cheat, and dupes who are cheated. This is a short-hand history of the whole concern. We have laws to punish gambling, and laws which assign the House of Correction to "persons who use any juggling." Now the vile quackery in question is gambling and juggling at the same time, and both of the very worst sort. If the evil cannot be reached by existing laws, it is serious enough to call for a new enactment.

RHODE ISLAND.—The revelations from Rhode Island would seem to indicate that that State is the most venal of any in the Union. The late election is alleged to have been carried by the most shameless bribery. The Providence Journal, after stating that one man spent \$4200 for election purposes, goes on as follows:

"In another town, where the contest is always close, a man who is an applicant for an appointment under the Government, bought a vote for \$25, and as he nor the venal wretch who took his money would trust each other—they were pretty well acquainted—each took hold of the five five dollar bills by one end, and so marched to the ballot-box, when the voter dropped in the envelopes, the purchaser let go his hold of the money. This was a shameless case, and was done in open town meeting, in the presence of the voters on both sides."