

# The Sumter Banner.

DEVOTED TO SOUTHERN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, NEWS, LITERATURE, AGRICULTURE, SCIENCE AND THE ARTS.

W. J. FRANCIS, PROPRIETOR.

"God—and our Native Land."

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## THE SUMTER BANNER

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### MISCELLANEOUS.

#### A MIDNIGHT SCENE, DURING THE REVOLUTION.

The following incident is strictly a fact. I have but arranged in regular form those circumstances which I heard from the lips of the actors in the scene, and in so doing I am very conscious that I have deprived them of much that added deep interest to the event. But the glance, the tone, the gesture, the rapid utterance, or the pause of emotion, must be imagined by the reader, my pen claims no merit save that of decorating truth with the mellowed recollections of friendship—for I knew and loved those of whom I am about to speak, and there are still some living who could instantly give to my story "a local habitation and a name."

Fertile as each of the "Old Thirteen" may be in harrowing and romantic incidents, connected with the War of the Revolution, none can offer a fairer field to the imagination, or to the feelings, than South Carolina. Many causes combined to make her situation at that period very interesting, and not the least striking was the contrast between the aristocracy and the degraded slaves of the other. Good sense, strict probity, enduring patriotism, were prominent traits; but among the especially, who adhered to the ancient order of things, and whose passions and fears were constantly excited by the threats of change and the dread of danger, there was sometimes found to a ferocity—an eagerness for plunder—a readiness to engage in scenes of violence—which scattered terror over many a neighbourhood that else would have known war only in its milder forms. But at the period I speak of, South Carolina was also a prey to civil discord; all the ties of brotherhood were broken, and as success crowned either party, the patriot triumphed with a taunting and reproachful joy, or the tory exulted in a prospect of such a return to the "good old days," as would make the word *treason* a sword and shield to him. In the mean time, according to the depth of the moral character, feelings of aversion and hatred, or of open and manly disunion, were silently nourished or boldly avowed.

Such characters were numerous in a southern district of South Carolina, which lies very near the beautiful river that separates it from Georgia. The year 1780 was one of gloom and sorrow to the hearts of its patriots; Charleston was in the possession of the British; the whole State at the mercy of the royalists, and the gallant spirits who had thrown life and property into the perilous stake, were in general obliged to abandon the one and seek safety for the other in the depths of their swamps and the solitudes of their pine barrens. There were some, however, who still remained at their homes, and in bitterness of heart tried, by a voluntary retirement, to avoid that expression of feeling which could only bring ruin to their helpless families.

Among this class was a planter, whose name was P——. He possessed a fine estate on one of the narrow and winding waters which empty into Broad river; was young, intelligent, ardent, and enthusiastic, and devoted to the cause in which his country was struggling. Such a character was exactly calculated to secure strong friendships and excite strong enmities, in a time that tried men's souls. Whilst freedom of speech was permitted to him, he avowed his sentiments with a careless frankness, a bold independence, which alternately galled and

enraged those who adhered to the ungracious course pursued by the "mother land," and unfortunately there was a regular channel for the outpouring of his triumph or his wrath, in a kind of weekly meeting at a favourite spot where the neighborhood, in every direction, sent forth its little groups, to spend an evening in comparing news, or debating upon the results of the engrossing events of the day. The demon of discord hailed these meetings as its own. The passions, whether noble or base, were all aroused; and had they needed stimulant, they would have found it in those deep and frequent draughts which were tendered and accepted as the pledge of good fellowship; it was very visible, ere long, to Mr. P's friends, that he had given great disgust to some low characters whom he had treated with a scornful contempt. He was warned as affairs on the American side became more gloomy, to be on his guard; but he laughed at the idea of having given serious offence to them, as they still doffed their hats and bowed obsequiously; and when at last, conscious of his own impetuosity, he withdrew entirely from those meetings, he little dreamed that scenes and sayings which had passed from his own memory with the flush they had excited on his brow, had sunk deeply into the hearts of some whom he called, and in all singleness of spirit, looked upon as neighbors, in the primitive sense of that word.

He had married about a twelvemonth before this period, a very young creature—an orphan, and almost friendless, though not portionless; and very recently she had given birth to a lovely boy. His wife was a being of quiet and gentle mood—best suited, perhaps, to the bold and vehement character of him she called lord. His thoughts, his hopes, his fears, were faithfully reflected on the placid stream of her feelings; it resisted only the shadows of bitterness which sometimes passed over his spirit; and when they came to trouble the fountain of her happiness, the tear in her dark eye, and his imploring look, dispersed them when holier influences failed. To his wife, who had found cause for constant anxiety in this trait of his character, the change in his habits was a blessed one. She no longer watched the setting sun in sadness and in loneliness, dreading lest he should have been embroiled with some of his rude companions; yet trying to conceal her real cause of solicitude under the plea of fear lest he should be exposed to the heavy dews of the season. She no longer saw him return exhausted by excitement, or irritated by opposition. It was grievous to know that the patriots were, even for a time, crushed in Carolina; but she deemed all safe who no longer offended by word or deed, and her husband avoided intercourse with any save a few tried friends; and although serious, he was calm, and always with her now, and Mary asked no more.

"I think, dear Edward," said she, as they sat one lonely evening in the piazza which embraced the whole front of their mansion, "I really think we were never so happy as at present—for our days of courtship, as they are called, were days of anxiety and alarm, and even our bridal was so hurried and so private that it could scarcely be called a season of joy. You know how restless you were just at that time, under the uncertainty that attended the plans against Savannah; and I am sure I wearied of D'Estang's name—then when you brought me here, for many, many months, you were constantly on the wing. I seemed scarcely to pass a quiet day at your side. But now you are no longer truant; you are taking care of home, instead of seeking care abroad, and are literally what our good old Rector told you you must be—the *household*—encircling all things by your vigilance and love; and you are going to set a charming example to my sweet George." added she playfully, as she laid her infant in its father's arms, and pressed her own soft lips to his polished forehead.

Mr. P—— looked up and smiled, for how could even an absorbed politician resist the sweet tone and innocent caress of his young wife. For a few moments he forgot all beyond the treasures which his arms encircled, but only for a few moments. He sighed, as he said, "My dear Mary I hope that we shall yet see even happier days than these. Dark as is the prospect for our country, I look for the cloud to roll away even as that gorgeous one is doing from the glorious sun; and then, love, the domestic habits for which you give me such sweet credit will, I trust, be of choice, not of necessity. I shall not be obliged to limit my rides to my cotton field, lest I should be ordered off the road—or to bite my lips when I chance to meet a neighbor, lest the sentiments of a freeborn

American should offend his loyal ears. Those fellows!—(she put her hand gently on his mouth.)—well then," said he, checking a rising warmth, "those royalists will then no longer lord it over bower and hall, and that worthless fellow, Guilford, will have better employment, I trust, than abusing me—harmless man as I am—or tampering with my negroes."

"Nay, Edward, do not believe such tales. He can bear no ill will towards you; idle and worthless he is, but I am sure he is not malignant, and I hope he is not ungrateful. He cannot have forgotten all he owes to your kindness, during the sad distress of his family last autumn." Mary said this earnestly, for she knew her husband was not prone to suspicion.

He shook his head. "I have not a particle of faith, my wife, in his good feeling toward us; you may judge of it when he has been trying to induce even our faithful Cyrus to desert us, and join the British."

"And only Cyrus?"  
"Oh! he tempted them; all; and I have no doubt some of them will yield to the booty he promises them."  
"Docty!" Mrs. P—— turned pale. "He surely wished them to depart peaceably," said she, gasping, for that was a fearful chord to touch.

Her husband saw her alarm, and with assumed carelessness smiled as he answered, "Nay, Mary, even I have so much charity as to be willing to think that he desires nothing more than *my ruin*. He will urge these poor devils to join the British, and then take especial heed to secure a good part of their wages; and he will care little for their sufferings or my distress. But come, let us go in; the evening has grown chilly. I must retire early, for I shall arise with the dawn."

"If it pleases God to protect us from evil during the night, my dear Edward," said his wife, in a low and solemn tone.  
"True," replied he, bonding his hand with a solemn oath, "as at an early hour they retired to their chamber; and wearing by a day of bodily toil, and with a mind oppressed by apprehensions which he had only ventured to hint to his wife, Mr. P—— soon sunk into an unrefreshing sleep. But to Mary there was no rest. Her heart was aroused; and what charm can lull the mother and the wife, when she trembles for the objects of her love. She could not sleep; she sat with her infant in her arms, until sheer fatigue compelled her to lay his soft cheek on his pillow. She watched by his little couch until her husband awoke from a troubled dream, and then to convince him that she was not indisposed, she trimmed the lamp, committed herself and those who were more dear than self, to Him who "neither slumbers nor sleeps," and tried to repose. But even on her pillow fancy was busy around her. She started at every sound; strange noises seemed to ring in her ears; she thought she heard shouts; wild cries; then she distinguished low murmurs, as of whispering beneath her windows. Again and again she started from a momentary slumber to say, "is it the night that has no morrow?" At length, about midnight, she was thoroughly roused by a sound in which imagination had no share. She distinctly heard the rapid and regular advance of horsemen. She listened, and just when they must have reached a spot where the road was forked, the sound died away. Breathless, yet relieved, she was about again to recline her head, when it returned; but, gently, and as if fearing to alarm, she grasped her husband's arm, and called upon him to arise; and ere he had hastily dressed himself, a rough voice hailed "the house," and in a few moments the front door was furiously struck by impatient hands. Mr. P—— implored his wife to remain where she was; and taking a light, had only reached the door which led into his parlour, when an entrance was forced by his rude visitors, and with a shout of triumph he was seized and hurried into the room. He found himself in the midst of a party of armed men, carefully wearing *crapes over their faces*, and from their noisy and tumultuous manner it was very evident that they were under the influence of liquor. Whilst an eager and important debate apparently occupied a part of the number, and completely drowned his attempts to be heard, he was calm enough to scan the forms and listen to the tones of those who were near him, and in spite of the disguise something every now and then escaped that was familiar to his eye or ear. He turned to look on him who had seized and held him in his grasp as a tiger would his prey; he started; he could not be mistaken—it was Guilford; and from his loud and frequent curse on their folly and delay, it was evident he was

their leader; and that his life was in the hands of a personal enemy. For a moment Mr. P—— closed his eyes in despair—for a moment he determined to address the wretch by name—but the impulse was mercifully checked; and ere the temptation could be repeated he was suddenly placed in the middle of the room, and the party formed a close circle around him.

The leader deliberately cocked his pistol, and taking out his watch, said, "Offer up a prayer, as you are fond of the business, you have five minutes allowed you—when they pass, you die." A wild shriek of agony rang through the room as he closed the brutal address, and by a sudden movement of the circle the poor victim saw in a corner of the room his wretched wife, on her knees, and holding up, as if in appeal, his sleeping infant. She had thrown around herself and her husband, had hitherto in silent horror witnessed the whole scene. A mist seemed to blind Mr. P——, as his eye rested on her—a faintness to pass over him, which might well be termed the agony of death. But he had a dauntless spirit, and he rallied when he thought his enemy would triumph in his weakness. He looked steadily upon him, as he said, "I know not why or wherefore you are about to murder; but since I am to die, if not already prepared for the hour, assuredly it is not here that I can pray. Fire."

The wretch obeyed. He was a perfect marksman; but either he was embarrassed by the noble bearing of his victim, or some slight movement eluded his eye, for he did not kill. Mr. P—— had involuntarily raised his left arm as he spoke, and the motion saved his life. The bullet shattered his hand, and passing through it grazed his temple. He stood covered with blood; the sight of this "certain mark of crime" softened instantly those around him. The scene had all passed in a moment, and the flash of the pistol, they perhaps never dreamed that Guilford meant more than to insult and terrify. They now fiercely protested against further violence, and insisted on being led to seek the booty he had promised them. He suddenly submitted. Every part of the house was ransacked, and all that was valuable secured; and then, dreading lest an alarm should reach some of his friends in the neighborhood, they hastily retreated with their "spoils from the rebel."

By that time Mr. P—— had become weak and faint from loss of blood. He had never moved, but with stern composure stood and supported his shattered hand until the last of the band rode furiously from the door. Then he turned, and called upon his wife. But she did not heed him—her eyes were fixed with a horrid glare; one hand was held up as if to shield them from some fearful sight; her lips were apart, as if struggling to utter a sound; but she uttered none, and her whole appearance would have served as a personification of approaching madness. Mr. P—— tottered towards her, and sunk at her side.

"My wife," said he, "rouse yourself and aid me, for if you do not, I must die." And he held up his bleeding hand.

The sight acted on her as he hoped. She gazed slowly and fearfully round the room, as if to see that the murderers were gone; and then, with a burst of mingled anguish and joy, she threw her arms around him and wept bitterly. Mr. P—— permitted her tears to flow in silence, and when with uplifted hands and eyes she had returned thanks to a merciful God for his preservation from a cruel death, she by degrees became composed, and placing her infant by his side, she went to seek for aid in binding up his wound. But not a domestic was to be found; and believing that they had indeed all deserted, she was endeavoring, weak and trembling as she was, to drag a mattress to the parlor, when Cyrus cautiously peeped in at the door. His cabin was at some distance, and he told her on hearing the alarm, he had immediately run towards the dwelling, but seeing it filled with armed men, and terrified by her shriek, he had withdrawn, and watched at a distance until he beheld them departing, with many of his fellow servants in company.—Then dreading lest they should seek for him, he had actually concealed himself in a deep dry ditch, so long as he even heard the faintest sound of the retreating hoofs. The faithful creature uttered a thousand simple but affecting expressions of sorrow and pity for his wounded master, and busied himself in arranging the mattress; he kindled a cheerful blaze, (for the night air was cold,) and seeing that the blood still flowed through all the bandages and applications his mistress had wrapped around the wound, he begged

her to let him try "something which the old people said the Indians always put on *fresh wounds*," and she gladly consented. Her husband passively submitted to all the directions which Cyrus gave, whilst with a trembling hand she unwound the bloody folds, and he then sunk faint and exhausted on his pallet. Mary hastened to prepare a safe and refreshing cordial in a strong cup of coffee, and strengthened by the beverage, and soothed by the judicious surgery of Cyrus, he was ere long able to talk of the future.

"My love, when day dawns, we will go to our kind friend, Mrs. S——. She is skilful in the treatment of most diseases, and I dare say can manage even this wound; at all events she will do as much as even a surgeon could just now, were I nearer one than twenty miles; for I am sensible that already my hand is so swollen that the bones could not possibly be set."

The plan was a most grateful one to his wife, for no words could express the horrible dread which hung over her as she looked upon him in his helpless state.

"They will return and complete their work; Guilford will never be satisfied until he murders him before my eyes," she murmured. And every leaf that fell with the rising breeze, seemed to her painfully acute ear, the heavy tramp of a horseman.

With the faint streak of day, Cyrus was despatched to the stable. He found an old and gentle animal grazing near the door, the only one which the marauders had left. He tried to equip it with his own saddle and bridle, and made up a kind of pillow for his mistress. Mr. P——'s arm was carefully secured in a sling; his wife, with her infant rode behind him; and Cyrus, their trusty guard, walked briskly by the side of the horse, until they reached the residence of her who was truly the Lady Bountiful of the neighborhood—the hope of the distressed, the comfort of the unhappy, the refuge of the poor. She received them with a woman's tenderness, and a woman's active principle. She exerted all her skill, and finally effected a perfect cure, although the hand was dreadfully disfigured; and she did not permit her young friends to return to their own residence, until happier days had dawned on South Carolina.

It was in 18—that, with the bride of that lady's son, I visited the hospitable mansion of Mr. P——. He was then an old man, and surrounded by a large and most engaging family, the light and active form had shrunk, the keen blue eye was dim, and the brown locks which Mary used to twine with so much pride around her slender fingers, were ringlets still, but silver ones; yet still as carefully arranged by the same kind hand, for she was living too, and enjoying with him a green old age. I became a favorite with them both, and loved to induce them to talk of former days; those were necessarily the days of our Revolutionary War, and I was struck by the excessive bitterness which the old gentleman displayed, whenever the royalists of that period, (or Tories as he called them,) were subjects of discourse. I ventured one evening to tax him with want of charity, and urged him, as the Scotch say, to "let by gones be gones." He laid on the table before me his mutilated hand, and asked, "whether it could be so easy to forget the times, or the men, who had left him such a memorial as that." I had often remarked the terrible scar, but as he had never named it, of course I had asked no questions; but now I learned from Mrs. P—— and himself the particulars of the trying scene which I have related. From other sources I afterwards gathered the sketch which I have given of their youthful characters. As I listened to the details of the cruel outrage, I ceased to wander at its influence on a man of Mr. P——'s deep feeling; and I saw that if ever he forgave, it would not be the voice of reason that would effect the change.

"And you are sure, sir," said I, "that you were not mistaken; that it was really Guilford?"  
"As sure, madam, as if I had seen every feature of his face. The villain betrays it now by his cowardly conduct."

"Now! What, is he living, and do you meet?"  
He smiled. "I can scarcely say that we meet; the first time I saw him after the night was, to use a homely phrase, when the tables were fairly turned. I suspect he had dreaded my vengeance, and fled the country for a time. My friends here even had studiously avoided naming him as the chief actor in the murderous scene, and Mary's tears and entreaties had sealed even my lips until all danger was past, so that concluding he was unknown, the scoundrel actually approached me in a crowd, and offered his hand. I did not kill him, madam. I pray you give me credit, I did not even fell him to

the earth. But I taxed him with his crime; I proclaimed to those around him, that he was a thief and a murderer; and I swore, by all which I held sacred, that if ever he intentionally crossed my path again, or remained one instant where we could breathe even the same atmosphere, I would crush him as I would a viper. He was glad to escape on such terms. My son (turning to him whose flashing eyes bore witness to his father's assertions) my son longs to get hold of him; but he keeps carefully out of our way; and I tell my children that in two senses of the word we are *old enemies*, and I chose to keep the issue in my own hands."

During my stay in Carolina we often spoke of the event, and when I bade them farewell I could only hope that the kind hearted old gentleman was a little undecided as to his course, if ever he should chance to meet his enemy again.

I returned to the north, and some few years afterwards, having preserved my intercourse with the family, I received a message from Mr. P——. "Tell her, that like David of old, the life of him who sought mine, has been in my power; and that, like him, I have been enabled, too, to forgive the pursuer of blood, and to let him depart in peace." His daughter added, that the sudden death of her beloved mother had seemed at once to quicken the fiery spirit which nourished his industry, and he ceased to allude to Guilford. Having consented to attend a parish meeting, where the site of a new church was to be selected, he left his son to attend to the equipment of his pony, and seated himself at his little table, with that sacred volume, which under his Mary's gentle influence, had long been the source whence he drew strength for the trials of every day.—The first sentence that caught his eye, was the solemn and impressive warning, "He that *hateth* his brother is a murderer." He paused. "Do I not in word and deed show that I *hate* Guilford?" He shuddered. "What, am I then in the state of Cain, on a par with him?"

Filled with these solemn thoughts, he in silence pursued his way to the place of meeting, and had scarcely exchanged greetings with his neighbors, when the wretched man accidentally approached it also. His impetuous son fiercely ordered him off, and seeing him hesitate, raised his whip to enforce the command; but his father caught his arm, and calmly, yet firmly, said, "Stop! on your obedience harm not a hair of his head." He then, to the amazement of all present, turned towards the dogged wretch, who still covered under young P——'s fiery tone and manner, and extending his hand, said, with dignity—

"Guilford, it is time to put an end to such scenes as this; we are both on the brink of the grave; we must stand before Him who will judge the heart as well as the actions. May He in that hour forgive me my offences, as with sincerity I tell you that I forgive yours. I offer you my hand as a pledge that you shall never be visited for your conduct, by injury from me or mine."

Guilford touched—yet scarcely touched—the withered hand which was extended to him; but his lip quivered and tears stood in his eyes. Mr. P—— turned from him with emotion, and as he left the spot the perfect silence of the group was only broken by low tones of admiration and astonishment, at the triumph of the Christian principle. The old men shook their heads, and said, that such a change, in such a man, was but preparatory to a greater.

And they were right. In a few months Mr. P—— was called from earth, and the mortal remains of the once bold patriot, and of his gentle Mary, repose in peace; and few are now living to bear witness of this simple record of even one event in their lives—"midnight scenes" of violence and bloodshed.

LOLA MONTEZ.—A California correspondent of the Nashville Gazette gives an account of the recent doings of Mrs. Patrick P. Hull, alias Maria Heald Countess de Lunsfeldt, alias Lola Montez. She was recently arrested for assault and battery, and heavily fined. It appeared on the trail that she becoming enraged at her Chinese servant, seized him by his long tail of hair tied to the door knob, and slapped his rice-masticating jaws most unmercifully. She had the poor fellow "tight," as he could not jerk loose unless he scalped himself. After the perpetration of this feat, the quondam Countess still further astonished the natives, by mining a whole day, in a corduroy Bloomer costume. To cap the climax of her eccentricities, Lola has sued for a separation from her husband, after but a few months, and sought the protection of a handsome cavalier. Her assigned reasons for this course, the correspondent says, are not for ears polite. Lola is a "brick," no mistake.

#### A fast and good Story.

An Englishman was bragging of the speed on English railroads to a Yankee traveler seated at his side in one of the cars of a "fast train," in England. The engine bell was rung as the train neared a station. It suggested to the Yankee an opportunity of "taking down his companion a peg or two."

"What's that noise?" innocently inquired the Yankee.  
"We are approaching a town," said the Englishman. "They have to commence ringing about ten miles before they get to a station, or else the train would run by it before the bell could be heard! Wonderful, isn't it? I suppose they haven't invented bells in America yet?"

"Why, yes," replied the Yankee; "we've got bells, but can't use them on our railroads. We run so tame that the train always keeps ahead of the sound. No use whatever; the sound never reaches the village till after the train gets by."

Indeed! exclaimed the Englishman. "Fact," said the Yankee, "had to give up bells. Then we tried steam whistles—but they wouldn't answer, either. I was on a locomotive when the whistle was tried. We were going at a tremendous rate—hurricanes were nigher, and I had to hold my hair on—We saw a two-horse wagon crossing the track, about five miles ahead, and the engineer let the whistle on, screeching like a trooper. It screamed awfully, but it wasn't noise. The next thing I knew, I was picking myself out of a pond by the road side, amid the fragments of the locomotive, dead horses, broken wagon and dead engineer, lying beside me. Just then the whistle came along, mixed up with some frightful oaths that I had heard the engineer use when he first saw the horses. Poor fellows he was dead before his voice got to him. After that we tried lights, supposing those the chickens were in all along the road when we came by, supposing it to be morning. But the lights were kept away from still, and was in the darkness, with the light close on behind it. The inhabitants petitioned against it; they couldn't sleep with so much light in the night time. Finally we had to station electric telegraphs along the road, with signal men to telegraph when the train was in sight, and I have heard that some of the fast trains beat the lightning 15 minutes every 40 miles. But I can't say as that is true—the rest I know to be so!"

#### A DUTCH CURE.

Ven I lays myself down on my lonely ped room,  
And dries for to sleep very sound,  
De dreams, oh, how into my het dey vill come,  
Till I vish I vas under de ground.

Sometimes, ven I eats one pig supper,  
I dreams  
Dat mine chintmak ish fill full of shones,  
Und out in my sleep, like ter tivel, I screams,  
Und kicks off de ped-clothes and groans.

Den dere, a-h I lays, mit de ped-clothes all off,  
I kits myself all over froze:  
In de morning I vakes mit de het-echo and koff,  
Und I'm chick from my het to mine toes.

Oh, vat shall pe tun for a boor man like me—  
Vat for do I leat such a life?  
Some shays dere's a cure for dis drouble of me—  
Dinks I'll drhy it, und kit me a—  
WIFE.

Mrs. ZEBEDEE SMITH'S PHILOSOPHY.—Dear me! how expensive it is to be poor. Every time I go out, my best bib and tucker has to go off. If Zebedees was worth a million I might wear a coal-hod on my head, if I choose, with perfect impunity. There was that old nabob's wife at lecture, the other night, in a dress that might have been made for Noah's great grandmother. She can afford it! Now if it rains knives and forks, I must sport a forty-shilling bonnet, a ten-pound dress, and a twenty guinea shawl, just to let "Mrs. Tom, Dick, and Harry," see that I can afford it. Then if I go shopping, to buy a paper of needles, I have to get a little chap to bring them home, because it wouldn't answer for me to be seen carrying a parcel through the streets. Then if I go to the sea side, in summer, I can't take my comfort at rich people do, in gingham dresses, loose shoes, and cambric sunbonnets. My senses! not I have to be screwed up by ten o'clock, in a Swiss muslin dress, a French cap, and the contents of an entire jeweler's shop showered over my person. I declare it is abominably expensive. I don't believe rich people have the least idea how much it costs poor people to live.