

The Sumter Banner.

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

W. J. FRANCIS, Proprietor.

"God—and our Native Land."

TERMS—Two Dollars Per Annum In Advance.

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TERMS.

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Rev. FREDERICK RUSH, is a travelling Agent for this paper, and is authorized to receive subscriptions and receipt for the same.

Miscellaneous.

THE MANIAC CLOWN.

A Tale of Thrilling Interest.

[The following narrative, with scarcely an alteration, is true. The particulars, thrilling as they are, were taken from the mouth of the unfortunate creature, during one of the lucid intervals between his howls of madness while confined in the madhouse of P—, England, and may be remembered as being noticed by the journals of the time, the notes were laid aside—but not forgotten, and the author but waited an opportunity to place them in this manner before the public.]

"And here," said the keeper, as he came to No. 13, from whence came the wailing cry, "there was a wretched prisoner, from whom you may gather a tale worthy of note, and surpassing any you have taken, if we can but find him quiet, as he is at times; a change story is his, and he is one of the most savage and raving prisoners here at times."

So saying, he unlocked the door, after having looked through the gate, and we entered; crouched down upon his iron and immovable stool in the corner, with his face buried in his hands, his hair long, black and matted, his dress fantastical and strange—but the attire, torn in various places, of a ring mimic—was a man, who moved not at our entrance; he was, like all we had seen, chained by the wrists to the floor, rendering it impossible for him to move more than was required in sitting or laying upon the coarse bed beside him. Nothing escaped him except a low moaning, which, at times, he sent forth, and shaking his head, buried it still deeper in his hands. The keeper said in this manner he had passed whole days and then he was more peaceable and less violent.

Touching him with the end of the stick he held in his hand, he said—"Look up." And the miserable creature turned up his haggard face to our view. "Why do you come here again?" said he, sadly—"to make, a show of me? You tell me, and those who come to see me, that I am mad! do you not fear me? ay, strong man—do you not fear me, weak creature that I am? yes, and so you chain my arms and hands and feet, so that I cannot lift them up, but look ye, there is one thing you cannot manacle, and if you could, I would bear all the chains that could be heaped upon me—my MEMORY! Chain that! keep that dread from before me—let it not haunt me night and day—let me not hear that voice that rings forever in my ear, and you may chain and load me down, and I will thank you for it." And he dropped his head and buried his face once more in his hands.

"He has not been so rational for many a day," said his keeper, "for which I am truly thankful, for he is like a lion when the fits are on him," and—

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted the madman, rising, and flinging his arms as high as his manacles allowed—"ha! ha! ha! I am with you once again. Come, is all ready? who goes first? why do you stare so wildly at me? Come, I am merry, and shall make them laugh to night! ha! ha! ha!" and his pale face was lit up with a wild demonic expression. "Soon he spoke again, 'Where's Mary? not come yet? Strange—it's time—long past time,

and she knew well she should be here early. Why gaze at me? she is not—no, no, no, nothing has happened—tell me, is she safe, is my dear child safe? Oh God! I remember, Mary is dead—dead! Ha! ha! ha!" And with loud shrieks, he dashed his hand to his forehead.

Soon he sat down again upon his low iron stool, dejectedly, and spoke not; then looking up again, he gazed round and upon the keeper and myself who stood by the door beyond his reach.

"Come nearer to me," said he beckoning; "come near, not you; no, not you, I fear you, and he shuddered as the keeper stepped towards him—"I fear you, for your eyes strike terror to my heart; and that, and the form of my child before me ever, are all a dread!—Come, and I will tell you of my little Mary, my own pet child, I'll tell you how she died."

Not daring to trust myself within his reach, I stepped as near to him as possible, so that he could not reach me; he bent forward, placed his hand upon his head and with a sudden tremor, and wildly glaring eye, he began:

Once, I know not when, but I could count by days, I knew the night, could tell the bright sun and clear moon and stars, but now all are the same to me—days I know none, and light lingers around me ever; well, long ago, ere I came to this dull, gloomy place, I was out among men; drank, ate, cried, laughed, like men, ay, and that too merrily, for I was jester in the ring, made the crowd, the heartless rabble laugh and shout, and raised a merry noise, no matter if my heart was sick or gay, but I was glad sometimes to see the long tiers, and closely packed boxes, and the stalls, each with a name to hear the laugh and the merry words, and know that I was the cause of all to hear the loud hurrahs, and to see them wave their hats and handkerchiefs, when, with a shrill whoop, I jumped into the ring. That would cheer me sometimes when my heart bled the laugh upon my face, the jest to which my tongue give utterance.

Well, so years went on, until my wife my own beloved Mary, died; her whom I loved so fondly and truly, I laid to sleep in the cold, damp earth; no one could have thought that I, the jester, the clown, the one who then laughed, could weep! But oh! how many hours I have passed besides that lonely grave? my Mary! she loved me as few women love; she had trod on the same rough road, walked beside me in my troubles and sorrows, sharing what I enjoyed or suffering without a murmur; and when I knew she was dead, it seemed as if my time on earth was over, and the same grave dug for her should take me also. But she had let me one over whom I must watch with anxiousness, and love, if possible, more than heretofore—my little daughter, the image of her mother, my own little pet Mary.

I struggled with the deep, the bitter curse of poverty. Could I have gained a livelihood by toil, incessant hardship and endurance, elsewhere, gladly would I have rushed to it, and blessed heaven for its kindness. But no; poor broken-down, a miserable wretched man—no profession, no business save the one I followed. I was still forced to drag on the arena, where my wants allowed but a very short, scanty respite upon my wife's death.

But what cared the crowd? the clown should not be sad; no, no, impossible for the ring jester to weep, it was a thing unheard of, and would raise a louder laugh than any of my liveliest sallies. And so, with a heart overburdened, sick and faint, I was forced to laugh and make merry.

"Oh, what a pleasure and joy to me was little Mary! how sweet artless smiles lit up the gloom within my breast—how her merry laugh made me feel young and happy for the time, and with what fondness, strange ay, mad devotion, did I hang upon every word, every look of hers! She grew and was beautiful indeed."

"How many hours when the toll of my profession was over for the night did I sit beside her little cot, and gaze upon her as she lay sleeping before me! often, very often, with a smile playing upon her lovely face, telling that her dreams were sweet and pleasant and making me even smile myself as I looked upon her,

and wish that I was young, and innocent as she.

"And then what horrid, horrid thoughts came crowding in upon my feverish brain. Ah! how I'd struggle and fight with them, and I would weep and moan aloud.

"For oh! thought; yes, the thought would come, what if death should rob me of her—her my Mary—all, all I loved on the wide earth!—she, in whom were concentrated all my affections, the only one inducing me still to drag on my weary life; what if the cold, strong, sure arm of death, should smite her down in all her purity and loveliness? True, she would die some time, as did her mother, as must I, as must all of us, but should that moment be while I remained on earth? Oh, how I prayed to God to arrest death's dart till I was in the skies. Yes, will you believe it, the clown—mark me the clown prayed! The one, who, in fanciful attire, leaped and rode, joking and making merry in the ring—he, the one who wept beside the grave of his dear wife, prayed beside the cot of his child, he prayed for her!"

"And then again, another and more dreadful vision came to me? to which the thought of death was nothing; should she, growing more beautiful and fascinating every hour, still continue the object of my entire thought and fall to sin? Oh, God! the thought was sickening; then how I bent me down and prayed, then how I trembled for the fate of my dear child."

"London's no place for a young, motherless and beautiful girl; for temptation and every allurements of sin and vice existed on each turn; and should she fall! Would that ere that moment I could see her a corpse before me."

"Well, as I sat and gazed and mused on all this, and my thick coming fancy passed before me, sometimes she would wake; at first she was surprised to find me there in tears, and sought to know the cause; and she would say, 'Dear father, do go to rest, for you look pale, very pale, yes do go, father, for your own little Mary asks you, then I'd kiss and bid her good night, wishing her pleasant dreams, and leave her till I thought she was asleep again, and then so softly creeping back to watch till morning."

"Each day, each moment, found me growing weaker and weaker, and as she grew more and more fair and beautiful, the more and more I failed in strength and everything—everything but love to her—no abatement could there be in that while the life blood coursed through my veins."

"Sometimes I took her to her mother's grave where she was sure all ways to bring some simple flower, and I would tell her of one who lay beneath, so good, so gentle and so kind, telling her that she must try and be like her; and then she'd ask me many artless questions—if she was in heaven then, and if she loved me as tenderly as did she, and when she spelled the only word upon the head stone—simply 'MARTY'—she said, 'Why, that is my name too!'"

"My salary became inadequate to my wants—I pinched myself sadly to allow my daughter education, and to enable her to dress prettily, and that she might not suffer for anything. So I applied for more and told them I could not live with what I had.—But, alas! they answered that my request could not be complied with; they would retain me paying me what I was receiving, or that I might go, for although I was a favorite I was growing weak and old and many a younger one was waiting for the chance and station I then had. 'I demurred but it was of no avail—I pleaded poverty, but that was no help and was turning to leave when once the manager spoke to me—"

"If you are poor, and wanting as you say, I can name a way in which you can gain money."

"Name it," eagerly cried I.

"Your daughter—she is young and handsome—she—"

"What do you mean by these words? shouted I, as I stood panting before him.

"Why not train her for the arena?"

"Horrible idea! train my little Mary for the arena! No, no, I could not think of such a thing. I could not find it in my heart to bring that dear one pure as she was—untouched, unsmiled yet by sin—into the midst of the many low and vile crea-

tures hanging around such a place. No, no; the thought was agony.

"So I toiled on, harder and harder than ever Little did those who laughed so loudly, long and heartily think the heart of him who caused them so to do was sadly beating while he sang that merry song, or danced and capered, telling of curious jokes and laughing out so loudly himself—ah, no!—At length nature could support it no longer; I grew sick and was scarcely able to go through with my performance, and the words of the manager recurred to me again—there was no alternative and I was forced to bring her to the house."

"And that hour when she stepped therein I curse—aye, curse it from my heart!"

"And here the poor maniac after talking so rationally, and for such a length of time, covered his face with his hands, and swaying his body to and fro, uttered loud curses and cries. Upon this I feared that the remainder of his story was lost, and waited long for his paroxysm to cease. By degrees his voice subsided and he commenced—"

"She murmured not—she said she was glad that she could be earning something to assist me in my poverty, and she would do her best to learn and to please. Poor child, poor Mary!"

"Weeks, weeks—and many too, we practised—every day for hours, and she would not say she was tired—no complaint, not one—and she learned too rapidly."

"How I watched her then!—by her all day, all night, not a moment could my eyes be from her. After hours and hours of training and toil, she was prepared for the debut. The days preceding the night was sad enough to me. We went together to her mother's grave and sat an hour or two. I told her that she was soon to come before the world—that she would be surrounded by sin, misery and temptation—but ever to treasure the memory of that mother who, when living, was free from taint, and peerless as the driven snow.—She was so young that she did not understand me fully, but said—sweet child—that she would go to heaven to meet her there, and if she would, she must be good to do so."

"The night arrived— portentous night—and with sadly beating heart, I put on my customary habiliments. Mary was to appear in two performances—in the first alone, the second in conjunction with the best performer in the arena—how sweetly did she look when all attire for her first appearance. Never had she looked so beautiful, with her little spangled frack and tights, so like a sylph, so pure, so innocent. Again and again I kissed her, and bade her fear not."

"The house, long before the advertised time for the raising of the curtain was densely packed, for the announcement of the first appearance in public of the daughter of— had been long underlined, had been heralded forth in glowing words for several days. Yes, men came to look upon one whom poverty had compelled to appear; whom want had driven from her peaceful home, and to laugh at the jests of her sad-hearted father."

"And they would not look in vain—for at rehearsal the manager, struck with her beauty and daring courage, with her skill on horseback, made me liberal offers for her services, which poverty of course made me accept. It is not often that managers applaud their hirelings."

Tier above tier they rose—and when with a shriek and merry, 'Here I am!' I jumped into the ring, deafening plaudits made all echo again."

"I know not how I acted, or what I said—but from time to time I heard them shout: My thoughts were upon my child; and when the moment came for her to appear, I led her by her little hand to make her bow, feelings of pride mingled with my sadness, for it was Mary, my child, for whom they shouted, unto whom they rose, to whom every eye was turned."

"But, oh! what a moment for me!—With the lightning of fair she vaulted into the saddle. A crack from the master's whip, and round went the noble steed like lightning—round the arena so swiftly, it seemed to me it were not half so long. Then how they applauded! My eye followed her as she went, my heart knocked against my bosom at each beat, and when she stopped for rest I could not speak. It was well for me that they

saw it not—they were waving handkerchiefs, and sending flowers from every portion of the place.

"It was a triumph. I was wild with joy, with fear and weakness! Sweetly, and with grace, she smiled and waved her tiny arms and hands, as the foaming steed walked slowly around to let her breathe, and give her time to rest."

"Off again performing more difficult feats than before, but with the same ease and grace. One could not have told, to have looked on, that she had not done the same thing months and months before; so easy, no effort; so coolly no embarrassment. It was then I breathed—I breathed again."

"But, no—she must come before them, and I led her out again. I need not tell you how they shouted, what they did; you'll say my brain was turned with love for my dear child, and would not think I told the truth."

"And now, one more performance, and the last that night. On she came borne by the best performer in the arena, the favorite in the place.—With what ease and grace he held her up on high! How smartly, she looked, away up there—all tinsels and spangles, glittering so finely in the gas light; and he, like Hercules beside her, urging the steed onward to its utmost powers."

"The most intrepid riders are carried the swiftest, to enable them to sustain their balance—and he was anxious for swiftness in riding; it seemed as if he flew. No word came from my lips, though I was in the arena all the time. I was not thinking where I was, or what I was doing—all I thought of was my child."

"High up in the air he threw her, catching her as easy as if 'twas play; and she clapping her little hands—no fear had she. How they applauded!—her triumph was complete."

"Each moment brought the performance nearer to its close, and how I wished it through! But, no—his steel fearing the whip, trained to exerting all its powers when this rider was upon his back, kept on its lightning course, and, oh, God! in one unlucky feat he missed her! I saw her fall—the horse reared, and down came his heavy hoof upon my Mary. I cannot tell you what followed. There were cries, but I know that piercing shrieks drowned them—I saw blood, red blood, upon my dear child's face. I had sprung to her ere the horse had hardly moved, and seized her from beneath him and all connected with the place, rushed to my side."

"But she, the beautiful—she my idol, life and hope—a moment before so full of joy, I had clasped to my heart a corpse!"

"Ay, she was dead!—dead, like her mother Mary—dead, like everything to me that should be full of life—dead, and I lived."

"I know no more—no more!" said the poor maniac, as he wiped his dry eyes, as if there had been enough to wash away. 'I could have wept once but now my eyes are dry and I have no tears to shed. Men tell me that she lies beside her mother's grave, and that for many hours they could not separate us; but I remember not that it was so. But they brought me here to this dark place, and shut out the bright light, and will not let me listen to the song of birds, or smell the fragrance of the flowers; they chain me down. When they have barred the door, ah! they cannot close them to my Mary. I see her now, with the red blood streaming down her pale face—don't let me see it away! away!"

"And with a tear of real pity, and after obtaining the location of the two graves, I turned from him, and the massive doors were again closed and barred upon the 'MANIAC CLOWN.'"

MAKE YOUR OWN CANDLES.—Take twelve ounces of alum for every ten pounds of tallow, dissolve it in water before the tallow is put in, and then melt the tallow in alum water, with frequent stirring, and it will clarify and harden the tallow so as to make a most beautiful article, for either summer or winter use, almost as good as sperm.

If the wick be dipped in spirit of turpentine, the candle will reflect a much more brilliant light.—*American Farmer.*

Agricultural Resources of South Florida

One of the most interesting reports submitted to the late General Assembly, will be found upon the first page of to-day's paper—the report of the joint committee upon the agricultural productions of South Florida. This section is almost terra incognita even in Florida, but elsewhere it is regarded as made up of irreclaimable morasses and barren sand beds, desperately sickly, and swarming with the insect tribe. South Florida, however, is perhaps, taken as a whole, the most salubrious portion of the North American continent. And why should it not be?—a narrow strip of land almost sea-girt and perpetually fanned by a breeze from the Atlantic or the Gulf. On such a slip of coast, if local causes of disease exist, they would be entirely corrected by the marine atmosphere which constantly pervades it.

To the extent of its soil adapted to that purpose, South Florida is, beyond comparison, the best sugar growing region of the United States. It is capable of producing tobacco equal to the Cuba, and it ought to do much towards supplying the Union with the finest oranges and pine apples. Those now raised in St. Lucie and Orange counties are said to be of very superior size and flavor. South Florida, at this moment, affords the best opening to the young man of industry, without capital, of any country in the world. Selecting a small rich spot, of easy access to navigable waters, and stocking it with the pine apple plants and orange trees, in the course of a few years, he would be placed in a position of ease and thrift, from the early product of his ground; or he would find perhaps equally profitable disposition of his time and labor, in the manufacture of saw-wood.—*Tallahassee Sentinel.*

The New-York Journal of Commerce has a letter from San Francisco, which relates some remarkable facts as to the wonderful agricultural resources of California. We quote the following.

"Mr. James Horner hails from Monmouth county, New Jersey. His farm is now located at the mission of San Jose, (about 40 miles from San Francisco.) Horner planted about 130 acres of potatoes, yielding him a crop of 35,000 bushels, averaging 50 lbs. to the bushel, and 270 bushels to the acre. The crop will average about ten cents per pound, or the enormous sum of one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars; or what is the same thing, the whole yield of 130 acres was thirty five thousand bushels, and sold at five dollars per bushel. He has raised from four acres of land forty thousand pounds of onions, which he sold at an average of 40 cents per pound (some of them weighing four pounds each,) and which crop of onions produced \$16,000 (say four acres of onions, 40,000 lbs., 40c. per pound.)

As for cabbages, he planted 70,000, and raised forty-thousand head for market, which he sold on the average at 40 cents each, or say, \$16,000 from fifteen acres. He also raised fifty thousand pounds of tomatoes, which he sold at prices varying from 10 to 20 cents per pound, or an average of 12 1/2 cents per pound—producing the handsome sum of \$6,250.

And now for the pumpkins, about forty tons, which sold at 6 cents per pound, some of them weighing seventy-five pounds each, but averaging thirty pounds each—these equalled the sum of \$4,800.

To sum up all, we find the product of this farm of less than 150 acres, was as follows:

Potatoes	\$175,000
Onions	16,000
Cabbages	16,000
Tomatoes	6,250
Pumpkins	4,800
Total	\$218,050

A POISONER UNMASKED.—A wine merchant of Rheims, who has for several years been doing an immense business by the sale of his wine, which had a peculiarly agreeable and exhilarating quality, causing it to be in demand above all other wines, has finally lost his secret. Liebig analyzed some of it, and found that the peculiar quality was caused by the introduction of laughing gas, or protoxide of nitrogen.

ASPARAGUS BEDS, according to the experience of London gardeners, who are among the best in the world, should have a dressing of salt equal to a pound for each square yard every spring or winter. Fork up the earth and cover the bed with well rotted stable manure four or five inches deep. In making a new bed the earth should be trenched, 7 c., dug up with a spade from 20 to 30 inches in depth and made rich with fresh loam and a fair proportion of well mixed and decomposed manure—taking care to avoid too much clay by adding sand if necessary. Being a marine plant, common salt has ever proved beneficial to it when used with judgment.

IRISH POTATOES—PRESERVING SEED.—A correspondent of the Massachusetts Ploughman, writing from Savannah, gives the following account of an experiment in the culture and preservation of Irish Potatoes, by Col. Greene, of Hutchinson's Island, near Savannah. After describing his visit and stating the difficulty in preserving the seed in this climate, he says: "His (Col. Greene's) method, is to let the potato remain in the hill, until wanted for seed, then dig them, cut them in quarters, and dry them one week. Next week he will begin to plant; and they are now (Jan. 1st.) digging the seed. In every hill there are two crops! I myself saw new Potatoes taken out of the same hill where the old ones were perfectly sound, as large as a common sized hen's egg. He has about six acres that he left for seed and from which, in addition to old, for seed, he thinks to get from 40 to 50 barrels of new for the market."

At Huron, Erie county, Ohio, on the 3rd, there was a curious attempt at marriage. It appears that relations of intimate friendship had existed between Dr. B.—and Miss B.—for some two years, which resulted in their presenting themselves at the Episcopal Church for the purpose of marriage. The first portion of the service, embracing the vows of the bridegroom, were promptly responded to by him. The covenant of the bride was then read by the clergyman, to which she promptly answered 'No!' The minister asked her if she was in earnest in what she said. 'Yes, sir,' said she, 'he has perjured himself—trifled with the affections of others—and I have but done him justice!' And turning round she took a gentleman's arm and left the church. The Doctor says he doesn't understand it, and declares his innocence.

DISTRESSING OCCURRENCE.—A man in Roxbury, Massachusetts, got into a quarrel with another, and it was agreed that the parties should settle their difficulties by a fight on the subsequent day. The wife of one of the parties, hearing of the arrangement, went to an apothecary's shop and told the circumstances of the case, and inquired the quantity of laudanum necessary to put her husband into a sleep, from which he would not awake until after the time fixed for the fight to come off. She was told the quantity, but, to make the thing sure, her kindness prompted her to add to the dose mentioned, and she administered so much that it proved fatal. She told the whole story—her objects—her regrets—and the coroner and other authorities have wisely determined that the woman was not subject to criminal proceedings.

OHIO FUGITIVE SLAVE ACT.—The Ohio Legislature, on the 22d of February, passed "an act securing the benefit of habeas corpus," which comes quite up to the Vermont act. It transfers the duty of the Attorney General of the State, and the prosecuting attorneys of the counties—

To protect and defend all persons arrested as fugitive slaves, and to make immediate application to specified courts and judges for the writ of habeas corpus; such courts or judges to grant the writ, and upon its return, to grant a trial by jury on all questions of fact at issue between the parties, provided either party make application for such trial. If the verdict of the jury thus called shall be in favor of the person claimed to be a fugitive slave, he shall forthwith be restored to his liberty; and if the claimant shall again claim ownership in the slave, within the State, he shall be deemed guilty of felony, and on conviction thereof, shall be imprisoned in the penitentiary for not more than five, or less than two years.—*Philadelphia Ledger.*