

THE WOODSTOCK DISPATCH

SEPTEMBER 1, 1897.

BABIES AND POETS.

Some years since David Barker, a distinguished poet in the State of Maine, on the birth of his first child, wrote and published the following pretty poem:

One night, as old St. Peter slept
He left the door of Heaven ajar,
When through a little angel crept,
And came down with a falling star.

One summer, as the blessed beams
Of morn approached my blushing bride
Awakened from some pleasant dreams
And found that angel by her side.

God grant but this—I ask no more—
That when he leaves this world of pain,
He'll wing his way to the bright shore
And find his road to Heaven again.

John G. Saxe, not to be outdone, in deeming that injustice had been done St. Peter, wrote the following:

—St. Peter's Reply—

Full eighteen hundred years or more
I've kept my gate securely fast,
There has no "little angel" strayed,
Nor recanted through the portals passed.

I did not sleep as you supposed,
Nor left the gate of Heaven ajar,
Nor has a "little angel" left
And gone down with a falling star.

Go ask the blushing bride, and see
If she don't frankly own and say
That when she found that little babe
She found it in the good old way.

God grant but this—I ask no more—
That should your number still enlarge,
You will not do as done before,
And lay it to Old Peter's charge.

DAVE THE HERO.

Honey-path was a siding in the States, where occasional trains took water and passed each other. Two or three log shanties, without special pretensions to any architectural dissimilarity, marked the site of the town, distinguishing it from the vast area of impenetrable swamp that backed it, and the arid waste of sandy bottom through which the glistening polished rails of the grand trunk line writhed and sinuated. Along the glowing metal highway troops of both armies passed and repassed, gazed at curiously by the few old women and senile males left in the village, but exciting no other emotion than a blank curiosity that died out even before the white mist of dust stirred by the soldiers' feet had settled behind the retreating bands.

Dave was a native of Honey-path, and living with an aged father in one of the shanties. Sue dwelt with her mother in another near by. Dave's father was a hot-blooded Southerner, whose patriotism answered to the first call to arms, but Dave was timid, fearful of the smell of powder, and refrained from action, preferring to suffer the opprobrious epithets which were liberally bestowed upon him, and the contempt of the county generally, to facing the knew not what horror upon the battlefield.

Dave was simply a coward and accepted meekly the obloquy which the condition imposed, not even the taunts and cutting sarcasm of pretty Sue Spivey being able to rouse the instincts of battle in his craven soul.

Before the strife ended Sue's mother was gathered to her final rest, being put out of sight in the little sandy graveyard, with only the comment of two remaining neighbors. And then Dave and Sue toiled early and late in order to wring a living from the starving acres.

One day Dave was working among the young potato vines in an open arid field behind the cabin, when Sue ran out to him in troubled haste.

"Oh, Dave, I'm pow'tul skeered!" she panted.

"Skeered of what?" he asked, without intermission of the bent labor.

"Some—some soldiers just went down the road an' they spoke to me—sassy like." She hesitated, and Dave looked up to see her pretty face scarlet and her brows bent together in angry lines.

"Well, what did they all say?" he demanded, in his accustomed slow drawl, after waiting in vain for her to proceed.

"The 'lowed they all was a-comin' back."

"Who was they, enny how?" he asked uneasily, his face blanching in anticipation of the partial visit.

"They was Mosby's men, I 'lowed, an' they was five of 'em."

"Our fellers?" a little surprised and straightening his back. "Come on back to the house, Sue, and shouldering his hoe, he trudged stolidly on before. "Don't you be skeered," he continued, as they reached the yard, "I reckon they won't do nothin'."

Of the two it would have been manifest to the most casual observer that he was the worst "skeered," but he walk on till they reached the house, and Sue cried out: "Yonder they come now—all five."

Dave's face blanched to a sallow whiteness, but he pulled her quickly inside the door. "What you gwine to do?" Sue asked nervously, keeping near her cousin; but he apparently did not hear. He had taken down a rifle.

"What you gwine to do, Dave?" the girl persisted, coming closer and laying her hand on his arm. Dave shook several cartridges into the cylinder of the rifle, and waited in

silence, apparently not aware that Sue had touched him. Only a few more moments to wait, and then the last act in the commonplace little tragedy. A loud pounding at the rickety cabin door, and a derisive imperative voice demanded:

"Hi, in there, open up, or we'll make splinters of yer ol' door!" The threat was garnished by several strong expletives and accompanied with more vicious pounding.

Then for answer went the spiteful snap of the rifle, followed by a surprised howl of pain, more voluble profanity, and footsteps in rapid retreat.

Dave went to the window, and through a knot hole in the shutter reviewed the situation of the enemy. Then through the aperture the rifle again spoke with decisive, leaden emphasis, and when the smoke cleared away the man inside beheld one of the besiegers lying prone across the freshly hoed potato rows, while another limped painfully in the rear of the retreating trio.

In the short silence that followed the last shot the arid topography of Honey-path seemed to flash before Dave's vision, each peculiarity standing out strong and clear. The fine white sand covered everywhere with fat-leaved prickly-pear and cactus that bloomed perpetually in big buttered-colored flowers; the bright, blazing sky, the heat that rose up and hung heavily over man and beast, the many insects that sat out in the furnace-like sun, rattling shrilly with very joy. Then the dense shade of the murky shadowed swamp and the big scaly-backed scorpions and dainty multi-colored lizards that played an eternal game of hide and seek among the rotting rails of the old snake fence.

The trio had disappeared into the swamp, and Dave calmly refilled his rifle, waiting as though lost in thought. Presently from the rear of the cabin came the harsh command.

"You cowardly bushwhacker in there, come out and fight like a man! If ye don't we'll burn ye and yer shanty an' the gal with ye."

There was no opening in the rear of the cabin, the logs were thick and the chinks were well stopped with clay, so that Dave could not return a leaden answer to this brutal challenge. He fingered the rifle nervously and looked at Sue.

"Oh, Dave, don't open the door," she pleaded, meeting the earnest look bent on her face from the brim of Dave's frouzy slouch hat, "I ain't afeared to burn."

His lips blanched, his knees were wobbly with fear, but he had not forgotten one boast of his poor, pinched life, uttered long ago: "Toe putrec' yo honah an' happiness I 'up th'ow away my wuthless life." He uttered the words again monotonously, fingered the rifle that was held limply in his shaking hands.

In that moment Dave, who had all his life long borne meekly the scorn and opprobrium attached to the character—he whom heretofore nothing could arouse to a sense of his degradation—calmly arose to the very pinnacle of heroism.

"I'm coming out," he called, and shooting out the bolt he stood on the cabin step before them.

"Fall back and give him a show: he's coming out, boys!" Sue clung to him pleading, "Dave, don't: there's four to one. Don't go. But he pushed her gently back into the room. "Bolt the door behind me!" he said, and passed out.

Sue stood motionless in the centre of the room waiting for it to begin. Dave pulled the trigger of his gun and turned the corner, and instantly four weapons barked out with one voice.

Sue heard something heavy fall against the side of the cabin, then instantly the sharp clear utterance of a rifle answered the carbines again and still again. One carbine only answered; then all was still; only the fretful warbling of a wren in the nearby Cherokee rose hedge breaking the tense silence of the drowsy afternoon hush.

Anxiety conquering terror, Sue drew back the bolt, throwing the door wide open. A broad stream of yellow light and a rush of heat met her, passing over a figure on its knees that always trembled at the sight of deep water. Dave was gasping his last breath. Bleeding and shattered, he crept to her feet, after the manner of a faithful dog, to die.

In the grave, gray eyes that were raised to hers there was the light of the exaltation of a passing spirit, triumphant over the shadow of death which already darkened them. His lips moved in the contortion of a smile that broke into an articulate murmur.

"I done said that to putrec' yo' honah and happiness I would th'ow away my wuthless life— an' I done hit."

And Dave, with the crimson glory of his "wuthless life's" blood streaming from many wounds, passed to the judgment reserved for him from the beginning of all things.

The wren shivered out her fragmentary song to heaven, the perfume of the Cherokee rose filled the air with the fading day, and the setting sun, streaming through the cabin door, touched the still figure of Dave, wrapping him in molten splendor as though in the face of a dying god.

Poor Dave, though a coward all his life long, he had earned the reward of heroism at the very end. "Greater love hath no man

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HEADACHES, DIZZINESS, FRIGHTFUL
DREAMS, DISTURBED SLEEP, DROWSI-
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NERVOUSNESS, ETC., ARE OFTEN CAUSED
BY DISORDERED KIDNEYS.

EVEN IF YOUR MEMORY IS DEFECTIVE
YOU SHOULD ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT
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CURE.
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than this that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Listowel, Sept. 22nd, 1896.

Edmanson Bates & Co.,
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A. J. HACKING G.

Sawdust as Merchandise.

Sawdust as an article of merchandise is not calculated to excite the commercial cupidity of ambitious merchants, yet, prosaic and commonplace as is the commodity itself, it affords a distinctive branch of trade, and ranks as a thriving though limited offshoot of the larger industries. In Philadelphia, says the Times of that city there are perhaps half a dozen dealers in sawdust, and they have as much as they can do all the year round to supply the demand.

These dealers obtain their supply mainly from the lumber mills and packing box manufactures of the city but as these sources are not always sufficient, they import quite a quantity of sawdust from the southern lumber mills, one firm alone getting as much as three carloads a month in this way.

Sawdust reaches the consumer in bags, which contain three bushels and weigh 45 to 50 pounds each. The dealer's wagon goes over a regular route every day serving its regular customers, and at the end of the week collecting the empty bags. The largest users of sawdust are the cold-storage warehouses, each of which will take from 50 to 60 bags per week, and the large meat houses, which use from 15 to 25 bags a week. Next in order as consumers come hotels, dry goods stores, office buildings, butchers and grocery stores, fish and oyster markets, icehouses and saloons.

Ordinarily, there are two grades of sawdust, fine and coarse. The former is mostly used for smoking meats, such as hams, shoulders and dried beef, and is obtained from walnut, brier root, cottonwood, red cedar, oak, hickory and pine. The coarse grade comes from yellow pine and poplar, and is used for cleaning purposes and packing.

Sawdust is sold at retail from 15 to 20 cents per bag, according to weight, and the price is the same for all kinds except one. The exception is boxwood sawdust, which is very hard to get, and brings as high as \$2.50 a bag when selected for packing purposes by jewellers.

Common sawdust is used for packing some kinds of bottled goods, such as ink, cologne, pickles, shoe blacking, bicycle cements and oils. It is used for packing eggs and also for some polishing purposes, but the chief use of large quantities of this material is in sweeping floors. Great quantities are thus utilized, and much is also spread upon floors, where it lies for several days at a time before it is renewed. Sawdust for sweeping is usually dampened a little, and it is not unusual to clean carpets in this way. Hotels and large department stores use great quantities for such purposes, and expend perhaps \$200 a year on this commodity.

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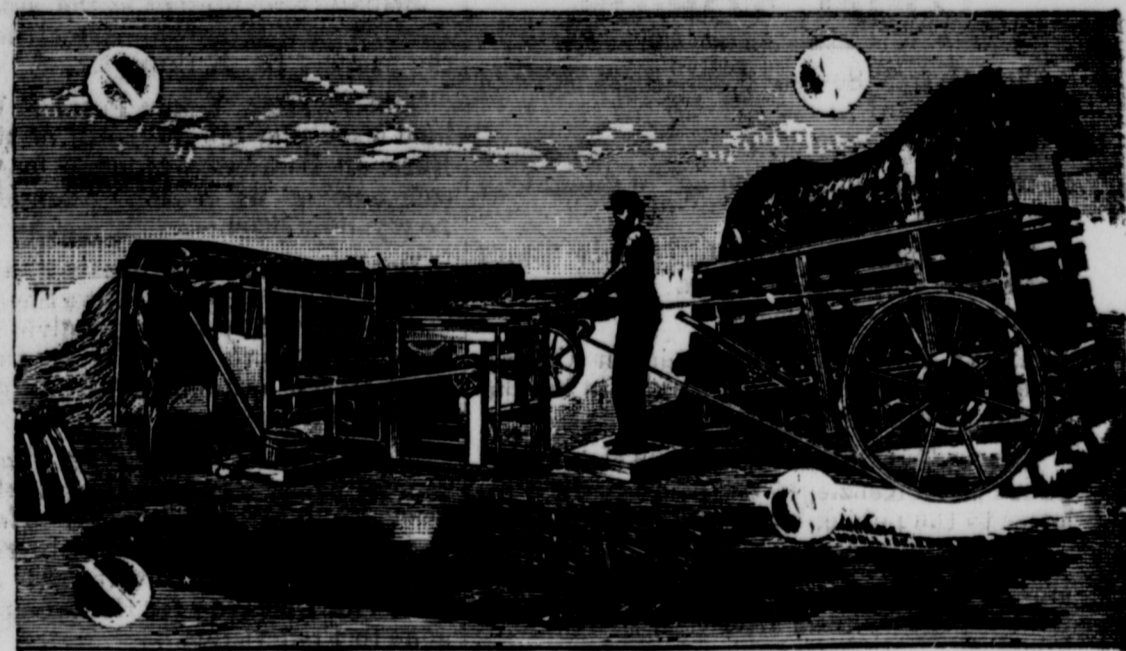
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"Henrietta doesn't seem to believe anything she sees in the newspapers," said Mr. Meekton, thoughtfully.

"It's a good thing not to be too credulous."

"Yes; but she goes too far. She can't even read the advertisement of a bargain sale without going in person to find out whether it is true in every particular.—Washington Star,



1867.

1897.

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