

LITERATURE.

[From the Yankee Blade.]

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BROWN;
OR
THE VICTIM OF A BORE.

BY PAUL CREYTON.

(Conclusion.)

Resolved to rid myself of this gentleman by some means or other, I told him in great gravity, that if he had promised to take tea with Miss Lark, he ought to return to her immediately, and remain at the house until my arrival. Anxious to do the polite thing, Mr. B. followed my instructions, bidding me "good afternoon," with one of his original bows, just as these fashionable young ladies of my acquaintance were passing down the street.

Too much of a coward to go coolly and deliberately to meet Mr. Brown, I took a cup of tea at a coffee-house, and returned home to lock myself up in my room.

I was to wait upon a young lady to the theatre that night, and forthwith commenced preparation for the occasion. But at the moment I was beginning to forget that such an individual as Benjamin Franklin Brown existed, there was a violent ring at the door. George came running up the stairs, saying—

"The gentleman who called to day, sir—"

"Mr. Brown!" I exclaimed, highly excited.

"Yes, sir."

"Confound the fellow! I am not in, George. Tell him I am gone—anywhere—to the devil! And mind you, George, if the clown ever calls here again, tell him I've gone to France, and shut the door in his face!"

George disappeared. I listened at the door, and heard loud talking in the hall below. A moment after, to my dismay, Benjamin Franklin Brown burst into my room!

"Hello! old boy!" he exclaimed, triumphantly, "I knew you was to hum; and that fool of a nigger tried to make me believe that you'd gone to tend a mass meeting on the top of Bunker-hill monument! I s'pose he was too lazy to show me up, or p'raps he was afraid I'd wear out the carpet!"

"He knew I was dressing for the theatre," I replied, coolly, and that it was not convenient for me to receive company. I told you I was engaged this evening."

"Pshaw! I declare I thought you'd be glad to see me, anytime!" exclaimed Mr. Brown, with great simplicity. "Besides, as you did not come to tea, Miss Lark thought you must be sick, and wanted me to come up and see."

"Very kind in Miss Lark, indeed! I muttered with bitter irony. "But didn't it strike you that Miss Lark wanted to send you away, without appearing impolite!"

"Dear me! no! That girl's actually smitten with me, you'd better believe!"

"No doubt of it! and I'd advise you to go back to her immediately."

"Oh! but she is engaged this evening, too! If you are going to the theatre I'll go with you. How much does't cost?"

I answered firmly that I had no objection to Mr. Brown's going where he pleased, but he could not possibly go with me, as I expected other company. Mr. Brown appeared to think there was some mystery concealed from him, and to be filled with infinite wonder because, even though I had other company, I declined taking him along, too.

To my great relief, the coach I had ordered come for me at length, and literally tearing myself from my new acquaintance, I ordered the hackman to drive me to Miss B—'s residence.

Two hours after, I was enjoying myself exceedingly, seated in a rather conspicuous box with Miss B—, whose beauty attracted general observation.

Between the fourth and fifth acts of Hamlet, I was carrying on a pleasant conversation with the agreeable Miss B—, when some one touched my shoulder. I looked around. Imagine, if you can, my consternation! Stretching his awkward body over two vacant seats, and grinning from ear to ear—stood—I gnash my teeth

while I write the name—"Benjamin Franklin Brown!"

Miss B— shuddered and looked frightened. The spectators in the next box giggled audibly. I felt that I was the centre of observation, and that the contrast between Miss B— and Mr. Brown must be regarded as the height of the ridiculous. Before I could speak, to order Mr. Brown out of the box, he exclaimed triumphantly—

"By thunder! ain't I lone of 'em? Takes me to hunt up people! I knew I'd find ye, if I undertook to. Pshaw! what a nice looking gal that is sittin' on your coat-tail!"

This was spoken loud enough, I thought, to be heard by the whole house! I could endure such impudence no longer. With an air of offended dignity, I informed Mr. Brown that his company was not agreeable; but he laughed immoderately, exclaiming—

"What a joker you are, though! Pshaw!" I turned my back upon him; but in doing so, I was obliged to face the audience; and my face was very red. Every eye in the house was fixed upon me, and everybody was laughing.

"If it will be agreeable to you," said Miss B—, coolly, "I will thank you to see me home!"

This was the climax of my misfortune—the worst of my mortification! To have Miss B—so annoyed by the impudent fellow, that she desired to leave the theatre, filled me with indescribable misery. As we passed out, a thousand eyes followed us, and one individual. That individual was Benjamin Franklin Brown!

"Look here," he cried, grasping my arm, "ye ain't going hum?"

I shook off his grasp with angry rudeness, and a minute after, I was riding away with the mortified and indignant Miss B—, endeavoring to console her, and entreating her to attach no more blame to me than I deserved. My efforts were of little avail, and Miss B—, at the door of her residence, dismissed me with marked coldness.

Half that night I spent in loading the absent Mr. Brown with anathemas. During the few moments sleep I enjoyed—or rather didn't enjoy—I was troubled with horrid visions, in each of which that gentleman played an atrocious part, and once I dreamed that, like Sinbad I was compelled to carry continually on my shoulders, an old man of the sea, who wore the identical boots, pantaloons, and grinning countenance originally worn by Benjamin Franklin Brown.

In the morning I found myself in a state of desparation that fitted me for the perpetration of any atrocity. Consequently, when somebody called to see me, and the faithful George refused that somebody, in spite of all opposition, entered, and bursting into my room, reminded me of my horrid dream, of the old man of the sea; I caught that somebody by the collar in a terrible wrath, and unceremoniously precipitated him down the stairway.—Whereupon that somebody looked as if the unpleasant discovery of numerous stars, bro't to light by a door post striking his head, had given him sudden clearness of intellect; for with a look of unusual intelligence, he gathered up his hat and himself, and incontinently disappeared. That somebody was nobody but Benjamin Franklin Brown.

Arriving at my boarding-house, I had the pleasing intelligence, that "my particular friend, whom I introduced," had proved so troublesome, and disgusted everybody so thoroughly, that Mrs. Julep had taken the liberty to have him turned out doors. To excuse myself and make the best of an unfortunate affair, I at once told the whole story of my first and last interview with Mr. Brown, taking an oath then and there, never again to make myself agreeable, or invite to dinner any man whom I instinctively disliked, nor suffer myself in any way to be afflicted by stupid ignorant bores.

A few days after Jefferson Miles came to town.

"Deuced glad to see you!" cried Jef, warmly.

"I should have been glad to see you just a week ago!" was my cool reply.

"Ha! ha! how's Mr. Brown?"

"I am very happy to say, that I am unable to answer your question."

Jef's countenance changed.

"Where is the fellow?"

"I—don't—know!"

"The d— you don't! He called on you?"

"Unfortunately, he called thrice too oft."

"And you saw him last—"

"Going down stair."

"How?"

"Very rapidly, and head foremost!"

Here I related to Mr. Miles the scene of my misfortunes, at which he would undoubtedly have laughed heartily, had he not had a misfortune to relate to me. Mr. Brown, it appeared, designed emigrating to California, and Miles, who was a ship-agent, was anxious to furnish the promising young man with his outfit and passenger's ticket. Unable to attend to the affair at the moment he first met Brown, sent him to me, presuming upon my good nature, to divert him until he (Miles) could come to town. How I fulfilled my trust, the reader knows. Benjamin Franklin Brown was nowhere to be found.

"It's not of much consequence," observed Jef, afterwards, "only I've lost a good bargain through your instrumentality."

"Oh, not of the least consequence," was my bitter reply, "only—I've lost Miss B—, through yours."

[From the Yankee Blade.]

A HOME THRUST.

During the late exciting debates in the Maine House of Representatives, upon the subject of Public Lands, there were several sharp passages at arms between the members, and once or twice the lie was given with a distinctness and emphasis that would have done honor to Congressmen. Besides, however, the affectionate huggings after the style of the National Bear-Garden, there was occasionally a keen encounter of wits, which elicited "guffaws" instead of disgust, from the spectators. One of the most amusing of these was an encounter between Messrs. Sewall and Paine. A member from Kennebec county having accused Mr. Sewall, of Old Town, Penobscot county, of being a tactician in legislation, the latter retorted that "it was not a little curious that a Kennebecer should complain of tactics. Why, the gentry of this region were famous the Union over for their superiority over other communities in the element of which the gentleman had complained. All were familiar with the story of a Kennebec emigrant, on his way to the West, who, with his covered waggon and family endeavored one nightfall to secure entertainment for himself and his family. 'Where are you from?' asked the man applied to. 'From Kennebec.' 'Well, I can't take you in,' said the suspicious host. The man journeyed on. 'Where are you from?' demanded the second householder. 'From Kennebec.' 'No.' And so the poor man wandered on, giving the same answer to similar inquiries, until at length, finding his own nativity a continuous and repelling burthen, he answered—'From anywhere on the face of the earth except Kennebec!'"

Mr. Paine, of Hallowell, thought it required superlative assurance on the part of the gentleman from Penobscot to assign such powers of strategy to Kennebeckers; and proceeded to illustrate the subject as follows:—

"Kennebec tactics! Mr. P. could not better illustrate the difference in this particular, between Kennebec and one other quarter of the world, than by setting off against the gentleman's anecdote another. It was a familiar fact that the only region in this state as yet visited by the rapping spirits was Penobscot county. And not long since a credulous citizen of that community consulted one of the media with a view to determine the condition of a departed friend. The spirit replied that the man was in hell. 'And what kind of a place is hell?' asked the anxious inquirer after truth. 'Hell,' said the spirit, 'is a place a little worse than Argyle, but not so bad as Oldtown.'" This last "bric-a-bac" was a decided ten-strike, and brought down the house in an earthquake of laughter.

"A lass I am no more," as the girl said when she got married.

Anecdote of the Sally Ann.

Some years ago, the Yankee schooner "Sally Ann," under command of one Captain Spooner, was beating up the Connecticut river. Mr. Comstock, the mate, was at his station forward. According to his notion of things, the schooner was getting too near certain "flats" which lay along the larboard shore. So aft he goes to the Captain, and with his hat cocked on one side, said:

"Cap'n Spooner, you're gettin' leetle tew close to them flats; hadn't you better go about!"

To which Captain Spooner replied:

"Mr. Comstock, jest you go for'ard and tend to your part of the skuner, and I'll tend to mine!"

Mr. Comstock went "for'ard" in high dudgeon, and halloed out:

"Boys, see that 'ere mud-hook all clear for lettin' go!"

"Ay, ay, sir, all clear!"

"Let go, then!" said he.

Down went the anchor, out rattled the chain, and like a flash the "Sally Ann" came luffing into the wind, and then brought up all standing.

Mr. Comstock walked aft, and touching his hat very cavalierly, said:

"Well, Cap'n, my part of the skuner is to anchor!"

Fevers are like Indians, they both fly before civilization. Since locomotives were introduced in Michigan, agues have decreased fifty per cent. Physicians once thought that the only antidote for this class of disease was quinine—experience has demonstrated that a still better one is to be found in subsoil ploughs and piston rods. According to Dr. Francis, every spade introduced into Iowa saves twenty first class lives. From this it will be seen that "spades are trumps" if medicinally considered.

The poorer a man becomes, the more dogs he owns. Show us an individual who lives on one meal a day, and we'll show you an individual who has a life interest in four bull pups and a "pinter." Queer, isn't it?

CURIOUS NOTION.—The following is from a country paper, and is not only good sense, but out of all measure comical poetry:—

He who reads and comes to pay,
Shall read again another day;
But he who will not "plank the cash,"

Through his name, on our subscription book,
we shall be compelled, however reluctantly, to make a — (dash.)

There is a good deal of truth in the following aphorism, which we find in the New York Mirror:—"Self-sacrifice often invites unkindness. A man who shows any desire to do good, is at once made a pack-horse; and those who cannot use him call him a hypocrite."

"How is it," said a gentleman to Sheridan, "that your name has not an O attached to it; your family is Irish, and no doubt illustrious?"

"No family has a better right to an O than our family," said Sheridan, "for we owe everybody."

A gentleman passing through one of the public offices, was affronted by some clerks, and was advised to complain to the principal, which he did thus: "I have been abused by some of the rascals of this place, and come to acquaint you of it, as I understand you are the principal."

Another new motive power has been discovered. It is said that an ingenious Yankee has a new mill in operation, which is driven by the force of circumstances!

If two youths commence the world together, the one with a silver spoon, plenty of pap, and a dislike for labor, the other with nothing but a determined will to be somebody, it is not very difficult to see where the "spoon" will eventually be.

"It is well to leave something for those who come after us," as the gentleman said when he threw the barrel in the way of a constable who was chasing him.

The surest way to improve one's condition, is to improve one's self.