

## Poetry.

## Railroad Lyrics.

Att—“Coming through the Rye.”

If an engine meet an engine  
“Coming round a curve.”  
If they smash track, train and tender,  
What do they deserve?  
Not a penny's paid to any,  
So far as we observe.  
But all acquit the engineer,  
When “coming round a curve.”

If an engine meet a steamer  
“Coming through the draw.”  
If they crush or drown the public,  
Need we go to law?  
If the engineer was careless—  
Perhaps he's rather raw—  
They don't discharge an honest fellow,  
“Coming through the draw.”

If a steamer chase a steamer,  
“Running up to time.”  
If they burst their pipes and boiler,  
Where's the mighty crime?  
Should a jury in a fury,  
Make them pay one dime,  
Or send the officers to prison,  
“Running up to time?”

If they maim or kill a body,  
Or a body's wife,  
Need a body sue a body,  
For baggage, limb or life?  
If you sue for damages,  
For pay for what you lost,  
You get a broken neck or leg,  
And have to meet the cost.

[Southern Literary Messenger.]

## Literary Selections.

## THE STORY OF A MAD PRIEST.

[The following thrilling and romantic tale was translated from a Spanish manuscript, discovered by an American officer in the “Desierto,” a ruin of noted celebrity, near the city of Mexico, and communicated to the “Spirit of the Times.” It is a singular sketch of the vicissitudes of human life.]

(Concluded.)

I could not refuse after his very polite and satisfactory apology, and handed it to him; he seized hold of it, and seemed for several moments to gaze with a most devoted and brotherly affection. My heart expanded towards him and I asked—

“If he thought the likeness as striking as he first imagined?” He replied—

“No, although he had always considered his sister the most perfectly beautiful creature living, he was forced to confess that, if possible, that miniature was still more beautiful, and, sir, may not this possibly be the work of imagination—a fancy sketch?”

“Oh, no,” I replied, his flattery having completely mastered me, “this, sir, is a living and true likeness of my affianced wife, the Countess of —.”

A slight shudder seemed to pass over his frame, as he quietly returned the miniature, thanked me and left the room. From that moment the young man's manners entirely changed; hitherto always buoyant and happy, he now seemed sombre and sad, seldom, if ever, coming into my presence, and when so, his manners always seemed constrained and uneasy; none could account for this sudden, yet palpable change, in one usually so happy and contented; day by day he grew worse and worse, until at last he solicited permission to return home. I represented to him the impossibility of returning except by a special commission, which I was not then prepared to dispatch, but assured him, that at the earliest possible opportunity, one should be prepared, and that he should accompany it. I furthermore besought him that, if he were unhappy, and if I could possibly assist him in any way, that he might confidently rely upon me to do so. He thanked me kindly, and assured me that it was out of my power to render him any assistance, he would unburden his breast to me. An opportunity presented itself much sooner than I had anticipated; for some days back I had discovered a spirit of discontent among the soldiery, and only by the merest accident, discovered, in time to frustrate and punish, one of the darkest laid plots of treason and villainy ever conceived—and would you believe it, reader, this Arragonese, this youth upon whom I had lavished kindness upon kindness, was the investigator, yet at this time I did not know it.

Panishing, as they deserved, the ringleaders, I determined to send several others back to old Spain, to have their trial; and for this purpose dispatched a vessel under the command of the Arragonese. But the seeds of rebellion had taken root, and the vessel was still seen hovering in the port, when another and more successful attempt was made, which resulted in my complete overthrow, and being made prisoner.— Here I lay in the most wretched state of confinement, whilst the Arragonese was making his way back to his native land, and immediately upon arriving, presented himself at Court, having previously liberated his prisoners, who, to gratify their revenge, readily joined him in a scheme of falsehood to effect my ruin; they were to represent that I, by a course of cruelty and oppression, had alienated myself from the whole band, and had fallen a victim to their just indignation, presenting a petition, purporting to be signed by every member of the company, and praying that my second in command (a cavalier of distinguished family) be confirmed as their leader, whilst he the Arragonese, was to represent me to the Queen as being very kind, brave, and generous, his true, and much lamented friend, that I had been basely assassinated by a band of murderers, having, as he represented, been my most devoted friend, barely escaped their murderous knives himself, and under a well-devised pretext, returned to vindicate my honor, and bear a last message to my affianced wife, and prayed the Queen that she would bring him before the Countess, for that purpose.

The Queen, deeply affected by his recital—for she truly loved me—complied with his request; and the villain played so well his part, that he left both the ladies deeply sympathizing with him, for all the dangers and trials he had encountered in my behalf, assuring him of their future interest and protection, and permission to visit them at his pleasure; this he did not fail to do, and when alone with the Countess, would describe the scene of the miniature again and again, and how he had struggled to bear back to her own hands that treasure which her lord had regarded with such devotion, but that the murderous villains had discovered and ground it to atoms over the corpse of his dead master.

'Tis madness to dwell upon the subject longer—suffice it, his villainy triumphed—they were married. Yes, that heart which had been pledged to me upon the altar of true affection, by a villain's arts—another's—and that other the villain himself, who had been so highly honored and loved by the one so basely wronged.

There is a retributive justice which follows close upon the tracks of human crimes and wickedness; and when the villain least expects it, he is hurled from his seat of conceived security into an abyss more terrible, more withering, than devils incarnate themselves could devise; such was the fate which awaited my false and treacherous betrayer, as well as my own self. Lingered in my damp and pestilential dungeon, without a ray of hope for the future, I was at last aroused from the torpor and gloom which had settled upon me, by the announcement from my jailors, that upon condition I would pledge my honor not to attempt a prosecution against them, I would be immediately set at liberty and carried back to old Spain. Too eager to regain my liberty upon any terms, I at once complied, and again breathed the free air of heaven. A vessel was in readiness, and I lost no time in leaving a country, where I had known so much of misery and wretchedness. Our voyage was prosperous, and I once again set foot upon my dear native land, but only, reader, to experience in its fullest extent, and full to the brim, the cup of misery which awaited me.

Immediately upon reaching the shore, I repaired to a “Fonda,” to obtain some refreshments, and while it was being prepared, I eagerly devoured the contents of the newspaper—a pleasure which had been so long denied me. And there, oh God! my eyes first beheld the infamy and misery which had been heaped upon me—yes, there I first read the fatal marriage announcement of the only being I ever truly loved, and for whom alone life was worth preserving; and married, too, to him

whom I had most befriended. Could it be possible? perhaps some heinous dream: or was I not again a prisoner in my miserable dungeon? So shocked was I at what I had read, that I was totally unconscious of every thing around me, and was only aroused from my painful reverie after several announcements that the refreshments I had ordered were ready. I had no longer any disposition to eat or drink; I threw the waiter half a crown, and again read the fatal paragraph. ‘Twas, alas! but too true. I seized my hat and rushed from the house, going I knew not whither. Yet, oh no! I could not believe her false; they had imposed upon her with rumors of my death. I now called to my mind the singular conduct of the false villain who betrayed me the first time he beheld her miniature; all was now clear to my mind—his singular and unaccountable conduct afterwards, all went to convince me that she had been deceived, and I most fatally betrayed. I endeavored to recollect myself, to reason what was the best course to pursue; he must die, and that too, ere another night had passed.

To gain admittance into his chamber, and there taunt him with his infamy, and then, if possible, myself to die, was the only wish that haunted me. Alas! I knew but too fatally well all the secret winding passages in the palace, and trusting I might encounter him in the former apartments of the Countess, I determined to seek him there. I now became more collected, and awaited the proper hour for my purpose; and when it arrived, stole silently into the secret passage which led to the Countess' apartments. Arriving there I removed a secret panel, and stepped full into the room; and but too true, oh, my God! there lay in fond embrace the betrayer and his victim. I stood for several moments gazing upon them, and heard her, who even in sleep was true, murmur—

“Juan, Juan, why didst thou force thee from me, to die by murderers in a foreign land!”

’Twas enough; I needed no other confirmation of what I felt to be too true before.—I now approached the bed-side, and hissed into his ear—

“Villain! thou art at last caught!—Awake, and defend thy miserably perjured life!”

He awoke, and gazed wildly around him, and seeing me, sprang up and exclaimed—

“Who art thou, midnight assassin, that demands my life?”

“One who has been gazing fondly on the miniature of thy sister—one who has been lingering for years in prison by thy plotting—one who has been permitted to live again, to taunt thee with thy infamy, and hurl thy soul to perdition! Dost thou not know me? I am thy captain whom thou ledest rotting in a dungeon to rush to his bridal couch, and upon that couch shalt thou die! Take that, villain!” striking him with my sword, “arm and defend thyself, or thou shalt die the death of a coward!”

Our swords crossed, the noise and confusion awoke the Countess, who sprang out of bed, crying—

“Murder! murder! oh! kill him not; kill him not!”

Our eyes met; she knew me not, and with a bound sprang between us—fatal bound! for just then her husband, taking advantage of the pause, made a thrust, which to parry, my sword passed through her heart, and she fell dead at his feet.

“Oh, God! and am I her murderer, too,—another thrust and the villain lay quietly with his victim.

I rushed from the apartment—the air seemed filled with hissing serpents, my tracks closely followed by howling demons, and upon my shoulder sat a gory death's-head, hissing in my ear—

“Villain, thou art at last caught;” and with a bound the nearest demon fastened his icy talons into my back, and I fell senseless upon the earth.

How long I lay there I know not, or what occurred afterwards, I know not; I only know that when I awoke, I had been the inmate of a mad-house, for how long I could not tell; for

my locks, which were then black, were now as white as snow. Yes, reader, I had been for years and years a raving maniac; and oh! how happy was the maniac's life, compared to the murderer's. I was pronounced cured, and told I might leave whenever it suited me. But whither, or what to do with myself I knew not; and determined to pass the few remaining days of my miserable life, in the service and in the house of God; and by a strange fatality, sought the same country where I had once before expected to find honor and renown. I arrived at this lonely spot, and besought the superior to admit a spirit crushed with the afflictions of the world, and who only sought a quiet place to die in peace and in the service of his Maker. My prayer was granted, and here I've lived, endeavoring to wipe out a life of sin and wickedness, by penance and devotion; and here I hope to die.

## Gen. Leslie Coombs on Story Telling.

Few men have ever gone to Congress with more fun and popularity than the Hon. L. Coombs of Kentucky. In the way of anecdotes he is unequalled, while his mode of telling stories imparts a tone to them that no one can appreciate who has not made his acquaintance.

Among the “characters” that Mr. Coombs knows “like a book,” is old Major Luskey, whose taste for bragging amounts at times to the sublime. Whenever the major has a stranger in the neighborhood, he “opens wide and spreads himself,” and with a success that leaves us nothing to desire. The following scene took place between the Major and Col. Peters. “A late arrival from Illinois.”

“Major, I understand from Gen. Coombs, that shortly after the Revolution you visited England, how did you like the jaunt?”

“Capitally! I had not been in London 5 hours before Rex sent for me to play whist and a devil of a time we had of it.”

“Rex? what Rex?”

“Why, Rex, the King—George III. The game came off at Windsor Castle—Rex and I played against Billy Pitt and Edmond Burke, and resulted very comically.”

“How so?”

“As we were playing the last game, Rex said in rather a familiar manner:

“Major, I suppose you knew George Washington, the Father of this country—Father be—d—d,” said he, “he was a cursed rebel, and had I served him right, he would have been hung long ago.”

This, of course, riled me, and to that degree, that I just drew back, and gave him a blow between the eyes, that felled him like a bullock. The next moment Pitt and Burke mounted me and in less than ten minutes my shirt and breeches were so torn and tattered, that I looked like Lazarus. This gave me rather a distaste for English society, and on the next morning I set sail for America. Six weeks afterwards I landed at Washington. The first person I met, after entering the city was Q.”

“Q, what Q?”

“Why, that d—d old federalist, Quincy Adams. He wanted me to play ninepins with him, and I did so. Won \$200 at 2 shillings a game, and then had a row.”

“About what?”

“He wanted to pay me off in continental money, worth about a shilling a pack. I got angry, and knocked him into a spittoon. Whilst I still had him down, Jim came in and dragged me off to the White House.”

“What Jim?”

“Why Jim Madison. I went played euchre for two hours, when Tom came in, and insisted that I should go home with him.”

“What Tom?”

“Why Tom Jefferson. Jim, however, would not listen to it, and the consequence was that they went into a fight. In the midst of it they fell over the banister, and dropped about 50 feet. When I left, they were giving each other hell in the coal cellar. How it terminated I never could learn, as just then Martha ran in, and said I must accompany her up to Mount Vernon, to see George.”

“What Martha do you mean?”

“Martha Washington, wife of George, the old boy that gave Jessy to the Hessians.”

About here, Coombs said the stranger began