

# Washington Independent.



## THE INDEPENDENT.

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## Poetry.

ROCK OF AGES. "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Thoughtlessly the maiden sung: Felt the words unconsciously, From her girlish, gleeful tongue; Sang as little children sing; Sang as the birds in June: Felt the words like light leaves down On the current of the tune— "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Let me hide myself in Thee, Felt her soul no need to hide: Sweet the song as song could be— And she had no thought beside; All the words unheeding, Fell from lips untouched by care, Dreaming not they each might be On some other lips a prayer— "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me, 'Twas a woman sung them now, Pleadingly and prayerfully: Every word her heart did know; Base the song as storm-tossed bird Beats wit a weary wing the air: Every note with sorrow stirred, Every syllable a prayer— "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Lips grown aged sung the hymn Trustingly and tenderly: Voice grown weak, and eyes grown dim, Base the song as storm-tossed bird Trembling thro' the voice and low, Ran the sweet strain peacefully, Like a river in its flow, Sung as only they can sing: Who his weary path have passed; Sung as only they can sing, Who behold the promised rest— "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Sung above a coffin lid; Underneath, all restfully, All life's joys and sorrows hid. Nevermore, O storm-tossed soul, Nevermore from wind or tide, Nevermore from billows roll, Wilt thou need thyself to hide, Could the sightless, sunken eyes, Closed beneath the soft gray hair, Could the mute and stiffened lips Move again in pleading prayer, Still, eye, still the words would be, "Let me hide myself in Thee."

## Miscellany.

### A CONFEDERATE STORY.

#### The Letter that Caused Brave Men to Desert.

At a recent political gathering in Tusculum, Ala., General Cullen A. Battle related the following touching story in the course of his speech:

"During the winter of 1863-64 it was my fortune to be President of one of the courts-martial in the army of Northern Virginia. One bleak December morning, while the snow covered the ground and winds howled around our camp, I left my bivouac fire to attend the session of the court. Winding for miles along the certain paths, I at length arrived at the court-ground at Round Oak Church. Day after day it had been our duty to try the gallant soldiers of that army, charged with violations of military law; but never had I on any previous occasion been greeted by such anxious spectators as on that morning awaited the opening of the court. Case after case was disposed of, and at length the case of 'The Confederate States vs. Edward Cooper' was called—charge desertion. A few murmurs arose spontaneously from the battle-scarred spectators, as a young artillery-man rose from the prisoners' bench, and, in response to the question, 'Guilty, or not guilty?' answered 'Not guilty.'"

The Judge Advocate was proceeding to open the prosecution, when the court, observing that the prisoner was unattended by counsel, interposed and inquired of the accused, 'Who is your counsel?' He replied, 'I have no counsel.' Supposing that it was his purpose to represent himself before the court, the Judge Advocate was instructed to proceed. Every charge and specification against the prisoner was sustained. The prisoner was then told to introduce his witnesses. He replied, 'I have no witnesses.' Astonished at the calmness with which he seemed to be submitting to what he regarded as inevitable fate, I said to him, 'Have you no defense? Is it possible that you abandoned your comrades and deserted your colors in the presence of the enemy without any reason?' He replied, 'There was a reason, but it would not avail me before a military court.' I said, 'Perhaps you are mistaken; you are charged with the highest crime known to military law, and it

is your duty to make known the causes that influenced your actions." For the first time his manly form trembled, and his blue eyes swam in tears. Approaching the President of the court he presented a letter, saying as he did so, "There General, is what did it." I opened the letter, and in a moment my eyes filled with tears. It was passed from one to another of the court until all had seen it, and those stern warriors who had passed with Stonewall Jackson through a hundred battles wept like little children. Soon as I sufficiently recovered my self-possession, I read the letter as the defense of the prisoner. It was in these words:

My Dear Edward:—I have always been proud of you, and since your connection with the Confederate Army I have been prouder of you than ever before. I would not have you do anything wrong for the world, but before God, Edward, unless you come home we must die! Last night I was aroused by little Eddie's crying. I called and hesaid: 'Oh, mamma, I'm so hungry!' And Lucy, Edward, your darling Lucy, she never complains, but she is growing thinner and thinner every day. And before God, Edward, unless you come home we must die. YOUR MARY.

Turning to the prisoner, I asked: "What did you do when you received this letter?" He replied: "I made application for furlough, and it was rejected; again I made application, and it was rejected, a third time I made application, and it was rejected, and that night, as I wandered backward and forward in the camp, thinking of my home, with the mild eyes of Lucy looking up to me, and the burning words of Mary sinking in my brain, I was no longer the Confederate soldier but I was the father of Lucy and the husband of Mary, and I would have passed those lines if every gun in the battery had fired upon me. I went to my home. Mary ran out to meet me, her angel arms embraced me; and she whispered: 'O! Edward, I am so happy! I am so glad you got your furlough! She must have felt me shudder, for she turned pale as death, and catching her breath at every word, she said, 'Have you come without your furlough? O! Edward, Edward, go back! go back! Let me and my children go down together to the grave, but O, for heaven's sake, save the honor of our name!' And here I am, gentlemen, not brought here by military power, but in obedience to the command of Mary, to abide the sentence of your court."

Every officer of that court-martial felt the force of the prisoner's words. Before them stood, in beatific vision, the eloquent pleader for a husband's and father's wrongs; but they had been trained by their great leader, Robert E. Lee, to tread the path of duty, though the lightning's flash scorched the ground beneath their feet, and each in his turn pronounced the verdict—guilty. Fortunately for humanity, fortunately for the Confederacy, the proceedings of the court were reviewed by the commanding-general, and upon the record was written:

HEADQUARTERS, A. N. V. The finding of the court is approved. The prisoner is pardoned and will report to his company. ROBERT E. LEE, General.

During the second battle of Cold Harbor, when shot and shell were falling like torrents from the mountain cloud, my attention was directed to the fact that one of our batteries was being silenced by the concentrated fire of the enemy. When I reached the battery every gun but one had been dismantled, and by it stood a solitary Confederate soldier, with the blood streaming from his side. As he recognized me he elevated his voice above the roar of battle and said: "General, I have one shell left. Tell me, have I saved the honor of Mary and Lucy?" I raised my hat. Once more a Confederate shell went crashing through the ranks of the enemy, and the hero sank by his gun to rise no more.

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## THE BIBLE AND ITS FOES.

[Rodgers' Superhuman Origin of the Bible.]

If collected from the earliest times to the present day, infidel books would occupy far more than a thousand times the space of the one volume against which they are directed, and would certainly be much more numerous than all the works that all other "sacred" books ever had the honor of provoking either for or against them. If all these books were placed in one library, and this single one set on a table in the middle of it, and strangers were told that this book—affirmed to be, for the most part, the work of a number of unlearned and obscure men belonging to a despised nation called the Jews—had drawn upon itself, for its exposure, confutation, and destruction, this multitude of volumes, I imagine he would be inclined to say: "Then I presume this little book was annihilated long ago; though how it could be needful to write a thousandth part so much for any such purpose, I cannot comprehend. For if the book be what these authors say, surely it should not be difficult to show it to be so; and if so what wonderful madness to write all these volumes." How surprised would he then be to learn that they were felt not to be enough; that similar works were being multiplied every day, and never more actively than at the present time; and still to no purpose in disabusing mankind of this same phronsey! He would learn, indeed, that so far from accomplishing the object, the new volumes are little more than necessary to replace those of this fruitful but fruitless literature, which is continually sinking into oblivion.

But the volume itself survives both friends and foes. Without being able to speak one word in its own behalf, but what it has already said; without any power of explanation or rejoinder, in depreciation of the attacks made upon it, or to assist those who defend it; it passes along the ages in majestic silence. Impassive amidst all this tumult of controversy, in which it takes no part, it might be likened to some great ship floating down a mighty river like the Amazon or Orinoco, the shores of which are inhabited by various savage tribes. From every little creek or inlet, from every petty port or bay, singly flotillas of canoes, some seemingly friendly, some seemingly hostile, filled with warriors, in all the terrors of war paint, and their artillery of bows and arrows. They are hostile tribes; and, soon turning their weapons against one another, assail each other with great fury and mutual loss. Meantime, the noble vessel silently moves on through the scene of confusion, without designing to alter its course or to fire a shot; perhaps here and there a seaman casts a compassionate glance from the lofty bulwarks, and wonders at the hardihood of those who come to assail his leviathan.

## JUSTICE IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

A lawyer from Chester, a heavy negro county, give me many instances illustrating the African's judicial capacity. Not long since a negro offender was brought before a negro Trial Justice. The prisoner's offence was, in fact, no offence at all, and it was only out of malice that he was arrested. A white man—a most respectable farmer—had given him some cotton seed, and he had taken it without a thought but what the title was good. But another negro claimed the cotton seed, and had darkey No. 1 arrested for stealing. The Trial Justice heard the testimony, and sentenced the poor negro to ten days imprisonment and \$20 fine although there was not a particle of testimony upon which he could reasonably base a conviction. It happened that the Circuit Court was in session, and the Justice was informed that an innocent man was in jail. He had the Justice before him in court, and inquired for the testimony, which

the law declares shall be reduced to writing.

"I hain't got any," said the black Justice. "I don't do writing in court; I keep it all in my head."

"What testimony did you have against this man?" demanded the Judge.

He could not give any.

"Then why did you convict him?" the Judge asked.

"Cause, sah, I noticed him close, and he looked guilty."

"You convicted him, then, on his looks, and not on the evidence?"

"Yes, sah; he looked guilty and I found him guilty."

The black judicial officer was thereupon given some wholesome advice, and departed with a bow and a "Yes sah."

## EXPLANATION OF FRECHH PARTIES.

The Assembly contains six distinct parties, with seldom more than two and generally only one acting as a unit on any measure of important public policy. The Republican party is divided into three factions: The Left, who claim to be the Republican party proper, and recognize Gambetta as their Leader; The Extreme Left, who are radical Republicans, and by some called Communists; and the Left Center, who are Conservative Republicans, recognizing Thiers as their chief spokesman and the director of their policy. Of these three factions, the one headed by Gambetta is the strongest, but never strong enough to carry any measure without the concurrence of the Radicals and the Conservatives. The Monarchical party party is divided into two parties. The Right proper, is made up of Chambordists, who call themselves Legitimists, who believe in one monarchy, and that of the Bourbon line. They ignore all that has been done in France since 1789, whether by the republic, the empire, or the Orleans monarchy, as unlawful, illegitimate, and an offence to the divine right of the Bourbon line of kings.

Then there is what is called the Right Center. These are also believers in monarchy, but they talk of constitutions, of toleration of the past, and are sweet on the house of Orleans. They prefer the Duke of Anjou or some other member of the family of Louis Philippe to any member of the Bourbon line proper; but at the same time they prefer any sort of monarchy to any sort of Republic. The Right and Right Center—That is the Chambordists and Orleansists—are not strong enough to carry any measure in the Assembly without the assistance of either the Bonapartists or one branch of the Republicans. Last of all, there are the Bonapartists, or imperialists, who believe in the magic of a great name as the best legend to govern France, and who still operate, with more or less effect, with such weapons as Lodi, Cim, Arcole, Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland and Borodino. Sedan and Metz blunted their tools, but they have hope, a compact organization, and a oneness of purpose which counts far more in politics sometimes than more numbers without organization or a settled plan of action. The Bonapartists do not exceed 37 votes in an Assembly of 730; but they always hang together, and often send the victory in a direction that secures to them some remote advantage.

SINCE H. W. Beecher has begun a prosecution of Tilton and Moulton for libel, and these detestable free-love rasals are somewhat at discount, the newspapers that were so determined to make Beecher out guilty, simply because he was a preacher, are fixing their sails to catch the adverse winds. Pretty soon they will be bold enough to write mild paragraphs in commendation of Mr. Beecher and in condemnation of Tilton and Moulton, to be followed when they think they have a safe foothold, by big head lines and "cuss" words.

## "JERSEY LIGHTNING."

Who it was that invented alcohol I am unable to tell without lying; but it would have bin a fast class blessing for the rest of us if he and the lickor had both of them been spilt on the ground and never been scooped up since.

The devil himself, with all his genius for a 10 strike, could not have rolled a ball more serviceable for his bizness on earth; one more certain to quarter on the head pin, and sweep the alley every time. Rum is the devil's stool pigeon, his right bower, his high, low, jack and the game.

A great menny, with dyspeptic morals, argy that lickor is indispensable for manufacturing and doctor purposes, and also; for mekanikal uses, and they hold that yu could not raise a barn that would stand without enny good old Jamaka rum, and sunn say that puddling sass, without enny sperets in it, is no healthier than common grease.

But all ov these argys are furnished free ov cost by the devil himself, and enny man who advances them iz telling (without knowing it perhaps) lies that will weigh, at a ruff estimate, at least a pound apiece. But my object in these fu preliminary remarks iz tew git a good chance to tell what I know about "Jersey lightning" (one of alcohol's impus) as a manufaktring and metaphysika agent.

Jersey lightning is cider brandy three hours old, still-born, and quicker than a flash. This juice is drunk raw by all the old sports, and makes a premonitory and hissing noise as it winds down the throat, like an old she goose setting on eggs or a hot iron stuck into ice water. Three horns a day of this lickor will tan a man's interior in six months so that he kan swallow a live, six-footed krab, feet first, and not waste a wink.

I don't fat a man (cider brandy don't) like whiskey daz, but picklers him up like fried potatoze. If a man kan survive the fast three years of Jersey lightning, he iz safe then for the next 85 years tew cum, and keeps looking every day more like a three-year old red pepper pod, hotter, hotter. An old cider brandy drinker will stem, in a sudden shower of rain, like a pile of stable manure, and his breath smells like the bung-hole ov a rum cask lately employed.

When Jersey lightning iz fast born it tastes like bilcing turpentine and cayenne, half-and-half, and will raise a blood blister on a pair ov old kowhide brogans in 15 minits, and applied externally will cure rumanism or kill the patient, I forget which. The fast horn a man takes ov this lickor will make him think he has swallowed a gas-light, and he will go out behind the barn and try tew die but kant. The eyes of an old cider-brandist look like deep gashes kut into a ripe tomato, his noze iz the komplexshun of a half-billed lobster, and the grizzle in his gullet sticks out like an elbo in a tin leader.

The more villainous the drink, the more inveterate are those who drink it. I kant tell yer whether cider brandy will shorten an old suckler's days or not, for they generally out-live all the rest of the nabors, and die just as soon as the old tavern stand changes hands and iz opened on temperance principals. One bottle of sassaperilla or ginger pop iz az fatal tew these old fellers as a rifle ball iz to a bed bugg.

I would do most ennything but murder to save a young man from Jersey lightning, but trying to save an old one iz like trying tew put fire out ov a holler log; yu might az well let it burn up, for the ashes iz worth more than the log.—Josh Billings.

How to pronounce a Polish name, sneeze three times and say ski. The farmers of the United States expend \$23,000,000 in reaping and mowing machines. The annual production is estimated at 125,000 machines.