An Anthology of Victor Marion Rose’s Writings

Victor Rose was a prolific author of histories, biographies and poetry. His biography, “Wild Rose,” by Louise S. O’Connor for A&M Press tells the story of his life. His works were far too numerous to include in that book, so this is the anthology of all his known works. They cover every possible subject matter, showing his amazing range and knowledge of many aspects of the world. He overcame his fantasy about the “Lost Cause” and also became an excellent journalist.

Poetry

This section contains poems from Victor Rose’s published volumes of poetry along with poems that appeared in the Victoria Advocate and several unpublished Civil War poems. With the exception of Demara, the Comanche Queen, which is available in a number of libraries, his poetry books are not simply out of print but extremely rare.

“Random Shots”

The four poems below were written on a folded sheet of paper in Rose’s handwriting and with the heading “Random Shots” written at the top of the first page. Only the first poem has a dateline (“Canton, Miss. July 1st 1863”), but the other three poems were likely composed around the same time. The misspellings and incorrect homonyms (such as “moats” instead of “motes”) are in the original.

To Miss Nannie Stoner

I left, thou wert a shining light
That gently dazzled every sight,
And many gathered round the flame
To breathe thy —— [damage] and fairy name.
Those halcyon days I often see—
Thy image as it used to be;
Forgetting that as time has flown,
It fair and sweeter far has grown.
As distance hides thee from my view,
Fair fancy paints an angel true:
Some Hebe with brilliant shining light
Armed with beauty as with might.
But sweeter oh the girl to me
Than goddess fair can ever be.
Let fancy all her chambers fill,
To me thou art the school girl still.

Canton, Miss. July 1st 1863

To the Queen of Beauty—Miss Tallitha Stoner

To Beauty’s fair empress I dedicate praise,
Which only that siren is fitted to hear.
Though presumptuous indeed with angels to raise
The voice, and forget the inherited tear:
For implacable fate most cruelly decrees
That her soft blue shall impart not the fires
Of love, on the ambrosial breeze
That flows to the heart of him who admires.
Then Oh! listen a moment fair queen I pray—
Though with scorn you refuse the tribute I bring,
For unworthy indeed I know is my lay
And unpleasant to thee the voice that would sing—
Deign from the summit where Beauty has crowned
Thy heavenly brow with diadem bright,
To hear the faint echoes far neath thee rebound,
—— [damage] him who would sing in the blaze of thy light.
Fair Science as yet is groveling in night
Though guided by Truth from ——— [damage] Above;
For no term stands forth in philosophys light
Of power sufficient to describe my love.
Take the million quintillian grains that there be
Of earth, and the countless drops of old Ocean,
Multiplied, compared with my passion for thee
Would be indeed an invisible portion—

To Miss Julia Hardy

Lady! thy eyes are soft and bright,
Beaming holiest love;
Thy marble brow is wreathed with light,
Resplendent as above.
Thy classic lip would scorn to air
Hellen, beauteous greek.
Aspiring Hebe would never dare
Surpass thy gentle cheek.

But greater far beyond compare,
On Earth, or realms Above,
Surpassing all that's true or fair
Is my own matchless love.
Above, one star the less doth shine,
Since thou art here on earth.
Angels for thee methinks would pine—
Without thee bliss were dearth.

Extravagant Morality

Oh hours that sped on wings too fast,
Obeying time's imperious blast
Entombed thou art with all that's past
In archives old and musty,
We often sigh for days so rare,
When feeling o're the wounds we bear
Which now all Jovial boys must wear
In hearts grown cold and rusty—

The wine cup once was no disgrace;
In truth it was an envied place
The victor held who won the race,
Cheered by smiles of beauty.
The father with paternal pride
Looked on the scion at his side
And with full heart o'er flowing cried
“Well hast thou done thy duty.”

Then stood abstaining 'coves' aloof,
Fair maidens with confiding truth
Give their rich smiles to festive youth
Who tipt the toe so frisky,
Those hours alas on earth are spent,
Above, with all that's good they went
And morals now will not consent
Admittance unto whiskey—

Recreant knights no shame can start,
ho bartered country, pride, and heart  
As merchandise of common mart,  
    Go in the best society—  
And he who stole the widows store—  
The puny fop dam’d ore, and ore  
In social circles onward pour  
    Blest by smiles of piety—

Degenerate maids with all their main  
Shower their smiles like copious rain  
On things devoid of heart or brain,  
Whose craws were never sandy.  
Condemn the brave who form the ring  
In festive mood, and tributes bring  
Bachus, and who dare to sing  
In praise of good old brandy.

Oh! higher morals here below,  
With higher law resistless flow  
To form the pool of damning woe  
Which wrecks all truthful being.  
Oh good Samaritans that sigh!  
For moats within thy brothers eye,  
But ’nere discern the beams that lie  
At home to mar thy seeing.

Sing out your hippochritic chant,  
With earnest drawl, sectarian cant,  
And on the spotless forehead plant  
Your brand with hand assiduous.  
Cheat Justice of her wonted due,  
Shield him to perjury so true  
And with thy tears of poison due,  
Wash out the stains perfidious—

—“Random Shots,” Victor Marion Rose Collection, box 1, Texas Collection, Baylor University

Nannie and Tallitha (Talitha) Stoner were the sisters of George Overton Stoner, Victor’s future brother-in-law. Julia Hardy was Victor’s future wife.

Poems Published in the *Victoria Advocate*

Rose published numerous poems in the *Advocate*, many of which he included in his collections of poetry, often with minor revisions. The following poems are those that do not appear in a later collection.

Decoration Day
Dedicated to Mrs. Richard Owens, President, Ladies Cemetery Association

Tread softly! Tis not common earth
   O’er which your footsteps wend their way;
Be tender thoughts and prayers and tears
   The offerings that you bring to-day.

The ashes of the faded rose
   We treasure still as memory’s gem,
The perfume wafted up on high
   Makes glad the New Jerusalem.

Hope rests not here beneath the sod,
   The eye of Faith can see
Beyond in the city of our God
   Their spirits pure and free.

Here blossoms lie plucked in glad springtime,
   With bloom undimmed by a tear;
And buds unfolding their beautiful leaves
   And blossoms withered and sere.

Stilled are the heart’s exultant throbs,
   Hushed are its songs of mirth,
The busy thinking brain will wake
   No more to cares of earth.

Mark well the city of our Dead!
   This silent and slumbering thong!
Do you find for delay or convenience of time?
   Its ranks spare the young or the strong?

Thank God these peaceful mounds mark not
   The terrors of the battle fray,
Nor noble blood o’er dyed the soil
   We moisten with our tears to-day.

No battle sound appalled their ears,
   No din of arms, no cannon’s roar
Only the voice of love and mourner’s tears
   As they left earth’s sunny shore.

Bring garlands bright for fair and brave,
   And flowers for the humble mound,
Let us deck the lonely forgotten grave
As well as the high and renowned.

And while we deck this sacred soil
   In our hearts forever the same,
We’ll twine a fresh memorial
   Of hope and love around each name.

Renewing tender memories
   For the mouldering forms beneath;
A garland twine for the lovely cross,
   For the costly slab—a wreath.

Let gentle tears of pity fall
   One the sod o’er the stronger pressed,
And loving hands must ever smooth
   His humble place of rest.

And brothers of the mystic bond
   A blessing we invoke for you
While we twine the triple loving chain
   Above the good and true.

Long live the Decoration Day!
   Let us ne’er forget our sacred trust,
And may others come with gifts of love
   When our frail forms are dust.

WILD ROSE

—Victoria Advocate, June 9, 1877

Married

At the residence of Mr. Crawford, of Kemper City, on the evening of September 27th, by Justice C. G. Hall, Mr. Wilkins W. Hunt to Miss Lily C. Stoner.

In mom’s rosy sunlight, still dreaming,
   A youth wandered far;
He saw thro’ the trees a light gleaming
   Like a silvery star.

He came to a clear shining river,
   With low banks moss-grown,
Whose wavelets with sunlight a quiver,
   Seemed diamonds o’er strewn.
A sweet Lily in quiet seclusion,
Gently bloomed there.
And he gathered it unto his bosom,
Dew-gemmed and fair.

Then the sweet Lily maid revealed truly,
Her pure trusting heart,
When she vowed from a lover so gallant,
She never would part.

Now earth seems a bower of roses,
Neath soft summer skies;
All the bliss of lost Eden reposes
In sunny blue eyes.

May Happiness wreath her bright garlands,
With sweet odors rife.
So bind these two hearts still more fondly
An ever through life.

May they feel the same rich glow of gladness
That touches them now.
And love efface all lines of sadness,
That sullies each brow.

May the joy bells never cease ringing
Their silvery chime,
Nor Cupids their airy flight winging,
Down the vista of Time.

May he with high purpose before him,
To conflict now go;
Guard well the heart trustingly pledged him,
For weal or for woe.

And when Time, who they say, fondly lingers
Round things that are fair,
Has sprinkled the frost from his fingers,
In the gold of her hair.

May it still be the fairest of faces,
With silvery curls;
May the woman’s mature thoughts and graces,
Charm more than the girl’s.
May they find only calm sunny weather,
On the ocean of Life;
And pass o’er Death’s dark tides together,
Fond husband and wife

Wild Rose
Victoria, Oct. 3, 1877

—Victoria Advocate, October 6, 1877

Friendship

As the star-worlds in magical splendor
Respond to night’s first dewy kiss,
And their dreamers with eyes fond and tender
Yearn o’er the dim beauty of this.

In the starlight a vision unspoken
Rises out of the rose illumed west –
Star of friendship; bright, perfect, a token
Of the future’s pure passionless rest.

Let it wake not wild thrill of emotion
Lying cold neath the chill tide of years:
Let it be no vain boast of devotion
To bring disappointment and tears.

No toy to beguile life’s bright morning,
No blossom to fade in an hour,
But a pearl, Hope’s dim future adoring,
Enshrined in her balmiest bower.

The rose springing in showy completeness
In the shade of the whispering grove,
Possessed the same rare grace and sweetness
Ere dyed by the blushes of love.

Oh, in friendship’s no golden delusion,
No songs of enchantment to die,
No rosy clouds bringing confusion,
But a star in the clear evening sky.

As we stray o’er Life’s flower gemmed meadow,
Out into its twilight and night
On our path it will cast no dark shadow
But guide us to realms of delight.
The Call of Genius

“Oh heart, alive to nature’s richest worth,
Arise, and make thee worthy of thy birth,
Nor longer fashion dreams that have no form,
Nor being warm.”

“I have lived; have throbbed with high exultant thought,
And in the world’s reality have wrought,
But now to live is pain, to wake to weep!
Oh, let me sleep!”

“Asleep! While life’s great battle still goes on!
While victory’s to be gained and glory won!
While on thy way fate’s swift weird shadow falls,
And duty calls!”

“Nay, I have striven and been wounded sore;
I fain would enter the wild strife no more,
But drifting idly down life’s changeless stream,
Oh, let me dream!”

“Dreamer, high noble thought is linked with heaven,
Soul-born, soul-wrought, to it eternity is given.
But dreams, though born on bright and golden wings,
Are earthly things.”

“Proud monitor, thy warnings come too late!
The soul that ’gainst the prison bars of fate.
Crushed its young eager wings, now free to soar
Finds strength no more.”

“When all the flowers that hailed thought’s glorious birth
Have fallen wan and fruitless to the earth
Nor left strength in the soil to hear again
Aught save pain.”

Victoria, May 6th, 1878

—Victoria Advocate, June 8, 1878
Aeolian Whispers

What dost thou hear on thy balmy Breath
Sweet wind of the eastern sea?
Thy voice seemeth sad, and yet it brings
A message of joy to me.
What hast thou seen in thy onward flight
That should’st come sadly sighing?
Has thou lain and sobbed on grass grown graves
By crystal waters lying?

Hast whispered along the silv’ry shore,
And over the fragrant lea,
Where oft we gathered the sweet wild flowers,
And danced in our childish glee?
There’s magic power in the song you sing
For my heart is strangely moved
As o’er the wide waste of years you bring
Voices and scenes once beloved.

Thou hast swept across the sea’s bright face
And its placid waters stirred,
While ’mong the cliffs and along the shore
Thy thundering voice was heard.
But to me thou tell’st of all fair things
Where thy wandering footsteps roam
In numbers sweet as an angel’s song—
Thou speak’st of my early home.

Like the faint tracery of a dream
The flowers and landscapes come,
And the music of the bold free stream
That begirt that humble home.
Like notes of a long forgotten song
Resounds in my heart today,
For on mem’ry’s wing I’m borne along
Where the fresh sea breezes play.

And see in the mellow starlight gleam
Like a gem in silver set
The old house that stood where sea and stream
With soft mingling kisses met.
And bright visions rare whose beauty glows,
As when warm I held them last,
With the gleaming hues of gold and rose
That glorified life’s dead past.
Oh dreams, that I laid so fondly down,
In your narrow culls to rest,
Strewing lover’s flowers and hope’s withered leaves
So thick o’er each pulseless breast—
Why have you come to haunt me now,
In the hush of silent hours,
Why would you lay on my aching brow
Those garlands of faded flowers?
Oh wind, with echoing song of waves,
And music of balmy sighs,
Why has thou shaken their peaceful graves
To bid the fair dead arise!
Oh why should the light of love’s lost smile
Still linger around decay!
As glorious sunset tints beguile
The glory of passing day.

WILD ROSE
Victoria, Oct. 1, 1879

—Victoria Advocate, October 4, 1879

The Summer of Life

By Wild Rose

“For youth’s sweet spring-time comes no more.”

Though the spring-time’s floral splendor
Glads the eye, perfumes the gale,
Soon, alas! the flow’rets tender
Strew earth’s bosom, wan and pale.

Now the spring’s fair bloom is waning.
Paler wax her violet eyes,
But the bounding year is gaining
Golden glory as it flies.

Golden grain and fruit is growing
Ripe to bless the clustered hearth,
Richer summer’s blush is glowing,
Deeper throbs the hearts of earth.

As the fruits gain form and beauty,
Brightest flowers must fade away;
So through the vast realms of nature
Life is nurtured by decay.
And Life’s noon’s no idle story
   Told amid cool breezy bowers,
Yet beneath its noon-tide glory
   Blooms the heart’s rare passion flowers.

The mature soul’s intuition
   Bearing fruits of ruddy gold,
Richer far in full fruition
   Than the budding spring foretold.

The ennobling sense of being
Victor o’er assailing fears—
The rich treasury of feeling
Garnered in Life’s riper years.

Though full many flowers have perished
   That once decked youth’s sunny brow,
Buds of promise fondly cherished—
   And upon the drooping bough.

Withered, youth’s sweet hopes should cluster,
   Yet no sigh their beauty claims
Since we’ve gathered from their lustre
   Strength to perfect, future aims.

Victoria, Oct. 13, 1879

—Victoria Advocate, October 18, 1879

Bonnell

Suggested by a poem from the pen of Mrs. Bella French, in the
“Sketch Book,” on the same subject.
   By Victor M. Rose

And manly beau and blushing belle,
   Stood hand in hand on Mount Bonnell;
The serpent river gliding by—
   The proud, fair city lying nigh
The lovers’ hope, the lovers’ sigh—
   The scene beheld through lovers’ eyes,
Indeed was then a Paradise.

They prayed the spirit of Bonnell,
   To hold, for aye, the blissful spell,
And consecrate that hour above
To hope, to youth, and lost, to love;
But youth must fade as the hours creep,
And hope with truth his buried deep,
And who can brave the “LOVER’S LEAP?”

Heart beats to heart, eye drinks to eye,
And soul goes forth on weighted sigh,
They care not why, they know not how,
No doubts their hearts betoken now,
As warm blood mantles rich each brow,
And pledges each their troth to keep,
For faith defies the “LOVER’S LEAP.”

—Victoria Advocate, November 22, 1879

La Bahia

BY WILD ROSE

Oh La Bahia! in grandeur hoary
Thy ruined old bastions rise,
Thy walls, bright with historic glory
Still gleam ‘gainst the blue of the skies!

Here were brave, true hearts doomed to languish,
Chilled by the fierce breath of despair,
These rocks caught the last wail of anguish
And echoed the last low-breathed prayer.

Dark clouds rising to the blue zenith,
In morning’s smile blush warm and red;
Shadows flee; flowers and sun-light mingle
Above the green mound of the dead.

The river so silently creeping
Along where low lieth their dust,
Makes verdant the sod that is keeping
The martyr’s loved ashes in trust.

Methinks in the full flush of battle
’Twere grand to die! when loud and clear
Vict’rys cheer, cannon’s roar, and the rattle
Of musketry quickens the ear!
But, ah! ’twas the acme of valor
When calm, ’mid the carnage of blood,
Where all was lost, save their own honor
The heroes of old La Bahia stood.

When bravely the noble souled Fannin,
Disdaining a suppliant’s part,
Unfalteringly gave the last signal
That sped the ball to his own heart.

Oh wife, in love’s vision of beauty,
Looking out toward our star circled zone,
Did you dream the proud sense of duty
That called him away from love’s own—

The thrill of heroic emotion,
That kindled the warrior’s breath—
The liberty child’s pure devotion
Would be quenched in the chalice of death?

Was the hope in your bosom burning
That soon in fame’s bright annals known,
The conquering hero returning
Should clasp you, and call you his own?

Oh did your heart break with sobbing;
Though your fond eyes ne’er could bedew
The token he sent, his heart throbbing
Its last thought for home and for you.

Did gleam from the glory light shining
Far down the dim vista of years,
Show laurel wreath’s ’round his name twining
Begemmed with a people’s warm tear?

Oblivious of the world’s praises,
Where sweet Southern summer still keeps
Her vigil; ’neath white waving daisies
The stern hearted warrior sleeps.

Oh Georgia, the sound of thy weeping,
Thy sorrow, thy anguish, thy pain
Have passed; here thy loved ones are sleeping
But the holocaust was not in vain.

For peace holds her gentle dominion
On mountain, hill, valley and wave,  
And liberty spreads her bright pinion  
O’er the land bought with blood of thy brave.

But where is the monument showing  
Our love for the heroes who fought,  
With the gift of whose life blood out pouring  
Our emblem of freedom was wrought?

Shall gratitude’s rich, full oblation,  
Return in warm life giving showers?  
Or pity, and faint approbation  
Fall chill on fair chivalry’s flowers?

O land, by their hearts once compassed  
Whose glory now shines o’er the seas,  
Whose warm Southern clime seems but fashioned  
By nature, when anxious to please.

Beauty’s home, where she ever lingers  
Bestowing her gifts with free hand;  
Shall in gratitude’s grimy fingers  
Stain thy fame, oh, beautiful land.

The Alamo hath its proud columns  
Inscribed with bright immortal names;  
As noble a commemoration  
The blood-imbrued La Bahia claims!

The while there is one true heart beating  
That thrills at the name of the brave,  
Rest not, till fair liberty’s greeting  
Rises o’er valor’s long unmarked grave!

—Victoria Advocate, February 14, 1880

Idyl[1]

BY WILD ROSE

Wide plains of green, bright flushing dyes,  
Warm gentle showers and balmy skies.  
Sweet incense floating on the breeze,  
Mild zephyrs whispering ‘mong the trees,
The busy bee’s incessant hum,
Proclaim afar that spring has come.

A sound of music soft and low
Falls on the ear; a gentle glow—
A dazzling vision greets our sight,
Arrayed in loveliness and light!
A humming-bird the tropic’s own.
The feathered kingdom’s jeweled crown.

The clinging tendrils gently twine
While flower and leaflet deck the vine.
And where silv’ry rills are creeping
Snowy crocus buds are peeping.
And violets ope’ their dewy eyes
To greet the spring with glad surprise.

But where the ripples darkling run
While wavelets dimple in the sun—
Where huge oak casts its shadows down,
The lilly lifts her regal crown.
Then lays her weary head to rest
Upon the lakelet’s pulsing breast.

From every budding bush is heard
The carol of the mocking bird,
The swallow swells his little throat
With ecstasy is every note—
A million flowers rise up to bring
Their offerings to the god of spring.

With roses garlanding her brow
She touches winter’s claims, when lo!
They melt, and as by magic birth
Leaf, bud, and flower, and fruit of earth
Burst forth in wanton luxury
To swell the glittering pageantry.

So blooming hill and teeming sod
Fulfill the promises of God.
In billowy plain and fruitful vale,
Seed time and harvest shall not fall,
Since each bud in its bosom bears
The germ of many harvest years.

Victoria, March 1st, 1880

—Victoria Advocate, March 6, 1880
Musings

BY VICTOR M. ROSE

I sit at the stern of the swift gliding craft,
    That is skimming the billows of life.
And forward, and onward the mild breezes waft
    Her far from the shore with the turmoil and strife.

Ah, pensive I gaze through the mists of the past,
    O’er the desert of water and wave—
A sigh to the vanishing shore is cast,
    In return for all that it gave.

In return for all that it gave, alas!
    For its gifts were sorrow, and pain, and gloom.
And the tides now rise o’er my heart, a mass
Of hopes cruelty crushed in their bloom.

As the phantoms tilt o’er the watery waste;
   (Spectral shades of the loved and lost)
There is one so fair, so good, so chaste,
   That I dream of her, nor heed the cost.

“It might have been” is the drear refrain
   That from the past comes back to me.
When hope had lit life’s gloomy main,
   But, then it was not willed to be.

Through calm, through storm she plows her way,
   The ship, deep laden with her heavy freight,
And hope no more for us will shed a ray,
   To light the night gloom’s leaden weight.

But it is sweet to muse upon the halcyon past,
   And round those tender memories linger late.
No more, alas, remains—the die is cast,
   The helm obeys the hand of fate.

—Victoria Advocate, October 16, 1880

The Serenade

A MADRIGAL BY V. M. ROSE

O, wake, Madonna, wake, O, wake!
To greet with gladsome eyes my song.
For soon the glorious daylight shall break
To light a world of sin and wrong.
But all Aurora’s dazzling light,
That gilds each drop of sparkling dew
Must pale before thy orbs so bright,
And sweet in love’s own azure hue,
Then list Madonna, to my accents free,
That softly breathe of beauty, love and thee!

Kemper City, Nov. 22d, 1880

—Victoria Advocate, November 27, 1880
Los Despenadores (1878)

EXPLANATORY.

The Despenadore was a secret fraternity that existed in the kingdom of Castile, towards the close of the Fourteenth Century, and probably in other States of the Iberian Peninsula—excepting those over whom the enlightened sway of the Moorish princes extended. For it is a patent fact—discreditable though it be to the Christian civilization that sprung from seed planted by the “holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church”—that while the inhabitants of those Christian States were steeped in ignorance and superstition, the Moors were prosecuting their studies in all the known branches of science and arts. While the former were persecuting their brethren through the cruel tortures of the Inquisition, the latter, with a religious toleration that evinced an exalted grade of civilization, were welcoming the persecuted Jews and Christians alike in their midst, where under the Mohammedan Crescent they could walk in conformity to the laws of Moses and Jesus. The object and proceeding of the Despenadores were, excepting minor details, about as follows:

After all hope of the recovery to health of a sick or wounded member of the society was despaired of, and the last rites of the church had been performed—absolving him from all sin, and preparing the soul for admittance into the realms of blessedness—should there appear a possibility of the recovery of the shrieved man, it was held to be a Christian duty to force his death, generally by smothering or strangulation, in order that the soul should realize the holy objects of the church’s absolution, and not be subjected to the temptations of sin again by resuming its place in the walks of life.

Herein constitutes the authority of the story. As to its execution the reader will form his own conclusions.

Upon one point, and one only, the author would forestall the hypercritical, by remarking in advance that his treatment of the subject should not be construed as intending any strictures upon the conduct of any religious organizations. For, as in his opinion, there is no body of religionists whose origin dates as far back as three centuries, that can exhibit a record free of reproach. The crimes of the Despenadores and the Spanish Inquisitors, are no more to be laid at the door of the Catholic Church, than are the persecutions of non-conformists in England and Scotland, to be charged to the discredit of Protestantism at large.

These “crimes of the churches” were really crimes of a people just emerging from the ignorance and superstition that, fungus-like, sprung into existence throughout Europe during the long night of the “Dark Ages;” and many of which, in a modified form, yet remain. That they may eventually all pass away under the benign influences of free institutions, and without the substitution of new errors for old crimes, is the wish of the author.

V. M. R., Victoria, Texas.

The Stirrup Cup
A Song

I
We hear in the distance the steel clash low,
   Of the bloody and terrible fight;
But hold gallant warrior ere you go,
   To drink of the stirrup cup, knight.

II
Thy prancing steed would now join the fray,
   As tossing his head proud and light;
Only a moment, stern warrior, stay,
   And drink of the stirrup cup, knight.

III
Perchance 'tis the cause of a hapless fair,
   That your lance now hastens to right;
Scatter her foes to the fickle night air,
   And drink of the stirrup cup, knight.

IV
We toast thee, fair beauty, in nectar sweet;
   Acknowledge love’s power and might,
And go at your bid the foeman to meet;
   Adieu to the stirrup cup, knight.

_____  

I
In the long ago, when glory
   Walked hand in hand with crime,
Are the annals of the story
   That we now devote to rhyme.
Long ago when priest and soldier,
   To the Inquisition bow’d,
When Superstition had a fear,
   For grandee, alike, and crowd;

II
Did Don Jose de Garcia—
   A most comely knight and bold,
Than whom no one wielded freer
   Lance, with more unerring hold—
Reluctant yield his dearest rights,
   To ride the crest of battles swell,
Where El Rey and his valiant knights,
   Contended with the infidel.
III

To seek his castle dull and drear,
   And to rust consign his steel;
For him was but the pensive tear,
   And to die in old Castile.
Great los was his, and honor fair,
   Won from th’ Moslem hilt to hilt,
And God responding to his prayer,
   Him assoilzied of all guilt.

IV

A score of gashes long and deep,
   Had his body wrought much harm;
Scant toll which he was bound to keep,
   For the work of his strong arm.
For many Spanish knights could tell,
   Sans falsehood a single fear,
How Moslem hundreds oft had fell,
   ’Neath the sword of De Garcia.

V

Don Jose was the single branch
   Of his ancestral tree;
Courtly dames and warriors staunch,
   Form’d his ancient pedigree,
Decayed the trunk, one withered branch,
   From death had respite brief;
No more of the stately tree and staunch
   Was left but a single leaf.

VI

Marie, a comely maid, and vain
   From causes a very flood;
One was because her land was Spain,
   And another was her blood.
Her eyes were dark, her brow was fair,
   And her cheeks were plump and sweet;
Like midnight was her flowing hair,
   That almost reached her feet.

VII

Her mouth seemed only formed to kiss,
   And high birth showed in her ears,
Her sphere seemed one of earthly bliss,
   But her step was the Garcias.
Twelve summers o’er her gentle head,
   Her voice toned as the lute;
Twelve summers brief their hours had sped,
   To ripen the luscious fruit.

VIII

For in the genial clime of Spain,
   Nature all her bounties cast;
Fruits and flowers gladden the plain,
   And womanhood ripens fast.
On wings of love the little sprite,
   Sped sans an hour’s delay,
To the bedside of the wounded knight,
   Who in death’s shadows lay.

IX

Senor Don Jose de Garcia,
   Forced a smile despite his pain,
At this proof of affection dear—
   Dear indeed, because in vain.
“Welcome, my little cousin, here;”
   Thus spake the wounded knight;
“There’s no one else to shed a tear,
   When death has closed my sight.

X

“Thou wilt, my child, stand at my bier,
   When I am cold in death,
And hovering ’round, my spirit near,
   Shall catch your every breath.
See that my armor, scarred like me,
   My stiffened form enclose;
A couch thus spread by dear Marie,
   Shall soothe my long repose.

XI

“And place my helmet on my head,
   My falchion by my side;
In life its gleam my vassals led,
   In death shall be my bride.
My life has been devote, my child,
   To service in the field;
’Mid scenes of death and carnage wild,
   No ground I thought to yield.
XII

“The foeman always saw my breast,
And, standing, caught my steel;
A loyal knight, I felt me blest,
In vivas of Castile.
I leave no son to bear the name
Our fathers bore before,
But I have gilded bright the fame,
That shone so fair of yore.

XIII

“A setting sun I am, whose rays
The fates at last have told,
But on life’s horizon my days
Shine forth like burnished gold.
But then the night must follow soon,
And wrap our house in gloom;
No light but thine, my modest moon,
To struggle with the doom.

XIV

“But woman-like, the moon, alas,
To change is ever prone—
Thy very name, my little lass,
Will soon, perchance, be gone;
Then stranger names will echo through
Our old ancestral halls,
The vassals of De Garcia do
The bid of stranger calls.

XV

“I would, my child, thou wert a boy,
Or—dare I breathe the thought?”
His ghastly face beamed with a joy,
That seemed with rapture fraught.
“Alas! alas! it cannot be!”
He self-communing said;
And wondering much, the fair Marie
From hope to sorrow fled.

XVI

“I would, my child, thy sex did not
Consign thee to the doom—
The cruel doom of woman’s lot—
The distaff and the loom;
I would, my child, thou wert my son,
Heir to our noble name;
With my race ended, thine began,
To wring from carnage fame.

XVII

“I would—and but an hour ago
The thought were sacrilege—I
I would this last sad scene forego,
With thee my troth to pledge.
A cruel mistress has been mine.
Who treasured not my love;
Less service would have won me thine,
O’er glory far above.

XVIII

“But all of earth for me is o’er,
And fate has spoken by,
The inflexible Despenadore,
That I, alas, must die.”
Sighing, Don Jose turned his face,
Despairing, to the wall,
Nor saw the changing feelings race
And vent in Marie’s call:—

XIX

“My knightly cousin, why should you
Despair, when all is well?
Repose and nursing soon will do
Their work, as plainly tell
Your coming strength, which, day by day,
Is growing lusty fast;
Yield never now, as in the fray,
And brood not o’er the past.

XX

“To make thee happy is the care
Of Marie; now and there
Thy ring symbolic I would wear,
And plight our vows fore’er.
To Nuestra Senora bear thy pain,
Thy thoughts on Jesus fix;
The saints can intercession gain,
Look on this crucifix!
XXI

“Why so despondent should you be,
When blessings on us pour?
Who speaks for fate I cannot see;
What is Despenadore?”

“Ah, Marie, I’m as loyal to
The Church as to the King;
The saints I do revere, and so
You’ll never wear my ring.

XXII

“For of the Church is born the power,
That tells my life sands o’er;
Inevitable comes the hour
Of the Despenadore.
In life, my child, we’re prone to stray,
Far from the holy path,
That leadeth by the narrow way,
And saveth from the wrath.

XXIII

“He who would snatch a burning brand
From out the fiery flame,
Deserves great honor through the land,
And an undying name.
The soul that trembles on the brink
Of death’s confines so dark.
Thirsting for the heavenly drink,
And the celestial spark;

XXIV

“With absolution from the priest,
Longs for admittance in
Unto the thrice glorious feast,
Safe from ‘The Man of Sin.’
God does his works, my Marie dear,
Oft times mysterious;
To trembling follow Him with fear,
Is the right way for us.

XXV

“And one great agency of good,
That broods its children o’er,
For ages in this land has stood,
And stands—Despenadore.
Its work in me you will perceive,
    When cold in death I lie;
And for the effect you should not grieve,
    But the cause justify.

XXVI

“Tomorrow eve I will receive,
    From the good Father Reme,
Absolution for all I grieve,
    And unction the extreme
Sacrament, when my vision clear,
    To higher things than earth,
I’ll strain aloft to see and hear
    Scenes of heavenly birth.

XXVII

“For when the Priest my bedside leaves,
    And his good work is done;
Although no pain my bosom heaves,
    And of my wounds not one
But yields unto the treatment fast,
    And I feel almost stout;
Scarce one brief hour shall have pass’d,
    Ere ebbs my life-tide out.

XXVIII

“With human weakness I would fain
    The ordeal forego,
And yet I know how weak and vain
    Are things of earth, and so,
Hopes born of my ancestral pride
    With evil but are fraught;
Above De Garcia seeks his bride,
    All other thoughts are naught.”

XXIX

“My knightly cousin, you but speak
    Enigmas to my mind;
For sure no mortal man would wreak
    Vengeance, if inclin’d,
Upon the helpless, lying prone,
    With gaping wounds a score;
If so, Atrocity alone
    Is the Despenadore.”
XXX
“My child, when the good Priest departs,
    Two men shall enter in;
’Tis they who bear the hidden darts
    That shields the child of sin,
By stopping short the earthly breath;
    In kindness you must know,
To spare the soul eternal death
    And endless pangs of woe.

XXXI
“In thy dear arms I fain would die;
    Alas, this cannot be;
But you’ll return and see that I,
    Or what remains of me,
Is cared for as my will dictates;
    Which also states, you’ll see,
That all the De Garcia estates
    Pass absolute to thee.”

XXXII
No word, indeed, escaped her then,
    But lighter felt her heart;
It was to be the work of men,
    And she resolved her part,
In the fell tragedy should be
    To save her cousin—more,
That by divine assistance, she
    Would crush Despenadore.

XXXIII
Don Jose told more than he thought,
    Or thought so young a maid
Could pluck from his enigma naught,
    ‘The Man of Sin’ to aid.
So he in full contentment lay
    Resolving on his fate.
In her child woman’s heart at play
    Were thoughts of love and hate.

XXXIV
Ah, then in Donna Marie seem’d,
    A soul to do and dare,
And yet so soft and young, you deem’d
    Her full as weak as fair.
The spirit shone in those dark eyes,
   Of self-sufficient aid;
Her’s was the blood, the cause, the skies,
   Of Sarragassa’s Maid.

XXXV

Who knows but this, the maid we sing—
   And the song is true in main,
As you’ll see, if to aid you bring
   The history of Spain—
Was the exemplar chosen by
   The amazons of Spain,
When piling fields of slaughter high
   With gory Frenchmen slain!

XXXVI

’Tis passing strange, but true indeed,
   That silken maids of ease
Will ’rise when ’roused and take the lead,
   If so their hearts but please.
Indolence may the body make
   As sluggish as the night,
The frenzied soul will madly break
   Forth in its potent might.

XXXVII

To tell the truth, I rather like
   Those maids with darkish eyes,
Whose every glance appears a spike,
   Aim’d at your bridge of sighs.
They’re not coquettish—I will stake
   My silver pesos few,
Their hearts are easier to break
   Than those with eyes of blue.

XXXVIII

The very devil’s in black eyes,
   Or so as least they say,
But I’ve seen some much like the skies
   In color, have their way.
A little devil in the sex
   Gives life a wholesome spice;
’Tis sweet to vex and then unvex,
   “Make ups” are always nice.
XXXIX
At all events, to gaze on one
Like our young heroine,
When the sick knight his tale had done,
Would shape your thoughts with mine.
'Neath folded arms, her heaving breast
Rose madly to and fro,
Her nervous foot, despising rest,
Sounded a tattoo low.

XL.
Her eyes were moist, her cheek was white,
   Her lips, compress’d, were blue,
Her hair, unbound, was flowing light,
   Just as it chose to do;
The right hand hanging by her side,
   Seem’d in the tresses lost;
A cross rode on her bosom’s tides,
   By the tiny billows toss’d.

XLI
Don Jose fix’d on her a look
   In which two passions deep,
Alternate of his bosom took
   Possession, not to keep;
Struggling hide his efforts long
   Retained a footing there,
But gaining oft a fortress strong
   The battle waged despair.

XLII
Inured to all the toils of strife,
   He was a novice here,
Where the sequestered ways of life
   A dreary tameness were.
In vain he tried to read her face—
   No known expression there—
Could he with every effort trace,
   And the minutest care.

XLIII
But “woman” was to his strong mind
   Synonymous with “weak,”
For at this time, the reader’ll find,
   No vengeance yet to wreak,
Had called the warlike bands to share  
Deeds of the battle plain,  
And raise as bold defenders fair  
The amazons of Spain.

XLIV

Don Jose was a knight sans fear,  
And of reproach no spot,  
The escutcheon of De Garcia  
Defamed with ugly blot.  
He’d wrote his name with fearless hand,  
High on the towering dome  
Of Honor’s lofty college grand,  
His temple and his home.

XLV

And while the maids of Spain were fair,  
Her knights were kind and brave;  
He vowed himself would not forswear  
To ignominious grave.  
For on the holy cross he swore,  
When in his early youth,  
To live by the Despenadore  
With all his strength and truth.

XLVI

And gazing thus, to him it seem’d  
He’d entered fairly land;  
Around him tiny maskers teem’d,  
And took him by the hand.  
With stealthy steps Marie arose,  
From out the room to creep—  
Not to disturb the knight’s repose—  
For he was fast asleep.

XLVII

Three great powers with bated breath,  
And e’er unceasing eye,  
Watch’d Don Jose’s fight with death,  
Noting each groan and sigh;  
The Church, the State, and greatest, last,  
The Inquisition bold;  
Each wish’d to seize his estates fast,  
With avaricious hold.
XLVIII
And each the other’s every act
Watched with eyes intent,
And striving each with adroit tact
Their shrewd endeavors bent.
But on the great and hidden power
Neither a thought had cast,
Which had decreed the fatal hour
To be Don Jose’s last.

XLIX
“Ah, daughter,” said the good old Priest,
When Marie told her tale,
“They are less human far than beast
Who would the sick assail;
And crazed is the blind child of fate—
Poor groveling earthly clod—
Who thus would dare anticipate
The stern decrees of God.

L.
“For ages has this festering blight,
Like some internal ill,
Been eating, hid secure from sight,
Our children to its fill.
But thou has been inspir’d, dear one,
To point the fest’ring sore,
And with the morning’s early sun
Must end Despenadore.

LI
“This eve I will the knight confess,
At his express desire,
And render the last rites to bless
Him for the holy choir.
The Inquisition soon shall bear
All, and do what is best;
Seal firm thy lips, and now, my dear,
Retire and seek thy rest.”

LII
’Tis night, and through the silent room,
A single candle’s rays
Is struggling with the dismal gloom,
In which Don Jose lays [sic].
His pallid brow attests his race
    On earth is nearly run;
His vision, piercing realms of space,
    Greets the eternal sun.

LIII
Completed was the last sad rite,
    The waiting soul to shrieve,
With the earliest dawn of night,
    And the Priest had taken leave.
His armor on the oaken wall,
    Seem’d in the dubious light
A vassal waiting but the call
    Of chieftain to the fight.

LIV
The casque, suspended, swung around,
    With motion solemn, slow,
And through the visor’s bars with sound,
    The wind mourn’d wierd [sic] and low;
His sword of best Toledo steel,
    Hung near his boots beside,
And if it could, no doubt would feel
    Chagrin’d in rust to hide.

LV
Along the wall hung pictures rare—
    Work of some master’s hand—
High-titled knights and ladies fair,
    Once grandees of the land,
Whose lineaments, the style and grace—
    All from one model laid—
Seem’d born again in the sweet face
    Of the pale watching maid;

LVI
Who now, assur’d the fatal hour
    Of time was spun at last—
The moment named by the dread pow’r,
    Was now already past—
Sat while swift-fleeting phantoms wrought,
    Strange glyphs o’er and o’er,
Conscious that the pow’r she’d sought
    Could crush Despenadore.
LVII
A movement at the door—she starts,
    Her face a pallor wore—
Another, and the pale lips part,
    And then—she hears no more.
Disappointed, again she turns
    Back to her vigils drear;
Her mind with expectation burns,
    The least sound greets her ear.

LVIII
Her thoughts on holy things now turn’d
    For consolation sweet;
She had the “Pater Noster” learned,
    And could the creed repeat;
Both these she did, and made a prayer
    To our thrice holy dame—
Then a cross on her bosom fair,
    And called the saints by name.

LVIX
And then she felt resigned and good—
    Belief works like a charm—
She felt no earthly power could
    Now do her aught of harm.
Commending to the Lord her few
    Friends, safe from all evil,
Moroscoe she consigned, and Jew,
    To the care of the devil.

LX
She’s reach’d the hundredth name on the
    Long catalogue of saints,
And wond’ring what the next could be,
    There ’rose a shrieking plaint;
Convulsed, she ’rose with frighten’d air,
    And wonder-gaping eyes;
A girl had fallen down the stair,
    And sought relief in cries.

LXI
And Marie found relief again
    In the long-sainted roster;
Believe in full, and any pain
    Yields to “Pater Noster.”
And is not this belief the same,
   That to pure childhood brings
Its charm? and which we fain would name
   Youth’s perennial springs.

LXII

Admit that superstition makes
   Perhaps the largest part,
And ignorance also partakes
   Much of the guileless heart.
How sweeter thus to yield to love,
   Than, fearing, think like they,
Who think damnation from above
   Is thunder’d ev’ry day?

LXIII

The degree of God eternal,
   Which Calvinists still teach,
To a creed leads most infernal,
   In placing from the reach
Of many, the sole goal of life;
   And adding to the flame
Of the fierce sectarian strife,
   Wag’d in His holy name.

LXIV

As if Jehovah could not be
   Just, and with it also
All things of past and future see
   Poor grov’ling creatures low.
They measure Him by their own size;
   For the dull worm must wing,
Before it can essay to rise
   And to the flowers cling.

LXV

The children of the Spanish race,
   Beneath a summer sun,
Nor time nor change can e’er efface
   The stamp that marks them one.
With sanguine hopes and lofty pride,
   That will no jot abate,
They love the pageant’s tide to ride,
   In forms of Church and State.
LXVI
With them reform is treason black,
And change is full of gloom;
What though they break the ancient rack,
To fly the priestly doom?
Excesses mark their efforts vain,
Whene’er they would aspire,
And back they go from Freedom slain
To wallow in the mire.

LXVII
The aught they know of God’s decrees
Would leave a volume blank;
They know they should the Bishop please
And yield respect to rank.
Is not this better than the band
Of Pilgrims sore, who came
To worship as they wish’d to, and
Make all men do the same?

LXVIII
Back to our theme let us return;
The gloomy room of death,
Where Marie watch’d, the end to learn,
With quick impulsive breath.
A footstep at the door she hears—
The portal opens slow—
Two solemn men en masque appears,
With careful footsteps low.

LXIX
They halted, on beholding there
A watcher in the gloom
And pointed with a mystic air
For her to leave the room.
But she arose to her full height,
And with a queenly air
Seem’d, in the pale, dubious light,
A Dian young and fair.

LXX
“Depart,” said one, with dismal sign,
And most sepulchral tone;
“For we would watch his bedside by,
And must be left alone.”
“And who are you,” she said, “Sir Knight,  
Who thus would dare invade,  
A sick room where we have no light,  
Nor preparation made?”

LXXI

“Now girl, begone!” he fiercely said,  
“We have not time to wait.”  
“Infidel!” cried the fearless maid,  
“I scorn you, and I hate  
Your most infernal brotherhood,  
Whose bloody, murd’rous hand  
Is lifted ’gainst the Church, and good,  
And hostile to our land.”

LXXII

“Oh, Infidel!” he cried,  
And strove to grasp her hair,  
But she around the table shied,  
And he fell o’er a chair.  
“Ho, Infidel!” a weak voice said,  
“On her lay not thy hand,  
Or this weak arm shall cleave your head,  
As in your tracks you stand.”

LXXIII

Five guardsmen now came on the scene,  
With drawn swords in their hands;  
They had been hid behind a screen,  
And now they took their stands,  
Destroying hope of a retreat  
By the fanatics wild;  
Don Jose sank back in the sheet,  
And cried: “My child! my child!”

LXXIV

Quick to the knight she lightly sped,  
Who now was safe from harm;  
On his bosom she laid her head,  
Around her form his arm;  
Convulsions heav’d her girlish breast,  
Tears sped her soft cheeks o’er;  
Delightful joy was theirs, and peace  
From the Despenadore.
EPILOGUE

“I write, my own Eulalia, dear,
To tell you many things;
Romance, no doubt, too much you hear;
The truth this missive brings.
’Tis true that I am married, and
My husband’s good and kind;
A postscript in his knightly hand,
At th’ end of this you’ll find.

LXXVI

“No more to the Convent will I,
A school-girl, e’er return;
My heart is heavy, and I sigh
Those mem’ries to inurn.
I love each sister dear, whose life
Devoted is to right,
But I am happier as the wife
Of the recovered knight.

LXXVII

“You’ll come, my dear, the first of May,
The fields are bright and green,
And spend with me a sweet birthday,
For then I’m just thirteen.
And—darling, need you then be told,
One age are I are you—
That I begin to feel me old,
And fear I look so too.

LXXVIII

“My own Don Jose’s fifty-five,
But quick as a young page;
In youth he did refuse to wive—
I’d hate to in old age.
And if I should outlive him, what,
Alas, then would I do?
I’d fly my sad, dejected lot,
My dear, and come to you.

LXXIX

“But God knows I do nightly pray,
To all the saints above,
That he may live full many a day
To bless me with his love.

37
And think, Eulalia, what a joy
  Would thrill my wifely frame,
To bear him just one pretty boy,
  To bear his noble name!

LXXX

“Oh, darling, I am happy here,
  My life is like a dream;
Sweet raptures through my visions, dear,
  In myriads do teem.
You cannot know how pleasant are
  The moments of my life,
Until with some kind knight you pair,
  And be a loving wife.

LXXXI

“But I forgot, my love, to tell,
  How the Despenadore—
Worse far than Moslem infidel,
  Who Mecca’s stones adore—
Was hunted all throughout the land,
  And struck down root and branch
Sans mercy, by the strong right arm
  Of royal Carlos staunch.

LXXXII

“And the two ghouls that sought to slay
Don Juan in his bed,
In their dishonor’d graves now lay,
  In soul and body dead.
The holy office made them feel
  The rigors of its power,
For they were tried, and on the wheel
  Broke in a single hour.

LXXXIII

“And now, Eulalia, thus much due
  To one so good and kind;
And now I’ll bid a brief adieu
  To her I left behind,
For had I written an hour more,
  And added unto this,
My song had but one burden bore,
  Bliss, absolutely bliss!”
ADIOS.

No postscript could the author find,
   Wrote by the noble knight,
And he to think is now inclin’d
   Don Jose could not write—
But made his mark, as others did,
   With his Toledo blade—
Not fam’d for letters was the Cid,
   The muse was not his maid.

LXXXV

But answer’d was her prayer, we know,
   And realized her aim,
For through the land, where’er you go,
   You’ll find the Garcia name;
All proud like her, like him all brave,
   But slothful and effete,
Until the Church or State to save,
   Calls them to daring feat;

LXXXVI

Then the guerrillas storm the pass,
   Or swoop down on the rear;
Then the doom’d invading mass,
   Must yield the tribute dear;
For gentle as the murmuring streams,
   Her sons of mount and plain,
But rouse them, and for vengeance teems
   The chivalry of Spain.

Demara, the Comanche Queen (1882)

Ross’ Men

I

No more the bugle’s ringing blast
   Now calls to horse throughout the camp;
No more the charger, rushing fast,
   In gore his quiv’ring fetlocks tramp;
No more the red cross proudly waves
   Defiance to the haughty foe;
No more the crimson battle waves
   Of human blood, now ebb and flow.
II
No more as when the cool old chief*  
His life gave up in sacrifice,  
Does glory lead the path to grief,  
Where tears and sobs may not suffice;  
No more, as when the “dashing boy†  
A stranger, came to do and dare,  
Is life exchanged for fame’s alloy  
Like empty bubbles light as air.

*General Ben. McCulloch.  
†General McIntosh.

III
Still we recall those scenes with pride,  
And mark each incident though light—  
The bivouac, the midnight ride,  
The skirmish and the deadly fight.  
First in the front of each advance,  
Last in the rear of each retreat;  
The Cossack Ranger’s ready lance  
Was ever poised the foe to meet.

IV
And when the modern sphinx arrayed—  
With will to match against the fates,  
His legions which had ne’er essayed  
In vain the storm of cities’ gates,  
Delayed, proud Vicksburg, was thy doom,  
By spectral men on noiseless wings,  
Who lit with lurid glare the gloom,  
That hung a pall o’er Holly Springs.

V
A pandemonium Spring Hill heard  
When Whitfield led, through shot and shell,  
The “LEGION,” “SIXTH,” the “NINTH,” and “THIRD,”  
To victory through a mimic hell.  
With Yazoo Glory’s bursts enlarge,  
As recompense for all our loss,  
Where Fortune, in the dashing charge,  
Conferr’d the “wreath and stars” on Ross.

VI
Around the lines of Corinth, where
    Disease, an ally of the foe,
Rode on the pestilential air,
    And claimed its dues of death and woe;
And ’round Atlanta’s ditches red,
    Where Valor failed to cope with Might,
We left at rest our priceless dead,
    Athwart the field from left to right.

VII

No marble shaft may point the way—
    No epitaph the lines disclose,
Where Death’s Brigade, in grim array,
    Unheeded find their last repose.
But far beyond, the phantom line
    In silence holds the dim parade,
Where radiant suns forever shine,
    “Across the river, in the shade.”

“Ross’ Men” originally appeared in Ross’ Texas Brigade. For the version in Demara, Rose simplified the punctuation and made a few changes in wording.

Samuel J. Tilden

Grand old man! Who towers above the race
Of pigmy politicians like the forest oak,
Which stands as Saul amid the tribes,
In sylvan grove or dark primeval wood—
In common thou hadst nothing with that
Crew of Democratic hucksters, who
    Bartered off their country’s weal
    For a paltry mess of pottage,
And “Fraud” first enthroned triumphant
O’er the councils of our Union fair!
No more couldst thou the basest depths
Of their foul ignoble level reach,
When brazen forgers occupied the seats
Of Elders in the Democratic host!
The tradsman’s wiles, the “boss’s” siren smiles,
Are not thine.

    Yet, Tilden, yet the time will be,
    When like Dandolo, of the “Sunny Isles,”
Thou shalt snatch victory from the very jaws
Of fell defeat, and lead the Democratic hosts
Once more to triumph, and to power!
The people wills it, and the people’s voice
Gives tongue to God’s eternal will;
The cause of freedom, and the people’s choice
Yet live, their holy mission to fulfill.

Samuel Jones Tilden was a New York lawyer who became known for fighting corruption. Although he supported the Union, he disapproved of the Civil War and the policies of the Radical Republicans. As the Democratic Party’s candidate for president in the election of 1876 against Republican Rutherford B. Hayes, he won the popular vote, but some returns were disputed, and electors awarded the presidency to Hayes. “Dandolo, of the ‘Sunny Isles” is probably a reference to Henry (Enrico) Dandolo, a doge of Venice. He was blinded by his enemies but went on to capture Constantinople during the Fourth Crusades.

Valley of the Shadow of Death

I strolled down a valley the lonesomest night
Of the year to my spirit most sad,
And silence hung o’er it, nor gleam of a light
Dared to cope with the elements bad.
In the essence of “Nothing” being was rife,
And a consciousness alien to breath;
I stood on the borders of ultimate life,
In the vale of the Shadow of Death.

II
I knew there was strife with the planets above,
That the genii of Evil and Hate,
A segregate force, o’er the angles of love,
Were winding the meshes of fate.
O, colder than ice was the flow of the soul,
And the heart hung as heavy as lead,
Yet they moved without sound to the boreal goal,
For the march was the march of the Dead.

III
The battle was fought in a temporal clime,
Away down in the regions of life,
But the archives are gone, and the annals of Time
Were erased in the throes of the strife;
And a void there was in the regions of space,
Where God gave mortality breath—
And the victims were called “Humanity’s Race,”
And the name of the conqueror, “Death.”
IV

Through the vague intermediate sphere they grope,
   In passive submission, their way,
Till a faint adumbration is caught as of Hope,
   A gleam of Eternity’s Day.
The dominion of Evil will cease “Over There,”
   On the spirit’s ethereal sod;
And the fame of that realm is “Beautiful-Fair,”
   And the name of the conqueror, God!

This poem was first published in the *Victoria Advocate* on December 25, 1880.

Princess Charming

Ah, never eyes to me so sweetly seemed—
   So brightly, mildly, kindly beamed,
      As thine of azure, pretty one!
Nor Time with his eternal pace,
Nor Change itself may e’er efface
      The deep impression they have won.

Ah, never lips to me so sweetly smiled—
   So gently all my cares beguiled,
      As thine of laughter, pretty one!
Nor vespers’ distant call to prayer—
Nor soft æolian echoes dare—
   Nor dying swan’s song even compare,
      With thy sweet voice’s rhythmic run.

O let hurrying Time to me but seem
The guardian of this blissful dream,
   And I’ll be happy, pretty one!
For possession palls upon the lip,
And satiate are those who sip—
   But Plato lives, O, charming one!

This poem first appeared in the *Victoria Advocate* on May 15, 1880, with an inscription (“Respectfully inscribed to Miss S. F. of Refugio, By Victor M. Rose”) and the following note: “Platonic love is a pure spiritual affection subsisting between the sexes, unmixed with carnal desires, and regarding the mind only and its excellencies.—Webster.” “Miss S. F.” may refer to Sallie Folk, a young woman from Refugio who is mentioned several times in Rose’s “Kemper Kernels” columns. She visited Kemper City often, and on one occasion Rose joined the group that saw her off. Describing the scene, he wrote, “‘Bussing’ at the departure became contagious . . . and your jealous reporter did not get a buss! He was mad, of course. He wanted a buss, or rather a hundred busses. But disappointment is an old friend of his” (“Kemper Kernels,”
Victoria Advocate, May 22, 1880). Rose may have emphasized Platonic love in the poem because Sallie Folk was twenty years his junior.

Battle of Oak Hills

At midnight in the drear bivouac,
    The southern patriots lay—
The storm-cloud, with its sombre black,
    Obscured the dismal way
Of the silent sentinels who kept
Lonely vigil while their comrades slept.

No camp fire shed its dubious ray
    The spectral oaks to define,
Or light the stalwart forms that lay,
    With rifles in battle line—
For when the sun o’er the hill should glance,
McCulloch’d give the word to advance.

Reposing here, in fitful dream,
    Of home and loved ones far,
By old Wilson’s turbid stream,
    Were the citizen knights of war,
Eager to meet the foe in fight,
Beneath the “bonny blue flag” for right.

Here waved Missouri’s banner’d “bear,”
    Our lustrous “Lone Star” beside—
The guardian “Pelican” was there—
    Gay Louisiana’s pride;
The tocsin Arkansas sounded, too,
And had mustered there her gallants true.

Morn at length from the dark night woke—
    A streak lit the eastern skies,
When the cannon of Siegel broke
    The silence with dire surprise;
Loud then the belching thunders grew,
O’er clouds of ming[ ]ing gray and blue.

To arms the banded heroes rushed,
    And formed their serried front
With bated breath, and lips still hush’d,
    But eager to meet the brunt
Of battle, rushing with giant stride
To humble Dixie’s patriot pride.

As leaps the angry tidal wave
   Upon the rock-ribbed shore,
So, when Lyon the signal gave,
   The “regulars” onward pour,
Like mad billows from the dark blue sea,
For conquest sweeping the peaceful lea.

The shock of battle and the crush
   Of ranks, as wild squadrons wheel
And charge with impetuous rush,
   The bright lines of deadly steel—
The cannon’s hoarse and murderous roar,
The rifle’s deadly rattle—and more—

The saber’s clash—the fatal thrust—
   The red wound and ghastly death,
As iron hoofs tramp into dust
   The wounded, whose departing breath
Was nursed to give one parting cheer
For the cause the hero deemed so dear.

In vain discipline sought to ride
   In haughty victory o’er
Patriotism’s devoted pride;
   Vain did the eagle ling’ring soar
Above this revel of terrestrial hell,
Which Siegel fled and where Lyon fell.

The pale, cold moon her timid light
   In dubious glances shed
Over the beaten army’s flight,
   And over the silent dead—
Of friend and foe strewn thick around,
Who won and held in death the ground!

NOTE.—The battle of “Oak Hills” or “Wilson’s Creek” was fought on the 10th day of August, A.D. 1861, near Springfield, Missouri, between the allied Confederate and Missouri forces on one side, commanded respectively by Generals McCulloch and Price, and the Federal army on the other, commanded by Generals Lyon and Siegel. The Confederates and Missourians were victorious. General Lyon fell in a daring but hopeless endeavor to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

“Battle of Oak Hills” was originally published, with minor differences (such as numbered stanzas), in Ross’ Texas Brigade. Rose added the note for the Demara version.
The Loved and Lost

I
O the loved and lost of other days,
   My heart of hearts their mem’ries fill,
Though but blighted hopes and withered bays
   The bitter ends of fate fulfill.

II
O Time! that man attempts in vain to stem,
   Like ocean’s hidden caverns deep,
Thy buried past conceals full many a gem,
   More precious than the golden heap.

III
A faded leaf, a letter dim with age,
   Whose burning words can ne’er grow cold;
Some trifle less, perchance, my thoughts engage,
   To bind me to the days of old.

IV
Adown the vistas of my lost delight,
   Where yet the olden sunshine gleams,
Fancy oft wings her solitary flight,
   To dream again my boyhood’s dreams.

V
Ambition then her stately sceptre waved,
   To gild the promise of youth’s halcyon hour;
And with flowers the steps of glory paved,
   Conducting to the seat of power.

VI
The young heart, like some very tender vine,
   Too frail to rise above the ground,
Sends forth its slender tendrils, to entwine
   The chord of sympathy when found.

VII
Sneer not, O cynic, at the simple tale
   The guileless thoughts of youth may teach;
For where Philosophy herself may fail,
   The promptings of the heart o’erreach.
Beneath the weight of threescore years and ten,
    Like a deep-freighted bark far out from port,
Without an aim he wanders on, as when
    Fortune first made him buffet of her sport
No proud ancestral halls he now may claim,
    No herald’s scroll arouse his heart to joy,
Nor boast how kinsmen of his blood and name
    Stood side by side with Saxe at Fontenoy.
A fair exchange was pride and place, he thought,
    Libertie, thy generous flame to feel;
Nor deemed thy holocaust of nobles aught,
    This democratic count of Moranville.
He spurned the rack, where rank had often broke
    The honest yearning of Egalitie;
And with the sans culottes’ most ribald joke,
    Smiled, coquetting with eternity,
Now, as his fancies brood upon the past,
    He wakes to view his grand chateaux in Spain,
And the sad truth to realize at last,
    His quest for thee, Fraternitie, was vain.
Like some old oak amid the boundless plain,
    On which no tender vine seeks its support,
In solitude he stand, and thinks how vain
    The vagaries that made him folly’s sport.
The tides of anguish rise above his heart,
    And bear him, Childhood, back again to thee;
And in the boyish throng resumes his part,
    Upon the lawn at distant Andelys.

Rose first published this poem in the *Victoria Advocate* on September 4, 1880, under the title “M. Le Compt de Moranville” and with this introductory note: “The following lines were prompted by the career of the late Victor Eude du Gaillon—“Old Victor”—so well known to many of the readers of the ADVOCATE. His maternal grandfather was the Count of Moranville, and commanded a company in the Auvergne Chasseurs a Cheval at the celebrated battle of Fontenoy Andelys—pronounced “Andele”—[which] was the scene of his youthful years.” Rose’s biographical sketch of “Old Victor” appears in his *History of Victoria*, pp. 124–126.

A Madrigal

I
Madonna of my boyhood days,
   Where breaks thy rippling smile to-night?
Throughout this life’s most checkered ways,
   Though lost to hope, one gentle light
My steps have through the darkness led.

II

Thy rippling smile, which, like some purling brook,
   I first encountered at the fountain head;
And wrapt in sympathy the form I took,
At the dark spirit of the mountain brook,
   Nor deemed that I could ever stray from thee,
   And lose my fairy in Life’s troubled sea!

Rose’s “The Serenade: A Madrigal”—a similar love poem addressed to a “Madonna”—appeared in the Victoria Advocate of November 27, 1880. A madrigal is any simple lyric suitable for being set to music.

Sonnet,
To Her Imperial Majesty, The Empress of Mexico

Go forth, O daughter of a royal line,
   With thy true woman’s heart for high resolves;
On thee the fate of empire now devolves,
Since force and arms have proved, alas, supine;
   ’Tis thine, the noble mission pure and blest,
To raise unhappy Mexico to the stand
   She held, ere Montezuma sank oppressed
By Castile’s fierce and savage hand.
   More brilliant than ambition’s is the crown,
Of her who left the sweets of Mirrama,
   To seek a land oppressed and trodden down,
Westward, across the angry deep afar.
   All coming ages yet shall sound her fame,
   And sweetest music breathe Carlotta’s name!

Carlotta (1840–1927) accompanied her husband Maxmilian, archduke of Austria, when he went to Mexico as emperor in 1864, leaving behind their palace, Miramar, near Trieste. When Napoleon III withdrew French troops from Mexico, the empire began to collapse. Carlotta returned to Europe in 1866 to seek aid from Napoleon and the pope, but was unsuccessful and suffered an emotional collapse. Maxmilian was executed in 1867, and Carlotta lived the remainder of her life in seclusion.

Astarte’s Jamboree
“The square dances have gone totally and irremediably out of fashion; they are not danced at all in good society. We see them still at balls; but to those all sorts of people go, and the programme must suit all tastes.”—Newspaper.

I

Sparkling and bright were the eyes that night,
   And light were the “twinkling feet;”
Gems never shone on a richer zone,
   Nor was pleasure half so sweet.

II

The social sky drew its compass nigh,
   And the stars they mingled free,
With festive vein in Abandon’s train,
   At Astarte’s jamboree.

III

The purple wine o’er the festive shrine
   Was reared like a golden calf,
And Venus led, with queenly tread,
   The galaxy forth to quaff.

IV

The Music rose from her soft repose,
   And vied with the nectar sweet,
For the wild round dance with name from France
   Engaged the impatient feet.

V

Here Bacchus sped with young Tyro’s head,
   On his bosom seeking rest—
There Juno flies with amorous eyes,
   In the arms of Saturn blest.

VI

But mortal gaze in that whirling maze
   Was lost as all else discreet,
And naught remains but the dulcet strains,
   And th’ mingling of legs and feet.

VII

Let the square dance go, it is too slow,
   For queens by Astarte led—
So “on with the dance” and “vive la France!”
   Abas the nuptial bed!
The statement about square dances appeared in the February 2, 1873, issue of the Chicago Tribune, but Rose might have seen it reprinted in another newspaper. Astarte was the Semitic goddess of fertility, beauty, and love.

Ye Ancient Spinster’s Prayer

O Lud, deliver us, we pray,
   From all the vanities o’ life—
Such as the sweeping polonaise,
   —And the airs of a young wife.
Let no bad man our footsteps lead
   Into temptation full o’ sin;
And for the heathen we would plead,
   Who know not how to toil and spin.
Thy will, O Lud, be done on Earth—
   But whomsoever ye shall loose,
Bind but the graceless son o’ mirth,
   Who dubbed me an unmated goose!

The Lord’s Supper

I
A solemn silence now the aisles invade,
   A deferential hush pervades the throng;
A sacred sacrament is being made,
   Ere bursts the voice of gladness into song.

II
“This is my blood!” the preacher said,
   With silver chalice raised on high,
And with deep reverence each head
   Was bowed, and moist was every eye.

III
One stood aloof whose novice feet,
   The paths of sin had lately trod,
And dared not with his brethren eat
   The mystic supper of his God.

IV
“Come!” said the softest whisper borne
   By zephyrs from angelic lips—
“Go not!” the mentor said, “to mourn,
As mourn he must who rashly sips!”

V

Of every stain by pure, O heart!
   Be cleansed of every sin, O soul!
Ere may his carnal lips take part,
   With those that press the mystic bowl.

D’Israeli

I

Ah, in that dream I saw a pensive youth,
   Whose lengthy scroll ancestral antedates
The primal page of all historic truth,
   Arouse his will to match against the Fates.
Ambition lit his dark Semitic eye,
   To waft his hopes o’er placemen far above;
His dream was power, and his only sigh
   Was for this mistress of his idol love.

II

“Behold the symbols of the ‘Premier’s place!’”
   He dreaming read upon the dubious page;
“For when Ambition wins the life-long race,
   Hers are the slippers and the chair of age.”

III

He won the lofty goal, and stamped his name
   In letter’d deeds o’er many an ample page
Of the long record of his country’s fame,
   To crown fair Albion’s proud Augustan age.
Power was his, and circling round the world,
   His mandates met obedience on the way;
The haughty mistress who erstwhile had curled
   Her lips in scorn, now woo’d him every day.

IV

Too late, too late was realized the dream,
   When Fortune at his feet threw down her gage;
It is youth’s again to chase that syren gleam,
   And his the slippers and the easy chair of age.

Benjamin Disraeli, who served twice as England’s prime minister, in 1868 and from 1874 to 1880, was also a literary scholar and a novelist.
“Oblivion”

I

Ah, years ago—perhaps thou canst recall
A scene that happen’d—shall I say how long ago?
The moonlit night was perfect, and the ball—
I yet can hear the rhythmic music’s flow,
That bore us—you and I—as in a trance,
Throughout the mazes of the Spanish dance.

II

Oblivion was the subject of our talk,
“A silly myth,” you said it was, you know,
As arm in arm we sauntered down the walk,
Immersed in silver moonlight’s mellow glow.
I bore my argument in language terse,
And vow’d to demonstrate its truth in verse.

III

And wouldst thou know how I have kept that vow?
And see me point Nirwana’s sacred truth?
Draw near and read this musty scroll, which now
Will guide thee safely past the doubts of youth.
Yes, mine’s the pen that traced those words, ’tis true,
But all my inspiration came from you.

IV

But, ah! Perhaps those Lethean waves have swept
Our grim Oblivion from thy mind away,
And I, a minstrel who his tryst hath kept,
Now trills to careless ears a stranger lay.
We cherish memories at fearful cost;
The dearest souvenirs are of the lost.

This poem was first published in the *Victoria Advocate* on December 11, 1880.

My Queen

As fairy nymph by mountain stream she’s fair,
And poises after nature’s sculptured grace,
Nor pride nor hate her bearing debonnaire
Disturbs, or marks with care her placid face.

Her sceptre sways the world of one true heart,
   The boundless empire of my regnant queen;
She reigns, indeed, unconscious of the part
   She plays within this ideal realm unseen.

Her voice is sweet, though I have never heard
   It syllable a note to mortal ear,
And I would treasure just one soft lisp’d word,
   As something to my heart supremely dear.

But we have often met upon the beach,
   And watched the sea gulls skim the billow’s crest,
Or anxious cast o’er ocean’s boundless reach.
   Our eyes in quest of peace, of home, of rest.

Ah, Fancy rears her chateaux high in Spain!
   And calls her silly dupes to fickle dreams,
These with the passing fabric all may wane,
   Yet is my little Queen just what she seems.

“My Queen” first appeared in the *Victoria Advocate* on April 24, 1880, as “My Queen of Hearts.”

Mrs. Bella French Swisher

Welcome the boreal blast of “norther” sped,
   By voice of love from skies of peace;
Our tropics on such wholesome diet fed,
   Would from their hurricanes in part surcease;
And nature, all would to that pleasing spell,
Rich tributes yield in concert with Bonnell.

Oh, sacred haunt! devote alone to love,
   The plaintive memory of that fatal leap
Circles like *immortelles* thy peak above,
   With leaflets green through Time’s resistless sweep:
Thy rock the altar, and the priest grim death,
“Love!” “love!” the burden of their parting breath.

And, lovely priestess, who with cunning art,
Sheds later glories on the sacred place,
Smooth be love’s current to thy tuneful heart,
And all of life but as a pleasure chase,
For never laurel wreath pressed marble brow
Of priestess worthier deemed than thou.

NOTE.—The second stanza refers to a legend in connection with Mount Bonnell, to the effect that Donna Antoinette and her lover, Don Leal Rodriguez, precipitated themselves from the summit to escape captivity at the hands of the savage Comanches. These verses were suggested by the perusal of a charming idyl[1] from “A Texas Norther” in the columns of the Courier Journal.

Rose’s “Bonnell,” published in the Victoria Advocate on November 22, 1879, also dealt with the legend of two lovers leaping to their deaths from Mount Bonnell in Austin, but it is a different poem, not an alternate version. Bella French (1837–1893), a journalist, poet, and magazine editor, established the American Sketch Book in Wisconsin about 1874. She relocated to Austin in 1877 and the following year married John M. Swisher, a veteran of San Jacinto, an Austin banker, and a purchasing agent for the Confederacy.

Dishy’s Reply

Married! O you git along dar!
Chillun—glory to God! I ’clar,
Cain’t you beholden dem ar three?
Dars Wiatt, he’s Wiatt’s, I know;
An’ Edards, he’s brudder William’s sho;
Den dar’s Bill jist a settin’ still—
De same old six and seven Bill;
An’ which sumtimes, once in a while,
I think he must be his daddy’s chile.
’Ligion, O, I is dat, you hear!
Ise jined de meetin’-hous two year;
I’m gwine ter church. I is dat,
Ef ole Caesar eats up all de fat
An’ hog chittlins in de pot;
For, glory to God! I is not
Gwine ter miss my heaven, boss!
Glory to God! I’ll have a hoss,
An’ den I’ll ride all round and round,
De glories kingdom, ter de sound
Of dinner-bells upon de air;
An’ boss, I will be jist as fair
As any angel wid straight hair—
You, Edards! what you doin’ dare!
Perdu

January, 1864

I
Madoña, list to thy lover’s lay,
   Which breathes in tones of sadness low,
   A wretched heart’s deep freight of woe!
List, Madoña, to thy lover’s lay!

II
But not for me, alas, those classic charms,
   That nameless spell that holds me bound,
   To thy sweet voice’s merest sound,
Though in another’s arms.

III
For him, O may thy plighted vows remain!
   Nor would I e’er (may God forefend
   To shield the sacred name of friend)—
Cause him dishonor’s cruel pain.

IV
But be it ours alone, O fatal sweet!
   My heart’s bright idol and another’s wife,
   The cold convention of a formal life,
And crush our very hearts whene’er we meet.

V
Thou knowest not, nor ever shalt thou know,
   The impious legend writ my restive soul above,
   In ink shed by my heart to lawless love,
And consecrate to misery and woe.

VI
My song dies on the evening’s fitful breeze,
   My blasted hopes, to feed upon themselves retire,
   And herd with worms, where once Promethean fire
Sparkled like ruby wine above the lees.

NOTE.—This expression of a morbid, not to say vicious sentiment, would have been eliminated from the present collection, had not the author allowed his inclinations to be
overruled by the counsels of some friends. Of the three personalities adverted to in the verses, the author is the survivor; and while he would attempt no defense for such figurative moral obliquity, he feels sure that it is not more depraved than many emanations from the highly aesthetical regions of the modern Parnassus. Besides, poetry is the prose of nature, and it is true just in proportion to its fidelity to nature. The perfect characters drawn in compliance with the demands of a prudish conventionality, have no place in human nature; and though we may write ourselves as saints ever so often, we may not in truth raise our natures much above the carnal desires of poor, fallen man.

The South

She hath doff’d the weeds of her widowhood,
    To resume the trappings of pride;
In the midst of the festive and gay she stood,
    With the mien of a willing bride.

She hath smiled on the suit of a stranger knight
    Whose ardor admitted no pause;
But e’er in her heart, a memorial light
    Burns on for the dear “Lost Cause.”

O, loyal and true in her hear of hearts,
    As the fealty demanded above;
But the Union restored, of segregate parts,
    Must divide with the dead her love.

This poem was originally published in *Ross’ Texas Brigade*.

Dreaming Realities

I

Now do I dream? methinks ’twas only yesterday
    Her parting lips, so pure and free of guile,
A softer trilled than friendship’s lay,
    And on me beamed with grace that lit her smile.

II

Too cold, too cold! the arctic blast,
    Her silence, sends me forth to-day;
O why may not some acrid *word* be cast
    To chill the heart inspired by simulated lay?
III

Now do I dream? Our paths of life diverge,
And every heart-beat bears us farther yet apart;
And she hath willed it so—nor would I urge
The conquest of a most unwilling heart!

Monday, May 16, 1881

Wergeld
A Roundelay

To my friend Charles A. Leuschner, of Victoria, Texas, a gallant and brave member
of Granbury’s Texas Brigade, and a true man in every relation of life, I cheerfully
inscribe these verses, the sentiment of which comes from his old Faderland on the Rhine.

V.M.R.

Victoria, Texas
Nov., 1881

Among the ancient Germans, the relatives of each freeman espoused his quarrels, and in
the case of murder were bound to see that the “Wergeld,” or price of blood, was paid.—
Hist.

I

“Wergeld!” shrieked the armored knight,
As fast his steed swept down the Rhine,
A kinsman at his left and right,
And kinsmen in the train that night,
    On vengeance bent, swept down the Rhine.

II

A kinsman’s bloody manes on high,
    For redress claim’d avenging deed;
And fiercely flashed each martial eye
Of kinsmen sworn to do or die—
    Wergeld or blood must sign the deed!

III

Fate in the cavalcade that night,
    Rode too a steed with noiseless tread,
As when they smiled at Roman might,
And died for Faderland and right,
   Where Herman stay’d the legions tread.

IV

The castle looms against the sky,
   And moonbeams bathe the scene in peace;
Closed in sleep is the Baron’s eye,
With armed retainers lying nigh—
   Nor thought of wergeld mars their peace.

V

Beneath those stately turrets there
   Fierce Otto oft hath breathed of love,
In “Mennesangers” plaintive air,
To the proud old Baron’s daughter fair,
   Ere blood had flowed to quench his love.

VI

To quench his love?—it cannot be!
   For with each thought of her sweet face
Her thousand charms he can but see,
Nor kinsman’s blood itself can free
   Him from the spell of her fair face.

VII

But Otto never quailed in life,
   Nor craved of foeman act of grace—
His was the slippery path of strife
To wield the battle-ax and knife,
   And right the wrongs of his own race.

VIII

But the mild Gisela was no foe,
   And Gisela’s eye, Gisela’s face,
Gisela’s name though utter’d low,
Tinged his pale cheeks with crimson glow,
   And half redeemed her recreant race.

IX

O sparkling and bright was the wine that night,
   That rivaled Gisela’s eye,
As Otto the bold quaffed a toast and told
   Of his love with a plaintive sigh.

X
For his love so warmed had stay’d his arm,
    That else had swung the scepter’d mace,
For Gisela fair and *debonnaire*
    Had saved her doom’d, unconscious race.

XI

Each chieftain bold a cup of gold
    Held high their heads above,
Then standing quaff ’mid merry laugh
    Libations deep to love.

XII

O sparkling Rhine! O deep blue Rhine!
    Our brave old Deutschland’s fond delight,
Thou ne’er has seen more joy, I ween,
    Than broke the stillness of that night,

XIII

When Otto the brave the Baron forgave,
    And the stroke of his falchion withheld;
But the Troubadours told in the ages of old,
    How Gisela the fair was wergeld.

The roundelay is a medieval French verse form with a refrain that recurs at regular intervals. The refrain can be an entire line or simply a word or phrase. “Wergeld” was first published in the *Victoria Advocate* on October 23, 1880.

The Surrender of Calais

DEDICATION

No one is more thoroughly aware than myself of the feebleness with which the outlines of this sublime picture are herein presented. The subject is worthy a master’s hand; and that its treatment has so long remained ignored, seems inexplicable. But I take pleasure in inscribing the result of my labors in its connection to one, whose bearing under scarce less trying circumstances reflected the resolves of a nature as brave, lofty, and chivalric as that of John de Vienne himself,

GENERAL JOHN S. GRIFFITH,

of Terrel[l], Kaufman County, Texas, who, if he was a knight in war, “without fear, and without reproach,” adorns the civic walks of life in a manner scarce less conspicuously.
A Narrative of the Siege of the Town and Castle of Calais, by the Forces of Edward III

BY VICTOR M. ROSE

Froissart’s Account

Edward closely invested the place in 1340, and after many futile attempts to relieve the garrison, the French king gave up the enterprise in despair, and drew off his forces, leaving it to its fate.

Then, says Froissart, after the departure of the king of France with his army, the Calesians saw clearly that all hopes of succor were at an end; which occasioned them so much sorrow and distress, that the hardiest could hardly support it. They entreated, therefore, most earnestly, the Lord John de Vienne, their governor, to mount upon the battlements, and make a sign that he wished to hold a parley.

The king of England, upon hearing this, sent to him Sir Walter Manny and Lord Bassett. When they were come near, the Lord de Vienne said to them:

“Dear gentlemen, you, who are very valiant knights, know that the king of France, whose subjects we are, has sent us hither to defend this town and castle from all harm and damage. This we have done to the best of our abilities; all hopes of help have now left us, so that we are most exceedingly straitened; and if the gallant king, your lord, have not pity upon us, we must perish with hunger. I therefore entreat that you would beg of him to have compassion upon us, and to have the goodness to allow us to depart in the state we are in; and that he will be satisfied with having possession of the town and castle, with all that is within them, as he will find therein riches enough to content him.”

To this Sir Walter Manny replied: “John, we are not ignorant of what our lord the king’s intentions are, for he has told them to us; know, then, that it is not his pleasure that you should go off so, for he is resolved that you surrender yourselves wholly to his will, to allow those whom he pleases their ransom, or to be put to death; for the Calesians have done him so much mischief, and have by their obstinate defense cost him so many lives and so much money, that he is mightily enraged.”

The Lord de Vienne answered: “These conditions are too hard for us; we are but a small number of knights and squires, who have loyally served our lord and master, as you would have done, and have suffered much ill and disquiet. But we will endure more than any men ever did in a similar
situation, before we consent that the smallest boy in the town should fare worse than the best. I therefore once more entreat you, out of compassion, to return to the king of England, and beg of him to have pity on us; he will, I trust, grant you this favor, for I have such an opinion of his gallantry, as to hope that, through God’s mercy, he will alter his mind.”

The two lords returned to the king, and related what had passed. The king said: “He had no intention of complying with the request, but should insist that they surrendered themselves unconditionally to his will.” Sir Walter replied: “My lord, ye may be to blame in this, as you set us a very had example; for if you order us to go to any of your castles, we shall not obey you so cheerfully if you put these people to death, for they will retaliate on us in a similar case.”

Many barons who were present supported this opinion; upon which the king replied: “Gentlemen, I am not so obstinate as to hold my opinion alone against all of you. Sir Walter, you will inform the governor of Calais, that the only grace he is to expect from me is, that six of the principal citizens of Calais inarch out of the town with bare heads and feet, and with ropes round their necks, and the keys of the town and castle in their hands. These six persons shall be at my absolute disposal, and the remainder of the inhabitants pardoned.”

Sir Walter returned to the Lord de Vienne, who was waiting for him on the battlements, and told him all that he had been able to gain from the king. “I beg of you,” replied the governor, “that you would be so good as to remain here a little, whilst I go and relate all that has passed to the townsmen; for, as they have desired me to undertake this, it is but proper that they should know the result of it.”

He went to the market place and caused the bell to be rung; upon which all the inhabitants of the place, men and women, assembled in the town hall. He then related to them what he had said, and the answers he had received, and that he could not obtain any conditions more favorable; to which they must give a short and immediate answer.

This information cause the greatest lamentations and despair, so that the hardest heart would have had compassion on them; even the Lord de Vienne wept bitterly.

After a short time the most wealthy citizen of the place, by name Eustace de St. Pierre, rose up and said: “Gentlemen, both high and low, it would be a very great pity to allow so many people to die by famine, if any means could be found to prevent it; and it would be highly meritorious in the sight of our Saviour, if such misery could be averted. I have such faith and trust in finding grace before God, if I die to save my townsmen, that I name myself as first of the six.”

When Eustace had done speaking, they all rose up and almost worshiped him. Many cast themselves at his feet with tears and groans. Another citizen, very rich and respected, rose up and. said: “He would be the second to his companion, Eustace;” his name was John Daire. After him, James Wissant, who was very rich in merchandise and lands, offered
himself as a companion to his two cousins, as did Peter Wissant, his brother. Two others then named themselves, which completed, the number demanded by the king of England. The Lord John de Vienne then mounted a small hackney, for it was with difficulty he could walk (he having been wounded in the siege), and conducted them to the gate. There was the greatest sorrow and lamentation over the whole town; and in such manner were they attended to the gate which the governor ordered to be opened and then shut upon him, and the six citizens whom he led to the barriers, and said to Sir Walter Manny, who was there waiting for him: “I deliver up to you, as governor of Calais, with the consent of the inhabitants, these six citizens; and I swear to you that they were, are at this day, the most wealthy and respectable inhabitants of Calais. I beg of you, gentle sir, that you will have the goodness to beseech the king that they shall not be put to death.” “I cannot answer as to what the king will do with them,” replied Sir Walter, “but you may depend that I will do all in my power to save them.” The barriers were opened when these six citizens advanced toward the pavilion of the king, and the Lord de Vienne, alone, re-entered the town.

When Sir Walter Manny had presented these six citizens to the king, they fell upon their knees, and with uplifted hands, said: “Most gallant king, see before you six citizens of Calais, who have been capital merchants, and who bring you the keys of the castle and of the town. We surrender ourselves to your absolute will and pleasure, in order to save the remainder of the inhabitants of Calais, who have suffered much distress and misery. Condescend, therefore, out of your nobleness of mind to have mercy and compassion upon us.” All the barons, knights, and squires that were assembled there in great numbers, wept at this sight. The king eyed them with angry looks (for he hated much the people of Calais, for the great losses he had formerly suffered of them at sea), and ordered their heads to be stricken off. All present entreated the king that he would be more merciful to them, but he would not listen to them.

Then Sir Walter Manny said: “Ah, gentle king, let me beseech you to restrain your anger; you have the reputation of great nobleness of soul, do not therefore tarnish it by such an act as this, nor allow any one to speak in a disgraceful manner of you. In this instance all the world will say that you have acted cruelly, if you put to death six such respectable persons, who of their own free will have surrendered themselves to your mercy, in order to save their fellow citizens.”

“Upon this the king gave a wink, saying; “Be it so,” and ordered the headsman to be sent for; for that the Calesians had done him so much damage, it was proper they should suffer for it. The queen of England, who was at that time very big with child, fell on her knees, and with tears said: “Ah, gentle sir, since I have crossed the sea with great danger to see you, I have a gift, for the sake of the blessed Son of the blessed Mary, and for your love to me, that you will be more merciful to these six men.” The
king looked at her for some time in silence, and then said: “Ah, lady, I wish you had been anywhere else than here; you have entreated in such a manner that I cannot refuse you. I therefore give them to you; do as you please with them.”

The queen conducted the six citizens to her apartments, and had the halters taken from round their necks, new clothed, and served them a plentiful dinner. She then presented each with nobles, and had them escorted out of the camp in safety.

I

'Tis night, and o'er the battle plain
The wounded, writhing, lie in pain,
Mix'd in with heaps of comrades slain;
And, by the moonbeam's fickle light,
Men grope about with dubious sight,
For round yon wall of frowning stone,
Where hundreds now are lying prone,
The sally and repulse were made;
And here, Lord de Vienne, alone,
Three English knights his devoirs paid,
In deeds whose fame can never fade.
But smiling shines each twinkling star,
Hush'd are the demons of vile war,
And silence spreads her mantle far;
The circling host is wrapp'd in sleep,
Save where the sentry vigils keep
Around the town from deep to deep.

" 'Tis two o'clock, and all is well!"

Rings out above the ocean swell,
When steps a man with cautions pace,
As strikes the loud and friendly bell,
To meet a girlish form and face,
Approaching from the English base.
Just out the barbacan [sic] they meet,
And anxiously each other greet
With warm embraces long and sweet:
"And, so my Eustace, have we met!
Now let us love while we may yet,
And in our joy all else forget."
"For this I've long'd, my dear Marie,
And were I at this moment free,
I'd clasp my bride and fly away;
But France, alas, has claims on me,
And at his post must Eustace stay,
And claim his bride another day."
"Alas," and Marie spoke with pain,
“Behold yon host upon the plain!
My Eustace, will we meet again?
Soon will this town in ruins lay—
Alas, that I should see the day
That sounds the knell of dear Calais.
But, Eustace, I will seek you out,
Though in the wildest final route,
For love will find its cherish’d form,
(And that I love, have you a doubt?)
And then a shield this bosom warm,
Shall guard thee safe from ev’ry harm.”

‘Tis three o’clock, and all is well!”
The watchman cries, and rings the bell,
And lovers now must say “farewell.”
The dawn approaches, and they start,
And then with heart close prest to heart,
Their lips unite, they turn and part.
And thus was given every day,
Up to the horrid, beastly fray,
One jewel’d moment of each night,
Lent to their checker’d lives a ray.
And it was holy, precious, bright,
Above all gems within their sight.

II

Without the pow’r to strike, now doom’d Calais
Within the circling lines of England lay;
The weary siege had been full long and sore,
Whose human waves had swept those ramparts o’er,
But to retire before the valiant knights,
As angry waters charge in vain the heights.
While yet the host of France lay full in view,
A hope remain’d the leaguered burghers knew;
But when that host, retreating from their sight,
Left them alone, to feel the foeman’s might,
The boldest hearts then yielded to despair,
And Edward’s mercy was their only pray’r.
And though lank want sat on each pallid brow,
Lost were the pangs of cruel hunger now;
Death by the English tyrant’s hand there stood,
A spectre at their side demanding blood:
Death so familiar in our sojourn here,
An old acquaintance whom we can but fear.
“Mount! mount the wall!” the anxious people cried,
To bravo John de Vienne, their chieftain tried,
“And signal to the host beyond the gate,
To grant a parley and pronounce our fate.”
The wounded hero, weak from loss of blood,
Complied, and on the death-swept ramparts stood,
And, as he rais’d his arm high up in air,
The storm of battle lull’d, and all was fair.
To this his ear the king of England lent,
And forthwith he the Lord of Bassett sent,
Along with Walter Manny, there to meet
The foe, on most ungenerous terms to treat.
“Dear gentlemen, and very valiant knights,”
Outspoke Vienne, as they approached the heights;
“Know that the king of France our lot hath cast,
To hold this town and castle to the last.
This we have done, as you no doubt can tell;
So would we do, tho’ Calais is a hell,
With festering curses and with famine sore,
Did hope invite us to exertion more;
But succor now has vanish’d from our view,
And all our hope is, generous friends, in you.
Starvation walks the city in broad day,
And we must perish if we longer stay.
Go to your king, and move his knightly heart
To let the famished garrison depart.
Be his to own, without another slain,
The town, the castle, all that they contain.”
“Lord of Vienne,” thus spoke Sir Walter fair,
“We grieve to say our lord’s intentions are,
That you surrender to his royal will;
Some he may choose to ransom, others kill;
For, by your obstinate defense, he swears
You’ve cost him more than the booty all repairs.”
“Alas!” the Lord John de Vienne replied,
“These harsh conditions we can never bide;
Our ranks are thin whom duty now inspires,
But all our gallant knights and loyal squires
Would scorn the unjust terms that did not give
The humblest Calesian the right to live;
Much we have suffer’d for our lord, the king,
Much more we’ll bear, before we stoop to bring
On our misfortune deep dishonor’s stain,
Go to your king, and ask the boon we crave—
Honor alone is left for us to save.
Beseech him then, in knighthood’s name and thine,
Perhaps his heart to pity may incline.”
The knightly envoys felt the mission low
That offered insult to a fallen foe,
And to their king the message now they bore,  
Beseecching terms for them less harsh and sore.  
But their stern master held out firmly still,  
Demanding full submission to his will.  
“My lord,” Sir Walter ventured then to say,  
“I fear you’ll live to rue this evil day;  
For fortune’s ever shifting scales may yet,  
In France’s power, an English fortress get.  
When she in English blood, at Jewish rate  
Of compound interest, will retaliate;”  
And many English knights and barons too  
Declared Sir Walter Manny’s words were true.  
“Now, gentlemen,” the warrior king replied,  
With lenient satire to his nobles tried;  
“My firmness falters at your mercy’s plea,  
And on these terms alone Calais is free.  
Go, Sir Walter, to de Vienne, and say,  
The only grace he may expect to-day  
Is, that six Calesians of the highest class  
Shall from the town to our pavilion pass,  
And that they march with feet and heads both bare,  
And round their necks the hangman’s rope shall wear;  
The keys of town and castle let them bring,  
And by my honor, both as knight and king,  
I swear Calais shall feel no further ill,  
But they shall be the victims of my will.”  
Back to the ramparts pass’d the noble knight,  
For all of knighthood’s vows as air are light.  
Whatever else romantic bards may sing,  
When in the scales ’gainst duty, land, and king,  
Brave John the message heard, with moisten’d eye,  
As vanish’d keen suspense in one deep sigh.  
But, as misfortune cannot bend the heart  
Long school’d in all the wiles of social art,  
He made the knight a courteous bow, and low,  
And said, “Remain, Sir Walter, while I go,  
And to my fellows in misfortune bring  
The ultimatum of your gracious king;  
Forth to the market-place he went, and rang  
The brazen bell, with loud and startling clang.  
The summons brought a trembling throng of all  
The sad inhabitants within the wall;  
With haste, men, women, children, young and old,  
To whom the will of England’s king he told.  
Their hearts burst forth in lamentations loud,  
As chill despair seiz’d all the trembling crowd;
Even brave John, who knew no mortal fears,  
On this occasion wept most bitter tears.  
Then rose the “noblest Roman” of them there,  
A man of wealth, nam’d Eustace de St. Pierre;  
“My countrymen,” he said, “both low and high,  
By ghastly famine we must shortly die,  
Should we indeed escape death at the hands  
Of perfide Albion’s strong, rapacious bands;  
With faith in God,” he raised a crucifix,  
“I name my humble self first of the six!”  
The weeping eyes at this, fresh torrents shed,  
And ev’ry tongue rain’d blessings on his head;  
Another rose, his curious fate to share,  
And ev’ry eye was fix’d on Jean de Daire;  
And then the Wissant brothers, James and Pierre,  
Stept forth to die for all that they held dear;  
Two more announc’d that they, at any cost,  
Would go, whose names, that should have lived, are lost.  
“With this devoted band of heroes, then  
March’d to the gates the Lord John de Vienne,  
And follow’d, too, a weeping city’s pray’r,  
And frenzied multitude in wild despair.  
The gate is pass’d, and closed by wardens stout,  
Which shuts the people’s view from all without.  
Lord John conducts his charge beyond the gates,  
Where at the barriers Sir Walter waits.  
He said: “I here deliver in your hands  
The six, self-chosen, that your king demands;  
In point of worth, they head the lists o’er all  
Who now reside within the castle’s call.  
And, gentle sir, beseech your king, I pray,  
To spare my six compatriots to-day.”  
“Alas!” replied Sir Walter, with a sigh,  
“All, all that I can do to save, will I.  
But with my king no counsels now prevail,  
And all I do, I fear, will not avail.”  
Now through the outer gate they onward move,  
And leave behind the all of earth they love.  
For kindred, country, all of nature’s ties,  
’Tis peace to die for these, where’er he dies  
Who lays before his own faith’s Juggernaut,  
The nil he holds in high esteem when sought.  

III

In the camp of England’s stern Edward now,  
Who, standing, frown’d with most portentous brow,
As cringing courtiers throng’d him all around,
And, in the presence, bow’d them to the ground.
Sir Walter with his doleful charge drew nigh,
The cynosure of every eager eye.
What contrasts here flash’d on each gloomy mind,
Compar’d with those sad scenes they’d left behind!
On every side they saw that plenty teem’d,
While ev’ry countenance with pleasure beam’d;
They felt, with all this great abundance shown,
That half their ills before they had not known;
And, so forgot their own impending fate,\(^2\)
To weep for those loved forms within the gate.
Sir Walter Manny, now his captives brings,
All bound with ropes before the tyrant king,
Who falling on their knees with hands up high,
“Hear us, most gallant king!” did Eustace cry.
“We are six Calesians and of good renown,
And bear you here the keys of yonder town,
And that our friends may feel no farther ill,
We yield most absolutely to your will;
And condescend, most gracious king, we pray,
To grant misfortune mercy on this day!”
Full many a proud baron, squire, and knight,
Shed bitter tears at this pathetic sight.
Not so the king, whose clouded brow bespoke
The pending storm that soon upon them broke.
“Off! off! with these devils! you knightly dunce,
And let their heads be stricken off at once!”
Thus spoke the iron tyrant, in whose breast,
Compassion never found a place to rest.”
Vain did his nobles intercession seek;
Of their sure death the king would only speak.
But venturing, Sir Walter Manny said—
And doubtless his own worth but say’d his head—
“Ah, gentle king, your anger now restrain,
Lest on your reputation rests a stain.
Now, all but join to praise your noble name;
This act forever tarnishes your fame.”
“He, headsman!” he cried, “to your post repair,
To grant each hostage hospitable fare!”
Now on the scene Philippa fair appear’d,
And kneeling to the stern old lord she fear’d:
“Ah, gentle sir, since I have cross’d the sea,
Impell’d alone by growing love for thee,
No favor yet hath ask’d thy queen and wife,
Now for these six she only prays for life.”
“Ah, lady, how I wish you were not here,
To rob me of revenge I hold so dear;
But as you have ask’d me so will I do,
Then take the six; I give them all to you.”
Now from their fountains tears of pleasure teem,
And the fair queen imagines all a dream;
A floating mist comes down before her eyes,
And unstrung reason from its tether flies;
A spectral crowd she views with fickle sight,
Performing orgies with the manes of night.
One form she sees move sullen, slow, away,
Like some ferocious beast robb’d of its prey;
This glance, but one, she casts the compass o’er,
And then—plutonian night—she knows no more.
Quick at her side Sir Walter springing, bent,
And kindly aid his fainting sovereign lent.
Now dire confusion sped the crowd among,
As whisper’d question flew from tongue to tongue,
And anxious crowds with eager breath drew round
Sir Walter Manny, kneeling on the ground,
Of her whose jewel’d soul they thought had fled.
The leech required most brought up the rear,
With maids of honor, who, like frighten’d deer,
Came bounding forth like mad, as if agreed
The only antidote for fear was speed.
They miss’d, like good intentions do, their aim,
And plump upon the kneeling captives came,
And here they halting stand in mute surprise,
As Marie, blushing red, her Eustace spies,
With the ignoble rope about his neck,
Which soon her lovely arms also bedeck,
For, springing like a bind that leads the chase,
She forward bounds to fall in his embrace.

Notes.—
1. “But as misfortune,” &c. This is on the principle of the ruling passion strong in death. All will remember the courtesy and politeness with which Philippe Egalite met his death on the guillotine. Louis XIV, we are told, took emetics in state, and vomited with all the majesty of the grande monarque in the presence of five thousand spectators. Augustus Caesar awaiting the final summons, arrayed in the imperial purple, asked a courtier if he had performed his cast in the drama of life well. The author once knew an aged lady of fashion who was punctilious to a degree that, being brought to bed of the disorder that caused her death, kept the physician waiting so long while she was engaged in the mysteries of cosmetics, crimping-irons, &c., that his skill was powerless to accomplish good.
2. “Forgot their own impending fate,” &c. This sentiment is rare, and the heart that it chooses for a temple is no asylum for such base passions as selfishness, &c.
Jean Froissart was a French courtier, poet, and author of the *Chronicles*, an account of the dynastic quarrel between England and France known as the Hundred Years War (1137–1453). Although biased as a historian, Froissart created narratives that were admired for their vigor and freshness.

**Dream of John D. Lee**

I

O sad reality, to wake
   When rapturous visions teem
       Like troops of fairies through our dream,
And the sweet illusion break!

II

Last night, methought, in manly pride,
Life’s current flowed with heaving tide,
And Hope smiled like a waiting bride,
   With sweet promise in her eye.
The Prophet’s will on earth be done!
The triune Father, Ghost, and Son,
The one in three, and three in one,
   Wills the gentle crew shall die!

III

Where valley grasses softly wave,
Beneath the mountains hoar and grave,
While in the shade or waters lave
   The weary strangers all,
   Mountain pass gives back the call,
To each avenger from this cave,
Danite trusty, and Indian brave,
The cause of Mormon true to save,
   Or in the attempt to fall.
Like spectres gliding through the night,
Shadowy outlines greet the sight,
Of phantom forms from left to right,
   Passing toward the mountain mead;
From white man’s hut and Indian camp,
They come with noiseless, eager tramp,
   Converging for the deed.

IV

O had they stayed their footsteps here,
Nor entered on the smiling plain,
My life would not have been in vain,
Nor terrors haunt me year by year!

But I was happy in my dream,
For all things then to me did seem
Approved by heaven and man.
Time limits law to all who do
Not their murderous hands imbrue
With blood. But, oh, alas! how few
Of the man-slaying thousands can
Flee Justice, with her perfect plan?

Down to the “Mountain Meadow,” past
The silent host, with footsteps fast,
And not until arrived the last,
And the dread circle was complete
Around the silent, slumbering host,
Which had no sentry on his post,
Was the signal given, and lost
‘Mid shrieks of anguish wild replete,
As half awakened “pale face” met
Painted savage, who had whet
His passions and his knife, to let
Vengeance glut with blood its might;
Or, when frenzied mothers gave
Up their lives in hope to save
Their offspring, on that dreadful night.
But short the cries of lessening breath—
Silence reigned o’er the scene of death.

Dawned the morning mild and bright,
But never has high heaven’s light
Shone on such a sickening sight
As “Mountain Meadow Massacre!”
For death that night full license sent,
And youth, and age, and childhood lent
Corse on corse, in confusion blent,
To form the graveless sepulchre.

I dreamed that, ’neath the church’s wing,
No power on earth could ever bring
Of justice or remorse a sting,
    To a bishop of Brigham Young.
But two decades have passed away,
And with them gone of hope all ray;
While for twenty years, day by day,
    Remorse has at my heart-strings wrung.
Thrice welcome then to me is death;
What matter how my parting breath
    Shall barter earth for 'tother lot?
Yet, as the choice is mine by law,
Not cruel axe, nor hempen draw,
    But wing me death by rifle shot!

NOTE.—I had intended dedicating the foregoing to Ann Eliza, the ultimate 1/28th of the “Prophet’s” multitudinous wife [sic]; but reflecting that it would work injustice to the remaining 27/28ths, I desisted, and now tender that honor to the Devil.

John Doyle Lee, a bodyguard for Joseph Smith and later Brigham Young, was the leader of the Mountain Meadows Massacre in 1857. After a second trial, he was convicted of murder in 1875 and was executed in 1877. He authored Mormonism Unveiled, in which he blamed the Mormon Church for his crime. Sam H. Dixon reprinted “Dream of John D. Lee” in his The Poets and Poetry of Texas (Austin: Sam H. Dixon & Co., 1885), 270–272, but without the note.

Lines To—I Can’t Tell You Who!

I
And so you have a babe! Did I ever,
    Ever imagine such a thing could be!
In that sweet brief dream of love I never,
    Never coupled little bibs with thee.

II
I can see thee now in fancy roaming,
    The thoughtless sylvan maid of long ago;
And amid the twilight’s mellow gloaming,
    Methinks I hear the promise uttered low.

III
O that the heart, like some old musty scroll,
    Should keep such things so legible and bright;
How very near we came to be—but roll,
    Roll the parchment forever from my sight!
IV

And would I that old Lethe should enshroud
  The thousand charms that nestled ’neath that brow?
The eyes of love can pierce the darkest cloud,
  And on thy image I am gazing now.

V

Now, as when fairy queen of trumps, you seem
  So innocent, so sweet, and charming fair;
Hearts were the trumps, you know in that old dream,
  And that you were the queen of hearts, I’ll swear!

VI

But I was not Jack, the potent bower,
  That swooped, an eagle down, to victory fast;
For he swept the board with mystic power,
  On which my fortune and my queen were cast.

VII

And does he swear by every latent grace,
  Whose many combined charms make up alone
My queen? Charms found but in the peerless face
  Of her who is too sure, alas! his own.

VIII

But I am reigning as in days of old,
  Enthroned an ideal realm above;
Nor need you, you of all the earth, be told,
  The image in this realm devote to love.

IX

On this lame stanza mounted, would your knight
  Wave his adieux to beauty, love and thee;
For the hours now are deep into the night,
  And it is doubtless time to give the baby tea!

Old Simon’s Version of the Fiery Furnace

See dem chillun in de furniss ober dar,
An’ de fires a blazin’ around;
De forked tongues are swingin’ of deir har
An’ de hans and feet are bound.

Dars Danel a-standin’ in de hottest place,
And Shaderack kivered wid de smoke;
Meeshack’s turned blood-red in de face,
An’ Bednegos ready for to choke.

But, bress you, niggahs, you ought for to seed
De eend of dis crime-ax den;
De Lawd he kum, an’ de chillun he freed,
An’ he slewed forty million of men!

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were three Jews cast into a fiery furnace by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar. Known as the Three Holy Children, they were delivered from death by an angel. The story is told in the Book of Daniel.

“Which Is My Neighbor?”

I

O not in Fashion’s throng shall we
Those rugged, homely virtues find.
Taught by the blessed Lord when He,
Sojourned among our sinful kind;
Nor in the busy marts where trade,
Kneels to the mammon idol, pelf—
For Avarice calls to her fell aid,
The round of virtues all for self.

II

No castle, no guild the truth confines,
Within the limits of a class,
But as a struggling ray it shines,
For all through Error’s cloudy mass.
How few, alas! are they who turn
From scenes o’er which they love to feast.
And through their selfish eyes discern
The feeble streak in the far east?

III
How fares it?—tell, my stately dame,
   Who tho’ she’s vain may not be vile,
For some whom Folly oft may claim,
   May keep their hearts devoid of guile,
How fares it in the “Great to Be,”
   In which we’ll reap our gain and loss.
With the unbending Pharisee,
   And the poor thief upon the cross?

IV

The standards that we raise on earth,
   To test with most exacting care
A fellow creature’s moral worth,
   Alas, are not acknowledged there!
The apples famed, like burnished gold,
   Within are but a desert blight,
While some repulsive clod may hold,
   In its embrace a jewel bright.

V

So have I often seen, alas!
   Alas, that it should be so seen!
And in my fragile house of glass,
   I muse upon what might have been.
I saw fair dames in numbers shun
   A sister of a dubious fame,
And saw them rudely frown upon,
   Her homely name of Nancy Jane.

VI

I saw lank Want at last o’ertake
   A mother of twice forty years,
And o’er her shrunken form partake
   His ghoulish feast of bitter tears;
Ah, bitter tears! for there are those,
   With earthly blessings a full share,
Within whose veins her own blood flows,
   Who heedless pass her on the way to prayer.

VII

I heard the brazen bell ring loud,
   That called to vespers every eve;
I saw them come, a tinseled crowd,
   To cross themselves, to smirk, and leave.
But her low seat was vacant now—
The aged mother’s lying prone,
And feebly on her wrinkled brow,
She traced the mystic cross alone.

VIII
I saw approach this humble cot,
   But not in the glare of high mid-day,
One whom Slander left no lot
   Among the sepuchres of white along the way;
I saw her deal her bounties free;
   I saw her soothe the racking pain;
I saw—but all may go and see—
   The impious works of Nancy Jane.

“Which Is My Neighbor” first appeared in the *Victoria Advocate* on February 21, 1880, with the title
“And Who Is My Neighbor?”

Reform of Marcus Aurelius Brewster

“Yes, boss, I’se done stealin’ yore chickens shore!”
   “Why, how is that, Marcus Aurelius Brewster?”
“High! for to steal dere aint any more,
   Nuther spring chicken, ole hen, pullet nor rooster!”

My Fortune

“Your fortune I’ll try!” said a lady as fair
   As the fabulous syrens of old;
A smile lit her eye, and her dark waving hair
   Lay as night in its deep silent fold.

Her fingers of white with artistic display
   Through the cards of mystery played;
Said the syren: “She’s fair, she’s stylish, and gay,
   She’s a beauteous dark eyed maid.
Her temper is quick as the lightning’s bright glare,
   And as soon ’tis succeeded by smiles;
Her brow is of Parian marble so fair,
   That the heart of a Stoic beguiles;
Her thin chiseled lips of a vermilion hue
Would win from a Cynic even love;
This maiden of fancy, so perfect and true,
Moves, methinks, but in circles above.

"'Tis finished!" she said, and the sweet little elf
Remained pensively musing too;
I received not the future, her own charming self
In visions my fancy flitted through.

C’est Le Juif-Errant Qui Passe!

I
When wildest hurricanes do madly sweep
The Norman coast, and rock the angry deep,
The churchman tells his beads with serious air,
And signs the cross imploring heavens fair.

II
He kens the elements but voice the wrath
Of God indignant o’er the sinuous path,
Of him who mock’d in wantonness the Son,
So soon to crown with death the work already done.

III
Behold in doubting Israel’s fated race
The scoffer’s mien, the wanderer’s face!
For this mystic people, to their ancient rites so true,
Live but to typify the “Wandering Jew.”

IV
But yet, O Israel, the time must be,
All things justified, that hope for thee,
Shall like the phoenix from æons of flight
Burst forth from Judah’s stem in floods of glorious light!

The Wandering Jew (le Juif errant) is a figure who, according to legend, mocked Jesus on the way to the crucifixion and was condemned to a life of wandering until Judgment Day. In countless literary works he became symbolic of the doomed sinner.
Monody on the Death of General Robert E. Lee

I
Sad, sad is the bell’s funereal toll,
That proclaims the hero, patriot, sage,
Has inscrib’d his name on the mystic roll,
That graces for aye the celestial page.

II
Dear Southia, in sackcloth bow thy head,
And in the ashes of thy temples weep
For thy peerless chief and noblest dead,
Who in thy bosom lays him down to sleep.

III
No more he rolls the tide of war along,
Victorious, o’er proud Potomac’s banks—
No more the rocks of Gettysburg prolong
The boom of cannon and the crash of ranks.

IV
No more on Rappahannock’s classic stream
Will he re-form his battle lines again—
No more shall his stainless sabre gleam,
Leading to glory o’er the ensanguin’d plain.

V
The lowered cross was furled and laid away,
When th’ scarred battalions met their doom,
And no grim brigades, in historic gray,
Parades the hero-chieftain to his tomb.

VI
But the southern breeze a lasting dirge will sing
Above our great general’s form laid low;
And here to valor’s shrine will pilgrims bring
The tribute tear expressive of their woe.

VII
He needs no marble shaft to tell his name—
No panegyric grand his praise to swell,
For his lofty deeds and immortal fame
Will in the pantheon of history dwell.
Ettiez Vous a Sedan?

Over the Kentish moors hung a gloom,
   A damp volume of nebulous gray,
As they came at the summons of doom,
   Where the dying Napoleon lay.

No glance from the heavy cold eyes
   Of things present gave token at all,
Nor was vision, alas, to the skies,
   Eager strained for the welcoming call.

Loyalty on his bosom arrayed,
   All the emblems of earthly renown—
To this shrine brought Devotion and laid
   The baubles of the sceptreless crown.

To the past were his faculties chained,
   By a spell which his being controll’d—
Though fallen, alas! he had reigned,
   But the iron had entered his soul.

The last milestone appears to the sight,
   Of the wearied, suffering man,
And with the falling shadows of night
   He breathes low: “Ettiez vous a Sedan!”

The title of the poem is based on Napoleon III’s dying words to his doctor: “Henri, etiez-vous à Sedan? N’est-ce pas que nous n’avons pas été des lâches à Sedan?” (Henri, were you at Sedan? We were not cowards at Sedan, were we?). The Battle of Sedan was fought on September 1, 1870, during the Franco-Prussian War. After being deposed in a bloodless revolution, Napoleon went into exile in England.

Whitfield—Ector

Not dead,
Oh, comrades! they but march
Forward to the future camping ground,
Where the eternal gleam of Summer’s sun
The pathway lights to peace forever more.
Death was to them
A discharge from stern duties here,
For in the harness Ector yielded up the trust,
A grateful people had conferred upon him;
Whitfield at the post of duty, as when,
He bore the weight of years through cruel war,
With all the verve of chivalry and youth.
Paladins both, and worthy of the olden time,
    When Beauty fair and gay romance bequeathed
    Their choicest bays to deck the hero’s wreath.
A grateful people’s paeans rise on high,
    Where celestial sentries keep their watch and ward;
In these, our chieftains with the parting sigh,
    Find ample recompense and full reward.

NOTE.—As colonel of the 1st Texas Legion, and subsequently as commander of the Texas Brigade of cavalry attached to the Army of West Tennessee, C.S., General Whitfield signalized his courage and fidelity on many of the most hotly contested fields of the war.

General M. D. Ector commanded a gallant brigade of Texans attached to the same army, as infantry, and won imperishable renown upon fifty fields. Whitfield and Ector died in 1879, with but an interval of a few months between.

“Whitfield—Ector” was originally published in the Victoria Advocate on November 22, 1879.

In Memory of M. A. Windham

Who Fell at the Battle of Spring Hill, Tenn.,
March 5th, 1863

I

Ah, what tender memories rise,
    Alas, with saddest thoughts to blend,
As after weary years, with moistened eyes,
    I write thy name, my friend!

II

Too soon was broke the golden bowl,
    The casket of thy jeweled life,
But never cause of a nobler soul
    Made sacrifice to strife.

III
In vain, alas, ’twas all in vain,
   Such rich libations poured,
For o’er those hecatombs of slain
   Our country’s flag was lowered.

IV
The ruthless shears that snapp’d thy brittle tie,
   Were fated then her high career to end;
We reck not of the spectre always nigh,
   For ignorance our weakness would befriend.

V
“The end shall crown the work,” ’tis said,
   And gladness springs from Iliads of woes,
But not for us the fruit for which they bled,
   Who found in death their last repose.

VI
Yet, Windham, while this pulse shall beat,
   And reason’s sceptre sway the mind,
Thine own’s the image last I’d greet,
   When leaving all of earth behind.

Ita Est Scripta!

“Eternal Hope!” alas, no more for me
   The bow of promise paints thy genial name!
To others who commence the race unfetter’d, free,
   Be all the meed that high deserts can claim.
I’ve lived to see my every dream dissolve,
   And hope evanish in its very gloom;
How I have tried life’s problem hard to solve,
   By strenuous effort and with high resolve,
   My deeds attest beyond this night of gloom.

Ah, peerless Laura, in thy girlhood’s pride,
   I see thee now as on one festive eve;
O had my feelings on that night have died,
   Which for thee then I dared conceive!
I’ve felt the lingering thrill for years;
   Thy lightest touch shot through my heart,
And all adown this dreary vale of tears,
Time, scene, and change thy image but endears,
As of my life, a thing, a part.

O to have won but for the briefest hour,
The priceless pearl of thy pure love,
Had been a wealth to me exceeding power,
And joy known but to the blest above;
How I could even brook this fell decree,
And smile indifferent at the fatal cost—
How I could turn defeat to victory,
Nor feel a single pang, my queen, for thee,
Had I never met thee, loved and lost!

Ita est scripta lex (the law is so written) is a legal phrase meaning that the law must be obeyed as it is written and not as it perhaps should have been written.

General W. S. Hancock

Hancock, the smiling Muse lights on thy name,
With ready stylus to record thy fame;
The legend reads upon the tablet traced,
In letters that may never be effaced.

In war, the superb soldier’s matchless blade,
Gleamed first and last along the lines array’d;
When Peace arose with crown of olive wreath,
His tempered steel was first to seek its sheath.

Though others in the drama bore conspicuous part,
He won the fortress of his foeman’s heart;
The hero chief, by all the sections blest,
Who knew no North, no South, no East, no West!

This poem was first published as “Hancock” in the Victoria Advocate on August 7, 1880. It then appeared as “A Texan’s Estimate of General W. S. Hancock, U.S.A.” in Ross’ Texas Brigade. The Demara version has only minor changes.

Garfield
An Acrostic

Garfield, a nation mourns thy death—its loss,
And Christians kneel beneath the heavy cross,
Raised now in hovel and palatial hall;
For opposition, at thy cruel fall,
Inspired by pure and patriotic breath,
Entombed for aye the party Shibboleth.
Living, Philanthropy enriched thy name!
Dying, thou hast bequeathed it all to fame!

A true acrostic is a poem in which the initial letters of each line form a word—in this case, “Garfield.”

James Abram Garfield, elected the twentieth president of the United States in 1880, was shot on July 2, 1881, by a disgruntled member of the Stalwarts, a faction of the Republican Party. He died on September 19 of his injuries and was succeeded by Chester A. Arthur.

Demara, the Comanche Queen

EXPLANATORY

While composing these verses, I frequently thought of George W. Pascal, the brave and generous friend of my boyhood, in whose veins coursed the proudest of aboriginal blood. He won renown on distant fields, as a Ranger, in combats with the Comanches and Apaches, and later, as lieutenant-colonel of the 1st Texas (Union) cavalry.

And though I followed the ignis fatuus of a vain delusion under the “Stars and Bars,” I never suffered the embers on the altar of friendship to grow cold; and if these lines should meet his eye, it will afford me increased satisfaction to know that he has received this assurance of my undiminished regard and friendship.

I

O who has not heard of Demara, the fair,
And her milk-white courser, with footsteps as light,
As strong, and as swift as the free mountain air?
    The “Medicine Man,” in the tepee at night,
Will, shuddering, tell of her sinister smiles,
Of the syren tone of her dangerous speech,
And the cunning art of her consummate wiles,
Which seared as the flame all that came in her reach.

II

Yet she was a queen, and her realm was as far
    To the east as the sun in his course ever trod;
And west to the home of the bright evening star,
    But o’er the Comanches alone was her rod
Of imperial force ever raised with a will,
    For they were the “Great Spirit’s” own chosen race,
And she, as his daughter, his mission to fill,
    Was essaying to wield the typical mace.

III
As the arrows glance from the buffalo shield,
    And harmless fall in their impotent flight,
So the years were compelled their powers to yield,
    As time was curtailed of his mystical might.
For the swift passing years, each a link in the chain,
    That reaches from death to the fountain of youth;
The Parian white of her brow swept in vain,
    In efforts to steal its sweet freshness and truth.

IV

Her lips curled in scorn when the warriors came,
    And laid at her feet the first fruits of the chase;
And the spell of “Big Medicine’s” reverend name
    Failed to force a respect for his too loyal race.
No spouse for Demara could be ever found
    In all the rich lodges that covered the plain;
Yet the meshes of fate her fingers had wound
    About them, and efforts to break it were vain.

V

It was said that a youth should come from the East,
    On a steed dashing volumes of cloud from his mouth;
That Demara would spread at his coming a feast,
    And invite to the board the mean “Tonks”* of the South.
A cloud seemed to rise o’er their horizon fair,
    For Mohee had seen with his own eyes the steed;
A monster of iron, and vapor, and there
    Was nothing to match him in strength and in speed.

*“Mean Tonks” etc. The Toncahna and Comanche tribes were hereditary enemies.

VI

Old “Pohebits-Quasho,” the veteran chief,
    Laid aside his cuirass of well tempered steel,
And sat in the dust with fierce “Big Foot,” whose grief
    Was as heavy as only the lost ever feel.
But “Peta-Nocona” recorded a vow,
    And “Medicine Man” consecrated his breath,
That the nuptials so fell, which threatened them now,
    A factor contained, no less than his death.

VII

Now tribal feet along the silent warpath fall,
    And war’s blood-red star is blazing fierce above;
To danger’s post each warrior duty calls,
   And red maidens pledge to heroes vows of love.
The Caddoes and the hated “Tonks” are marching fast,
   For a common danger close unites them now;
Brave Placido leads the first, young Pascal heads the last,
   And sear’d o’er with frowns is War’s all wrinkled brow.

VIII

Young Pascal comes a suitor for the queenly hand,
   Which, erstwhile, hath waved repulses with disdain;
Old Placido tells how, years ago, he planned
   To win this fair but ice-cold queen in vain.
How once he fondly pictured her as all his own,
   How fancy’s visions melted in the rays of truth;
How, though so many weary years had flown,
   She still preserved the fresh and rosy glow of youth.

IX

Now see the maddened warriors contend,
   On distant Wichita’s ensanguined field!
See friend and foe in wild confusion blend,
   And, struggling to the death, refuse to yield!
Here Van Camp falls, and Ross is wounded there,
   Van Dorn is struck, but still the fight proceeds;
And knights of old, bedecked with honors rare,
   Ne’er won their golden spurs by knightlier deeds!

X

Old Placido points, and quick young Pascal’s eyes
   Behold Demara on a milk-white steed;
She casts one hasty glance before she flies
   O’er the scene of death, gorging with glutton greed.
Some score of warriors stand about the queen,
   And grasp their ready arms with loyal breath;
Brave men, accustomed on themselves to lean,
   Now pledge her safety at the price of death!

XI

Heading the forlorn hope, young Pascal now is seen
   To stake his life upon a single cast:
And woo with high chivalric quest the haughty queen,
   As onward moves the advancing column fast.
Furious and fast the feathery arrows fly!
   Revolvers crack, and sharp-edged sabres clash!
Wild combatants in maddest frenzy cry,
   As, scorning death, they onward blindly dash!

XII
Fighting his way by superhuman strength,
   Intrepid Pascal nears the queenly fay,
And to grasp her reaches out his arm at length,
   To only see her moving silently away!
A “thud” is heard, and from his bosom springs
   The spouting current of his crimson gore;
A darkness falls, the earth beneath him swings;
   He staggers, reels, and falls, and then no more!

XIII
A faithful watch the loyal Caddo keeps
   At the side of the wounded youth, who now
Has found surcease from pain, and sleeps,
   Without a troubling thought to mark his brow.
Anon he wakes, and, with a dubious gleam,
   Beholds old Placido at his silent post;
“Old man,” he said, “I’ve had a pleasing dream,
   Abounding in sweet incidents a host.

XIV
“I strolled at random through a garden fair,
   On which an artist’s hand had set its seal;
And exotic plants of foliage rare
   Found in the alien soil a succor leal.
Here gorgeous flowers lined the pleasant way,
   And sweetest odors freighted down the air;
There birds of golden plumage winged their play,
   Or ’neath the dreamy lotus coo’d them pair and pair.

XV
“A crystal stream meandered slow along,
   With gentle cadence on its dreamy way;
I heard the sweetest notes of distant song,
   And murmurs of æolian chords at play.
And then I strayed along with listless smile,
   Adown a walk of most refreshing green,
And swept my vision o’er a fairy isle,
   And saw Demara! YES, I SAW THE QUEEN!

XVI
“She sat, my comrade, on a mossy throne,
A harp in negligence lay by her side;
Anon her dainty fingers wak’d its slumbering tone,
   And music’s spirit seem’d in it to bide.
Then, striking on some tune, perhaps her choice,
   (My thirsty soul imbibed its every word),
She softly trilled, with most melodious voice,
   The saddest air that e’er wrapt mortal heard:

I

“‘O when will he come, my errant knight,
   To gladden this melting eye?
O when will he come, with a smile of delight,
   To ease this bosom’s sigh?

II

“‘O come, love, come to our island home,
   And rest on this bosom here:
For my aching heart with thee must roam,
   Or burst forth in a tear.

III

“‘I sit on the silent beach to-day,
   Where the waters kiss the lea;
O that I were those waves at play,
   My love, and the beach were thee!’ ”

XVII

Away in the wilds of the Texan land,
   Where the rivers find in the hills their source,
Peta-Nocona held well his braves in hand,
   To watch the advance of the white man’s course.
Of a crisis at hand the stars had spoke,
   And the omens of Medicine Man were bad,
Who read in the camp-fire’s eddying smoke,
   With the ken of a seer the legend sad.

XVIII

Sadly he gazed on the warlike array,
   And buried his “charms” deep down in the earth;
Then, turning him slowly, took his lone way
   O’er mountain and vale, through prairie and dearth,
To the camp of the “Tonks,” away to the south,
   To the Toncahna chief, our Pascal the brave;
In secret, the Medicine opened his mouth,
   And this is the text of the message he gave:
XIX

“Hail to the bridegroom elect over all!
Demara is waiting thy coming to-day;
A feast shall be spread in the tepee so tall,
And the lodge-pole be decked with garlands all gay!
Then fly thee, chief, to the loveliest bride,
That ever a nuptial couch hath spread;
And when she reposes in peace at your side,
Remember ’twas I who successfully plead!”

XX

Upon the war-path once again, with tread
Of giants, march the Caddos, “Tonks,” and whites;
Ross, steeled to high emprise, assumes the head,
And boldly scales the rugged mountain heights.
Like spectral men they pass the dark defiles,
And round the fated camp deploy their line;
O where Nocona’s vigilance and wiles?
O why this fell indifference supine?

XXI

As bursts a thunderbolt from cloudless sky,
The pent-up vengeance of the host was sped!
And then the females’ agonizing cry!
The groans of wounded, and the ghastly dead!
From his last sleep on earth Nocona rose,
And for one stroke of vengeance nursed his breath;
Then casting where thickest fell the blows,
He smiling sped him to the dance of death!

XXII

Ross met the savage chief, and, hand to hand,
They grappled there for victory or death,
Suspending operations, either band,
The deadly duel viewed with bated breath!
Peta-Nocona fell, and his last sigh
Was borne along in sad funereal wail
By the dashing fugitives who sought to fly
The dreaded foemen of the “faces pale.”

XXIII

“Behold the Queen!” cried Placido, and there
In truth she was, astride the milk-white steed.
“Now or never!” Pascal cried with frenzied air,
As forward he reckless dashed at frightful speed.
“Welcome, O chieftain, to thy nuptial bed!
Ha, we have spread for thee a royal feast!”
It was old Medicine, with hooded head,
The least expected, and to be feared the least.

XXIV

His arm is raised, the bow string’s “twang” is heard,
   And the arrow speeds on its deadly flight;
Pascal, appalled, speaks not a single word,
   But grasps convulsive, falls, and all is night.
But to the big tepee they bear him now,
   No festive garlands deck the lodge pole high,
Nor leaves of laurel grace his aching brow,
   As fever lights his wild, unnatural eye.

XXV

His lips anon are wreathed in ghastly smiles,
   As o’er his fancy floats beatific views
Of shady copse and labyrinthine wilds,
   That catch the glow of bright celestial hues;
Now consciousness returning casts a glow
   Of reason’s gleam athwart his pallid face,
When to the veteran chief he speaks in accents low:
   “Placido, doomed is our ill-fated race!

XXVI

“I’ve seen it all, I’ve scann’d the page of fate,
   And met Demara on a stranger shore;
I woo’d, I won, alas, it was too late!
   For in her meshes once, and all is o’er.
O how entrancing fair her smiling face!
   And wealthier her tones than coins of gold!
A queen in name, surpassing queens in grace,
   But, O so immobile, so frigid, cold!

XXVII

“‘PROGRESS’ is the monogram her seal indites,
   And all the vials of the wraths are there,
The hissing steam to reason’s steps she incites,
   And with the lightning cleaves the ambient air!
Yes, westward ‘Progress’ now has set her face,
   And Genius twangs her loud discordant call,
Culture wins the artificial race,
   And Nature, weak, untutor’d jade, must fall!
XXVIII

“She may, perchance, with simulated grief,
   Follow with stately steps my humble bier,
Or carve a tablet to my virtues brief,
   And shed with grace the customary tear;
But heed you well, old man, the warning that I give,
   And your weak people teach to shun that wizard name,
For, O Placido, remember, while you live,
   That civilization and Demara are the same!”

NOTES.—“Pohebits-Quasho,” Iron Jacket; so-called from the coat of “scale mail” which he wore, was killed in the battle of “South Canadian,” or “Antelope Hills.” His armor was sent to the state capitol by his conqueror, Colonel I. T. Ford, where it may now be seen.

“Placido” was the Caddo chief; and the warm friend of the whites; he fell a victim to the wiles of his hereditary enemies, the Comanches, during the late war for the Union.

“Big Foot,” a redoubtable Comanche chief, slain in personal combat by the veteran Ranger, Captain S. P. Ross. [Shapley Prince Ross was the father of Lawrence Sullivan Ross.]

“Peta-Nocona,” whose white wife was rescued from captivity, was slain by General L. S. Ross in single combat. His bow, shield, lance, etc., may now be seen at the State capitol.

Yussuf and Zuleekha

INSCRIPTION

It is a pleasure truly gratifying to inscribe this rendition of the ancient story of Joseph to my old friend and associate, I. [J.] A. McNeill, co-proprietor of the Advocate newspaper, Victoria, Texas, as a slight testimonial of my friendship and esteem.

His well known aversion to personal compliments prevents any allusion to his manly devotion to duty, correct principles, and fidelity to trust, which I would gladly bear witness to.

Any other immediate connection of Mr. McNeill with the narrative must be sought in the note at the conclusion.

V.M.R.

VICTORIA, TEXAS,
Nov., 1881

I
'Twas in the rosy mild of earth,
While yet traditions of the awful birth
Of worlds and systems through His love begun,
Were handed down from hoary sire to son,
That Yussuf on Zuleekha’s vision burst,
And fired her desert heart with burning thirst;
Ere yet Osiris and his fabled crew
Of gods, the goodly land of Egypt knew.
Long, long before the pyramids arose,
To witness that long train of endless woes,
That sunk at last the proud Hametic race
Beneath the level of the basest base;
While yet the art that triumphed o’er decay,
Wrought for the ages witness every day,
Zuleekha found atonement for her crime,
Through faith that glads the heart of every clime:
Sought she and found the priceless pearl of peace,
In that calm sea where tempests all surcease.

II

He came, a comely slave among the train
Of his wild kinsmen of the desert plain,
And in the gloomy mart conspicuous stood,
Where mankind traffic’d in their fellows’ blood,
Among the bidders competition high,
Rose for the fair brow’d boy with sunlit eye,
And though golden offers came from every hand,
Yet could they not the royal bid withstand;
And soon Yussuf on sad protesting feet,
Was sent to swell the king of Egypt’s suite.
Hope fled him with a last departing ray,
With his sad thoughts to wander far away,
Where lowing herds, once grateful to his sight,
For safety sought his earnest care each night;
O’er these dear scenes did all his yearnings roam,
To center on one single spot, his home!
But soon the youthful captive, as the ward
Of the chief captain of the royal guard,
Exchanged his shepherd suit and rustic air,
For the softer fabrics such as courtiers wear.
But all the time his lot with them was cast,
The Lord was with the youth from first to last;
And, though failure oft his fellow slaves befell,
His every undertaking prospered well,
Until success his merits full disclosed,
When lofty station yielded its repose.
But if he stood without a peer among
The noble counsellors of state, his young
And comely person an attraction lent,
To draw the maids whose paths about him went.
And often, too, declared some elder wife,
His like was never seen before in life.
What wonder, then, Zuleekha, fair and young,
His praises sometimes lisped with cautious tongue!
Since he was second in his master’s home,
Full free of will to bide, to go, to come,
What wonder that she early learned to greet
With joy the sound of his approaching feet!
’Twas thus Zuleekha step by step did move,
Until enveloped in the maze of love,
When fair discretion left her icy throne,
To hang enraptured on his lightest tone.
And thus forever will it be,
Blind to most glaring faults, it can but see
The full perfection of the object loved,
And rashly plays its naked hand unloved.
Did Yussuf come, his daily task to ply,
Zuleekha met him with a melting eye;
And if his mind on state affairs was cast,
Her warm heart felt his coldness like the blast
Of Arctic winter, when its frozen breath
Chills sere the blooming lilies unto death;
Did he but deign a smile, though ghastly sad,
Quick in her bosom hope awaken’d glad.
Zuleekha loved! this much she felt she knew,
But what the end she sought in this made view
She never asked, she never cared to know,
If her heart’s stream would thus forever flow.
But thus enveloped in this fatal dream,
She heard not the rumors that began to teem
Among the dames, when gathered at the well
To draw their water, and their gossips tell,
How she, Zuleekha, held all else aloof,
For the young alien ’neath her husband’s roof,
Until the taint of scandal was attained,
When she awoke to find herself arraigned
By him, who held above his thoughtless wife
The patriarchal power of death and life;
But with that ready wit, that yet remains
The shield of woman, in vile scandal’s mains,
And, conscious of her rectitude, she laid
A wily plot, that would entrap the staid
Old dames, who gave the ugly rumors life,
And vindicate the sacred fame of wife.
One even, with treacherous smiles she dared intrude
On the frail subject of their slanders rude;
And, as they sat immersed in gossip there,
About the frailties of some absent fair,
Each one was given, ’mid the wordy strife,
A luscious orange and a sharpened knife;
When lo! upon the busy scene, there came
A comely form of man, Yussuf of name.
Quick passion’s flame in every bosom burned,
And all their longing eyes on him were turned;
Then cry they as his manly form they scan,
“This, O Zuleekha, is no mortal man!
But is indeed an angel from on high,
Just through the starry portals of the sky!”
The knives, propelled without the aid of sight,
Had gashed their nervous fingers left and right.
And thus a verdict did Zuleekha win,
Which, though it left suspicion still of sin,
Did demonstrate that she was not alone
The dame, who had her marriage vows forsworn.
But, alas, this triumph only paved the way
To greater dangers that before her lay.
Victorious she deemed herself at last,
And into love her being all was cast;
And boldly crossed that well-known border o’er,
Where prudence always stayed her steps before.

III

And thus her comely form Zuleekha decked
For conquest, but the cost she nothing recked;
Her raven hair in masses fell below
The jeweled girdle, round a waist of snow.
A starry necklace o’er her bosom shone,
That seem’d a blazing, palpitating zone;
And, clasping the well rounded arms about,
Costly bracelets flashed their radiance out.
About her graceful form of beauty rare,
In pleasing negligence and light as air,
Hung, or appear’d to float, a gown so white,
It seem’d but tissues of the morning light,
From out whose folds, reclining now at rest,
Her sandal’d feet their beauty would attest;
But two fair rivals gazed on them below,
Two rounded ankles, white as driven snow.
She half arose, as at the open door,
Yussuf stood, one tiny foot upon the floor;
O’er her fair face a crimson blush passed slow,
Like floods of sunburst on a plain of snow.
And warm desire beam’d from her amorous eyes,
As fast the heaving bosom fell to rise;
The red lips parted, and displayed a row
Of teeth, that seem’d a string of pearls aglow.
“Thou art, O Yussuf, comely, thou art fair!
And give ye heed, O Hebrew, while I swear,
By the immortal soul within my frame,
And by thy great Jehovah’s awful name,
I love thee! adore thee with all my heart!
And it were death to say that we must part;
Now, O Yussuf, together let us fly!
Together live and love, together die!
Desire thus would not be kindled warm,
If to gratify it in full were harm;
Come, Yussuf, to some distant isle we’ll fly,
Whereon no tyrant man hath set his eye!”
Thus saying, Zuleekha rose from off the bed,
And to his side she half affrighted fled;
Around his neck her snowy arms were cast—
Her face was buried in his bosom fast,
And there, convulsed by sobs, her form
Seem’d a fragile reed amid the storm;
“Zuleekha,” he replied, with solemn face,
“Thy weak, misguided footsteps now retrace,
Ere you experience the fearful cost
Of love like this—your soul and body lost;
For vile adultery calls from heaven down
With dire vengeance Jehovah’s awful frown!”
At this, her trembling arms relaxed their hold,
And with disdainful manner, stern and cold,
“Go, Yussuf! I lavish’d all my love in vain—
Let it in bitterness return again
To this drear hearts, where but one mem’ry burns,
And for thy fond embrace yet madly yearns;
Yes, go thy way, with that unbending will—
We each must now a separate fate fulfill.
I, to return and seek a troubled rest
Within a foul embrace, which I detest;
You, free to roam, like the untrammel’d bee,
Extracting sweets from flower, shrub, and tree!”
“Zuleekha, listen to a captive’s sigh;
The veriest slave is freer here than I;
O’er a distant land my heart a vigil keeps,
E’en Bethel, where an aged father weeps
For a lost son, his prayers would save,
Ere come his gray hairs down with sorrow to the grave:
Alas, you speak in mockery to me—
I find but gall in flower, shrub, or tree!"
“Ungrateful man, to spurn a love like this,
Nor meet these burning lips in one ripe kiss!”
“Then love, Zuleekha, if thou canst but love,
In me the potent will of Him above,
And view me as a symbol among you cast,
Of Him who shall fulfill the law at last—
The law, itself engraved but in His will,
A fount where thirsting souls shall drink their fill.
I am a promise, then, to all your purer sighs,
That sure the ‘Sun of Righteousness’ shall rise,
With healing on his wings, for those who love
The kindly precepts of the King above.
And though his birth is centuries from now,
Faith, Zuleekha, will crown thy spirit’s brow:
And truly herein is all of life to live;
No other hope for man hath earth to give.
Thus love, and though unknown to eye or ear,
My soul shall ever hold thy memory dear.
Love, Zuleekha, as I adoring love,
The great unseen, All in All above,
If human passion, with its base alloy,
Can love that which it never may enjoy;
For more your wifely honor never meant—
And to promise less my heart will not consent.”
But now is heard, alas, the fearful sound
Of near approaching footsteps on the ground.
Quick Yussuf clears the widely opened door,
But leaves, alas, his mantle on the floor,
Which soon the carping gossips all behold,
As confirmation of the tales they told.
“Rape, ravishment, and mockery alive!
Weak virtue languishes and treason thrives!
Behold the mantle that he dropped in flight!”
Zuleekha shrieked in well dissembl’d fright.

IV

Behold the wretched captive now confined,
A victim to harrowing doubts consigned;
Restless he silent paced the gloomy floor,
And cast sad longing glances at the door,
Locked so secure no heaven-sent ray,
Came in to glad his sight through the long day.
And doubtless, too, of false Zuleekha thought,
Whose selfish perfidy alone had brought
On his fair fame this withering disgrace,
And whisper’d, self-communing, with a sigh:
“O must I as a foul adulterer die?”
And her of all, the fairest branch indeed,
To life, that germinated from the seed,
By God selected on old Sichem’s plain,
To save from death a sinful world, and vain.
Alas, where was the God that once did swear
To Abraham?—the God of Jacob where?
Weak nature doubts when it but fails to see—
Even Him who suffered on the fatal tree,
“Eloi, Eloi!” and with the parting sigh
Of cruel death, “lama sabacthani!”

V

O seer, whose piercing vision shoots as far
As deathless ray of the most distant star
That trembles on the brink of farthest space,
Defying all our efforts here to trace
The leagues, when countless millions have been told,
Which yet defies the gazer’s vision bold—
Those orbs of thine can send a living ray
To greet the sun that lights earth’s latest day,
And read the future like a roll outspread,
Ere Time has marr’d the annals with his tread!
O subtle gift that reads the hearts of men!
Time, earth, and all are open to thy ken;
Nor Stygian night from thee withholds a ray,
Nor Death himself obscures the living day—
For when yon sun sets on thy journey here,
The sun of glory lights thy vision clear!
O minion, within yon dungeon’s gloomy wall,
Relief is even now within thy call!
And, vassal of the king, ye little deem
The full importance of thy mystic dream;
Though now you crouch, perhaps, in abject fear,
And pray the gods for one relieving tear,
Thou wilt arise from fathomless despair,
To don again the courtier’s flunkey air.
“Go, butler, to the captive Hebrew youth,
Dreams and visions reveal to him their truth;
For though his own dark fate he may not read,
He’ll point each letter of thy dream with speed;”
So cried that mocker at the Saviour’s grave.
“Others he save—himself he cannot save!”
Dreaming, Pharaoh stands beside the sacred stream,
And views weird figures with a dubious gleam,
For seven cows came forth, all fat and fine,
And also seven lean, ill-favor’d kine;
And (O mysterious, incongruous dreams,
Than fairy life in death that nightly teems,
With mystic tread of elfin on the plain,
With touch electric through the dreamer’s brain)
Was it a phantasy—a flitting thing,
That greeted then the vision of the king?
Now one stalk bears seven good ears of corn,
Another, seven blasted ears forlorn—
And that Abaddon reigned throughout the dream,
The troubled king could nothing less than deem,
For soon the pleasing features passed away,
And left but the unfavor’d ones to stay.
But this comprised the whole—the dream was o’er;
The weary monarch was perturbed and sore,
For all the magi shed no single gleam
Of light, by which to read the royal dream.
With sad, dejected air he roamed about,
And fevered brain whose secret would not out.
Ah, well, he ken’d for evil or for good,
The messenger of Fate before him stood.
“Oh sacred flame of On!” he cried in vain,
“I bear the letters deep burned in my brain;
I’ve tried all night the mystic words to tell,
And soon shall dawn another night of hell;
O power, O place, O pride! ye mock me now;
I’d yield my crown to cool this burning brow!”
The butler now, eager his king to please,
Announced: “The Hebrew readeth dreams with ease!”
Forth to the royal presence was he brought,
That Pharaoh might attain the end he sought.
Written upon the tablets of the conscious soul
Of those whom God would point the blessed goal,
Are all the mysteries of life and death,
Which with the gift of inspiration’s breath,
The mind prophetic grasps the golden chain.
And all His sublime purposes are plain.
“The power, O mighty king, is not of me,”
Yussuf replied, “but God will answer thee:
Now both the kine and corn are years, O king—
Seven shall a bounteous harvest bring,
Which seven of great plenty being o’er,
Other sever shall come with famine sore.
Then prepare, O king, while yet you may,
To save your people ’gainst the evil day!”
“Thou art discreet, nor is there one so wise,
O captive Hebrew, thou art free, arise!
And more,” said Pharaoh, stretching forth his hand,
“I make thee ruler over all the land.
Here from my finger take this signet ring;
This golden chain about thy neck I’ll fling;
In finest linen thou shalt be arrayed;
At thy command the second chariot’s laid;
Bow all the knee! a nation’s praise now wells
Up to Yussuf, in whom God’s spirit dwells!”

VI

The seven years of plenty passed, and lo!
’Twas found that Yussuf’s words were even so.
The famine came, but saved by Yussuf’s hand,
Good corn was plenteous throughout the land.
Yussuf was now a mighty prince, indeed,
And all the people sang his praise with greed;
As often he in judgment at the gate
Sate, and with wisdom heard each small complaint;
And oft in beauty’s bloom sat by his side
The high born Asenath, his lovely bride.
Where was Zuleekha through these weary years?
The timid prey of grief, remorse, and tears.
With humble heart she sought, and weeping eye,
A pardon from the saving grace on high;
For all her serious thoughts to God she gave,
And shed chaste tears above her husband’s grave.

Envoi

One evening mild approached, with doubting feet,
A woman pale, until the judgment seat;
Her hair disheveled in confusion lay,
Which, raven once, now was streaked with gray;
Her cheeks were wan, and o’er her wrinkled brow
Time had cut furrows with his tiny plow.
Close to the judge she pushed her anxious way,
And whisper’d: “Judge me now, my lord, I pray!”
Yussuf a moment sat in mute surprise,
As if to doubt the truth of his own eyes,
Then answered: “Zuleekha! and do you live!
Zuleekha, peace to thee, for I forgive!”
A dubious mist then past [sic] his eyes before,
When lo! the sad Zuleekha was no more,
But in her late footsteps, and standing there,
Was glad Zuleekha with her midnight hair;
In it no silver threads were gleaming now,
No furrows marr’d the smoothness of her brow,
For as her heart was born anew in truth,
Her person caught a second birth of youth.
And fair Zuleekha was a maid again,
As a Persian legend doth the truth maintain,
And shared his manly love with Asenath at last,
On whom for many years her being all was cast.

Note.—Perhaps it will be accounted unfair to accord Yussuf two brides, when so many old bachelors are consigned to a state of single “cussedness” for the want of one; and if any of my fair friends should object to the principle of the allotment here made as a rule, if but in one instance, governing the marital lottery, I must shift part of the responsibility to the shoulders of Mr. McNeill, upon the quiet of whose sedate bachelor walks such an invasion would prove diverting, should nothing more come of it. But the Persians are responsible for this version of the ancient song.

The Aramaic phrase Eloi, eloi, lama sabacthani, attributed to Jesus on the cross, is usually translated as “My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?”

Death

Being some unconnected thoughts in regard to the indestructibility of matter.

Dedication

To my old friend and comrade in arms, whose sterling qualities of head and heart rose superior to all the trials of many campaigns; to the generous, brave, and noble A. P. Hope, the modest citizen of Marshall, Harrison County, Texas, these fugitive lines are affectionately inscribed by his grateful friend,

The Author

Kemper City,
Victoria County, Texas,
October 1st, 1881

There is no death, O transitory man,
Contained in all Dame Nature’s perfect plan;
This tenement, of dust create, may go
Rotting back to its kindred dust, and so
With dissolution’s sad, expiring sigh,
The jeweled spirit seeks its native sky;
Thy frame, like some old ghostly household stand,
Where mortmain’s tenure holds the ancient land.
Or, decomposing on the ambient air,
Sends zephyr-ships deep-freighted everywhere,
That countless transmigrating spirits range,
Like commerce carries o’er the flags of change;
Thus round and round the endless circle move,
(As boundless is God’s own infinite love).
The myriad effects produced by cause,
Ceaseless creations under Nature’s laws;
Thus, genial Spring, but smiling, comes to greet
The flowers gemmed by dew, and laden sweet.
Each of earth’s atoms form’d by will divine,
That decked ere this, perchance, the Delphic shrine;
Each animated by a single ray
Of light and life, from the “Eternal Day.”
Behold the pupa in its prison’s womb,
A noxious grub, disgusting to our sight,
Which soon assumes the gorgeous hues of light,
Blended prismatic colors of the sky,
Uniting all to deck a butterfly;
Thus a Samian, with deep learning fraught,
Of the mystic metempsychosis taught.
And so, he of the “Silver Veil” once dared
To claim the attributes that Jesus shared
In part with Moses and the other few,
Who the awful councils of Jehovah knew.
And thus fair Livia, of a later day,
When her brave lover, in a distant fray,
Fell, with sword in hand, where wildest battle waves,
Strewed wrecks of life on life in soldier graves,
Turned in dejection from the severed tie,
With heart forever crushed, but tearful eye,
To wander from the haunts of all her kind,
And seek in solitude for peace, and find
Nepenthe, self-consuming though it be,
Oblivious to all unto eternity.
His bloody manes a shrine the wildwood took,
And thither she to the remotest nook,
A vested virgin robbed of reason fled,
To pledged her troth again with the immortal dead.
Ah, who can say that reason ever pales;
That the vital sparks of life eternal fails?
We lose yon sun with his departing ray,
But soon again he lights another day.
And when, amid the final wreck of spheres,
When destruction treads chaotic o’er the years,
And darkness hangs a funeral pall above
The silent, sleeping all of earth we love—
The “Sun of Glory,” with resplendent ray,
Shall rise to light a never-ending day.
Ministering then, as was her wont, one morn,
The tearless maiden stood with looks forlorn;
Her glossy tresses caught the morning light,
Which paled before her brow of Parian white,
Her hands were clasped, and far above the skies
She poured her spirit through her aching eyes,
And poured forth her weary soul in frenzied prayer,
Through ashen lips pure as the mountain air:
“O queen of heaven!” her hollow voice pronounced,
And soon the rustling of unseen wings announced
Her prayer was heard. “Now but a little while,”
She said, as broke o’er her lips a joyous smile,
“And fairy hands will spread our nuptial couch,
And angels will my constancy avouch.”
She feels the death damp settling on her brow,
She welcomes death—her prayers are answered now;
For Juno, waiting on the parting breath,
Said: “Man’s true, only happiness is death,”
They sought that eve with anxious feet in vain,
The truest maiden of the lorn refrain;
They shouted the name of Livia o’er and o’er,
But echo answered back mockingly, no more.
But where she stood so long in earnest prayer,
They found a snow-white lily blooming there;
They said its stem had all her matchless grace,
The petals cold and white as her pale face;
So sweet, so innocent, it blushing stood,
That all with sorrow-laden footsteps left the wood.
But, hark!—what preparation sounds on high,
Where Juno holds her court above the sky!
What music sounds to ravished mortal’s ears
Like æolian murmurs down the aisle of spheres!

________

SONG OF JUNE

I
Speed, Mercury, speed to the court of each god,
And summon the children of light;
O’er Samos, and Argos, sacred each sod,
To Olympia on with thy flight!

II
On the top of Olympus the feast shall be spread,
   On the heaven’s ethereal brink;
Be ambrosia to-night, immortals, our bread;
   And the nectar of gods our drink!

III

At their nuptials this eve let the pandean pipe
   Sound sweetly of love and of fire;
Bid Orpheus come with his fame full and ripe,
   Eurydice will list to his lyre.

IV

O welcome the brave young patriot now,
   And Livia fair at his side—
And this hero’s wreath, O place on his brow,
   And this crown shall be for his bride.

V

Now little it recks the colors he bore,
   Or the side that he took in the fray,
For the tocsin of war shall summon no more,
   To battle the blue and the gray.

Behold the sower who with prudence speeds
The early planting of his priceless seeds,
In smiling rows that rile the fertile loam,
To glad the anxious hearts at “harvest home!”
Death wraps the kernel in an earthly tomb
To rot—then spring forth from the silent womb,
A waving plant replete with vernal life,
O’er death triumphant through the throes of strife.
Thus immortality, with deathless breath,
Each tiny atom shields from mythic death,
And with each birth but draws a check at sight,
On Nature’s bounteous store of life and light;
Which all again, when Time’s accountant, Death,
The balance strikes with each departing breath,
Like some vast ocean’s deep, eternal flow,
Back to the common stock returning go;
As in the mystic days of Eld, while yet
The sun of Heliopolis had not set,
And “Priests of On” drew from the tuneful lyre
Pæans each day to the Celestial Fire;
The ph[ö]enix came from centuries of flight,
Upon the altar’s burning pile to light
And rise with incense floating up on high,
A deathless visitant of upper sky.

What then, O man, is death but a new birth?
'Tis as a pupa first he greets the earth;
A larva then his manhood's powers combine,
Then death, and as a winged moth to shine;
Or as an angel plumes his daring flight,
High over realms, through space to Glory’s Light.
What terrors haunt the dark plutonian shore,
Are but the silly myths of Earth no more!

2d. The “Veiled Prophet of Khorassan.”
3d. The reply of Juno to Cydippe, a priestess of Argos, who prayed the goddess to reward the filial devotion of her sons. Juno responding, they fell asleep, and awoke no more; for the goddess declared that death is the only true happiness that can fall to the lot of man in this life.
4th. The lily was sacred to Juno.
5th. Heliopolis, the “On” of the Bible. “City of the Sun,” &c. The “Priest of On” was the “pontifex maximus” of the sun worship. This religion was doubtless the parent of “fire worship” of the Ghebers.

The historical Livia was the wife of Augustus, the first Roman emperor. She was the mother of two sons, Tiberius, who became the second Roman emperor, and Drusus, who died young after a riding accident. Portrayed in Ovid’s poetry as a model wife, Livia was later deified and associated with Juno, Venus, and Vesta, the goddess of hearth, home, and chastity. “Death” originally appeared in the Victoria Advocate on December 6, 1879. For the Demara version, Rose made a few minor revisions and changed the section titled “Song of the Gods” to “Song of June”; he also added a fifth note. The poem was reprinted in Sam H. Dixon’s The Poets and Poetry of Texas (Austin: Sam H. Dixon & Co., 1885), 268–270, but without the “Song of June” section and the notes.

Adieu

I

Sad thoughts, O friend, whose knightly lead
I followed oft on distant fields,
Our tired souls at last have freed,
Devoid of mammon’s baser greed,
    To reap the harvest which eternal yields,
Through faith, the Christian’s final meed.

II
Tuned to the past, our fitful song
Shall breathe the sainted scenes of long ago;
And future effort, armed with justice strong,
Will right, perchance, the grievous wrong,
When we in death are lying low
Our fallen comrades among.

III
No merry madrigals of sunny skies
Bring gleam of promise to the heavy heart;
Æolian vespers which like weighted sighs,
Relieving tears beguile from aching eyes,
As weary nature shrinks from hollow art,
On holier and higher thoughts to rise.

IV
My song is sung; its echo dies away,
As the sad vibration of a troubled chord;
The lighter lute and happier roundelay
Be theirs upon whose souls no troubles prey;
Be mine, O sadder spirit, whose accord
With serious things inspires my lay.

NOTE.—“Friend whose knightly lead,” &c. General John Summerfield Griffith, of
Tyrrell, Kaufman county, Texas.

Rose included a biographical sketch of John Summerfield Griffith (1829–1901) in Ross’ Texas Brigade,
pp. 123–137, which covers Griffith’s service as a state legislator after the war.

Biding His Time (1883)

“And would you know the story of his life”—
The keeper asked—“to which his lips are sealed?”
“Mayhaps the pages now are blank, or lost,
“In mercy to his seething, whirling brain,
“And naught remains his high-strung soul to vex,
“Of love inconstant, and of broken faith.
“He was the victim, and no more shall rise
“The sun of reason to his vacant ken,—
“The spectral hand of Death at last shall lift
“The curtained gloom which hangs a living pall
“Above the void where once his mind was throned.”

Sauntering down the copious shaded walk,
Seeming unconscious that he walked alone.
The maniac mused with serious mien,
Of theorems abstruse, and formulas,
And ranged his figures like the Persian host,
Round some square described on the hypotenuse
Of a right angle flitting through the air;
Of complex logarithms, cubes, and squares,—
Conversed with interest never lagging once,
With auditors intangible and mute
To all, save himself by fond illusion led,—
Of war waged in some distant tropic clime,—
The “True Cross” captured, and of mountains scaled,
The Elysian vale beyond, where like a gem
The Aztec city shone in richest emerald set.
But for this gibberish of squares and cubes,
And a vacant, long, over-reaching stare,
One would have deemed his mind in pristine bloom,
So scrupulously near his person, and
The chaste decorum of his every act.

“The story of his life,” the keeper said,
“Is very sad, and briefly runneth thus:
“A home of wealth in this our genial clime,—
“Soft, cooling breezes from the Tropic’s throat,—
“Luxuriant groves whose golden fruit
“Would shame the apples fable famed of old,—
“Doting parents who watched their every step—
“His and Philip’s—in looks his very other self,
“As two bullets cast from a common mould,
“For into life one birth had ushered both.
“Their cousin playmate, junior by three years,
“Was little Alice with her Parian brow,—
“Large liquid, dreaming eyes, and raven hair,
“And voice as soft and sweet as whispers borne
“By angels to the dreams of tranquil sleep.
“The fragrant orange grove their playground was,
“With feathered choristers on every bough,
“In which was lived their little span of life,—
“Its dewy morning’s first and briefest hour,—
“The purest gold in all a centenarian’s age.
“Vine like love with sweetest flowers laden,
“Sprung triple rooted from their guileless hearts,—
“Three starting points upon life’s rosy path,
“Whose hopes all merged into a common stock:
“To laugh and sing, and play at random wild,
“To end—thank God they thought not how, or when.”
“But like that other Eden, this was doomed,
“Tho’ not as penance for transgression wrought,
“For just as pure they left its sylvan walks,
“In thought and deed, as first they entered in:
“Youth pays a tribute tear to childhood’s truth,
“As weeping Age kneels at the shrine of Youth!

“The dear old tutor had announced with tears,
“That he could guide the boys no further on
“The rugged road of knowledge, which now led
“The prouder way to distant college halls.
“Philip, fragile and fair, his mother said,
“Should not be sent too very far from home,
“So that in need her ready aid could lend
“Solicitude a more effectual force.
“Felix, robust and fond of manly sports,
“Elected as his own a soldier’s life,
“And to the martial mother of our land,
“Would go with all a student’s serious quest
“Of the art of war—campaign—battle—siege.
“So kissing little Alice, Philip said:
“’At merry Christmas tide I’ll come again!’
“But Felix: ‘Four years hence, my little coz,
And a soldier bold from the wars shall come!’

“Time past, and soon four years had run their course,
“And either youth had won the prize he sought;
“But War had raised his horror breeding front,
“And Palo Alto’s guns were heard afar.
“Home Felix hastened on the briefest leave,
“To hear her lips confirm the joyous hope,
“With which her missives had inspired his heart.
“This done, she felt his burning kiss, and then
“His sabre clanging on the flags below,
“Announced his journey to the war begun.
“Soon news of battle flashed throughout the land,
“And Felix proudly wrote of brevets won,—
“But to Alice he wrote of that near time,
“When love’s young dream should wake to real life,
“And he would come to claim her as his own.
“Black day to her when Philip came and claimed
“The consummation of their vows so oft exchanged!
“She loved them both,—in truth had never thought
“Their interests in life could e’er diverge;
“Her virgin love was yet the common vine,
“Which found a kindred root in either heart,—
“And bitter tears well’d from her weeping eyes,
Wrung from the fountain depths of her pure soul,
‘When cruel Fate cast down by ruthless stroke,
The sweet illusion of her native dreams.
And she, alas, must make a final choice!

“Suffice our purpose now that they were wed,
“And Felix read the news at Belen Gate,
“All harnessed for the bloody fray at hand,—
“Then went to battle as a butcher goes,
“Cleaver in hand, about his ruthless work,
“Till a sabre stroke that deep cleaved his skull,
“Left him dying, they thought, upon the field.
“The surgeons healed the frightful wound they said
“Which wrought his mind such cruel harm that day,
“But I am sure the steel that clipt the thread,
“Had done its work before the hurtful fray!
“They brought him home, and Philip shrank before
“The seething torrent of his crazed wrath:
“‘O, cruel, faithless twain!’ he raved,
“With foaming mouth, and wildly staring eye,
“You drive me from the haunts of all my kind,
“To herd with madmen till relieved by death!
“But the end is not yet,—my time I bide,—
“Heaven will decree at last who wins his bride!’
“And so, he bides his time,” the keeper said.

Years past, and a great man’s wife was dying,—
With tear-dim’d eyes he clasped her thin white hand,
And bowed his silvered head by her own lying
Just in the shadows of the Mystic land;
And lost in grief, a prayer upon his lips,
He little looked like Philip fair of old,—
For he had stood a chief on fields where Death,
A ghastly winner seemed at every throw,
And had left a leg upon the heights above
Gettysburg’s ever to be remembered field.
Now her ashen lips are seen to quiver,
And then—“I’m coming, Felix, wait for me!”
“My God!” he groaned in agony of spirit,—
“My Alice! O, Alice! come back to me!”

At that same hour but many leagues away,
Poor Felix too was nearing his discharge,—
To the kind keeper constant at his side,
He talked of Belen Gate and Vera Cruz,—
On his bleared mental page the latest dates
Avouched by Reason’s seal as of her own;
Again he ranged his numbers into line,
And hurled his logarithms at the foe,—
Then smiling, to the keeper gently said:
“My Alice is waiting now, and I must go!”

_Biding His Time_ was bound with _Celeste Valcœur: A Legend of Dixie_, pp. 1–4 [39–42].
Celeste Valcœur: A Legend of Dixie (1886)

Celeste Valcœur

PrincE Camille to a FrieNd in Eruope

New Orleans, May, 1861

I came, I saw, and—shall I own it, friend?
Am conquered! Yes, the flashes from her eyes,
In which the fire and snow of Etna seem to blend,
Inviting and repelling tribute sighs,
Wondering dragged me to her very feet,—
The verge of Love’s immemorial mine,—
Where ’neath her changing moods of cold and heat,
I’m kneeling at her variable shrine!

“Whose, pray?” no doubt you fain would ask,—then know,
She is of Beauty’s realm the very Queen.—
Parian brow which shames the virgin snow,—
Gray eyes reflecting glance of steelish sheen,—
Cheeks of—but O, Description’s self is tame,
Though some master’s hand the stylus guided;
Miss Celeste Valcœur is her charming name,—
More than which to none have I confided.

I hope, indeed—but how secure the base
Of my fabric, alas, I may not know,—
I fear “another fellow’s in the case,”
And so fish for information slow.

‘Valcœur,’ you’ll say, ‘is not a foreign name,’
She comes of French descent, and not unknown
To the fair France of better times and fame,
Ere freedom’s tree a gorgon foul had grown.
I’ve made no offer yet,—our formal ways,
I ascertain are not here current quite,—
For in love no part negotiation plays,
Which tete-a-tete themselves it seems the skeins set right.

To those who’ve only loved another’s wife,
Scarce venturing o’er Discretion’s icy line,
There yet remains the sweetest spice to life,
E’er conjured forth from Love’s enchanted mine.

What I will do, alas, I cannot say,
Since Fate is fingerling with my mesh of life,—
But what I would do, read almost any play
That homeward hails the hero and his wife.

A cloud of war is gathering o’er this land,
Like that which on our Vendean vales once burst;
Already ranks in lines of battle stand,
And a crazed people seem for blood to thirst.
My sympathies are with the South, indeed
I feel she draws the sword for all that’s right,
While *sans culottes* from pinching thraldom freed,
Their arguments oppose with brutish might.
‘What of the colored slaves?’ no doubt you’ll ask,
In contravention of my special plea:
In happiness and sunshine let them bask,
Who would not if they could to-day be free!
This town is putting on her gay attire,
To receive the thousands from near and far,
coming, the humble “ten bale planter” and “high-flyer,”
To swell the carnival at *Mardi-gras*.
Now, in conclusion, quaff a beaker blest,
From the golden goblet of Henri grand,
Pledging the health of my divine Celeste,
And Victory’s meed to the Southern band!
Thine, thine for e’er in friendship’s hooks of steel,—
*Vive le Roi! encore, Vive le Roi!*

__Camille__

**Miss Valcœur To Mr. Stuart**

Riverton, May, 1861

I shall pass Bayou Sara Thursday at one,
And the steamer will touch for a moment I learn:
Meet me—a brief minute suffices, and then when done
Is the last sad duty I owe you, I’ll turn,
If I can, from the past with its suicide love,
To the bright future, and hope smiling free,—
Alas, since hope comes with love from above,
Doth either remain in the future for me?
But may peace rest with you—the peace of the blest,—
I am your obedient, Sir, Celeste.
But scarce had she posted the note when she felt
She’d done perhaps a most improper thing:
Pride whispered ‘he’ll say the blow which I dealt
Her, with such dexterous hand, left a sting,—
When we meet she’ll fawn for forgiveness, I know,
And ask to retain my letters, and I
Will give her request an emphatic “No!”
And breathe my wrongs forth in a crocodile sigh!’
And thus past her melting mood rapid away,
To the coldest resolves of her boreal pride,
Thrusting the germ of forgiveness—a ray

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Just awaking to life, rudely aside:—
‘I’ll meet him with coldness and hauteur,’ she said,
Finding relief in a maelstrom of spleen,
And, saucily tossing to one side her head,
Celeste looked in truth like an indignant queen.
And he, dupe to himself, read her letter with zest,
As the ashes of hope gleamed again in his heart:
“Dear Celeste, of all girls the sweetest and best,
We meet, love, we meet, and never to part!”
This letter which bridged the deep gulf to the past,
He laid in his sanctum sanctorum away,
And hugged her sweet vision in memory fast,
Till it rose o’er his dreams with a promise to stay;
Again he stood by her proudly to know,
That she, the divinity sought for by all,
Had sought him in sooth, and sought to bestow
Upon him herself in that holiest thrall,
Whose silken confines expands through the spheres,
The shield of her virtue, the springs of her love,
Which flows in one bed with his own through the years,
From the fountain of Good near the White Throne above.
Ah, could she but know whom I now would invoke,
The springs of that heart which broke forth long ago,
In a suit for that promise which only awoke
On her lips the response of a chilliest “No!”
Ah, could she but hear down the vistas gone by,
When the breezes of evening are murmuring low,
As yet I can hear in my soul the sad sigh,
From the wreck of my most immemorial woe!
Ah, could she but feel as I have felt long,
Since she spoke without tremor our fate ‘We must part!’
And bend as I bend to the cyclone of Wrong,
That surely would find a way to her heart!
But as he thus roamed through the bowers of dreams,
With Celeste on his arm down the vistas of Weir,
Or stood on the banks of cool murmuring streams,
The Prince, so detested, rose with a leer,
And claim’d as his own the fair one at his side,—
“My own!” hissed the phantom, “mine own! mine own!
Come hie thee to bowers ambrosial, my bride!”
And she fled, and he was alone, all alone!

Some time before the opening of our story,—
Thus authors often stitch in some forgotten patch,
To splice the legend long embalmed and hoary,
With the ends of some late discovered batch.
But the merry dinner bell is ringing now,
And the new boarder, a savage, and voracious,
Sets to his work three times a day with earnest brow,
To make a desert round him very spacious,—
Besides, kind reader, since my early breakfast,
I have jogged along thus far in turgid rhyme,
And my pen-stock seems a very frigate’s mast,
My lines like cordage tangled by the sports of wind and time.
The gifted author of the fair and good Lucile,—
(While reading, I fell in love with her in truth,
Tho’ I would have yielded all and feel as now I feel,
To know that she and Alfred wedded in their youth!)
Has pronounced thy panegyric, O dinners good,
Indifferent and bad,—nor may I dare to stand,
Where frowning genius matching fate itself has stood,
Ere rising to his airy flight on pinions grand;
And if the eulogium intended for my meal,—
Like bad intentions sometimes,—missed its air,
To thy creator commend me, O, Lucile,
Thou leaflet green in his laurel wreath of fame!
Sometime before our story open’d, then,
The college campus had become a field
Of Mars, and soldier-boys playing soldier-men,
With serious will their burnish’d arms to wield,—
And not in peaceful haunts alone, but far away,
On fields where long grim lines of gray and blue,
Their writhing coils like serpents at Death’s play,
Grappled for mastery,—each the nerve to dare and do!
Stood now in line their silken colors to receive
From the fair hands whose fingers deft had wrought,
With hasty stitch and all the anxious thoughts that grieve
The breast of Virtue with sad forebodings fraught,
The proud ensign of an independent South;
Admiring thousands gathered round the scene,
And vivas rose enthusiastic from each mouth,
As Celeste, emerging from behind a screen,
Representing Louisiana, flag in hand,
And surrounded by seceding sisters fair,
Moved to the stirring music (Dixie) of the band,
And cast first its virgin folds to native air!
Captain Stuart, blushing like a timid maid,
Stept forth his comrades in behalf to assume
The precious charge,—but the speeches, I’m afraid
I couldn’t do them Justice after this long resume:
Suffice that they were proper, and the boys swore,
That they never, no never should trail in dust,—
(The colors, I mean, and not the speeches,) and that o’er
Their dead bodies all, the haughty foeman must
Incontinently march before a hand
Should seize that consecrated staff of Southern
beach,—
Such was then the style in Dixie’s martial land,
And that they were earnest, *Ah well the records teach!*
That night they flock’d then, youth and beauty, to the ball,
Thus love, a moth, flits round the lamp-lit glory,—
But why now rehearse that reminiscence all?
Enough one single thread for this our story:
The Prince Camille, such prestige bears a titled head,
Though above that horizon then rising first,
Seemed artfully concealing in his very tread
A *vade mecum* to quench a maiden’s thirst.
And if he numbered many in his train,—
Silly dupes whose minds for nobler aims imbued,—
At the feet of the fair Celeste himself he fain
For merest recognition would have sued.
The Prince’s marked attention soon became
Apparent to all,—and in one loving heart,
Jealousy enkindled her green tongued flame,
And traced there the letters, dubious at first: “We Part!”

He fancied that she more than half way met,
His moves adroit, advances cunning made,
He fancied too that his own presence in the set,
Though another’s partner, cast o’er her brow a shade.
All this he pictured on his heart, and more.
For when did Jealousy her impious task essay,
That demons stood not ready three or four,
Suggesting points, and summing up th’ array?
The adieus that night were utter’d distant, cold,
And Celeste vowed him payment to return
In his own coin,—but the story’s familiar, old,
Enough: once lighted the fire could but burn.
Of course it became the tid-bit of the street,
And Gossip affirm’d the Prince Celeste would wed,
And Stuart stept but out it seem’d to meet,
These ugly rumors which his passions fed:
And hence the letter,—writ neath anger’s heat,—
Which ruthless havoc play’d with all his hopes,
And then burned in his brain the words “We part!”
    In misery and silence his way he groops
Through a mental atmosphere grown thick and dark,
    When from the raging tempest out the dove returns,
To light in his darkened soul again the spark
    Of love, of hope, which once more fondly burns!
“I pass Bayou Sara Thursday at one!”
    Captain Stuart hum’d with her note in his hand:
’Tis well, my Celeste, and when you have done
    The office demanded by duty, as plan’d,
“I’ll breathe in your ear with the warm breath of Love,
    “That a duty et higher demand of us twain
“A compliance with faith,—and the angels above,
    “Will bless as of yore our union again.”
Thus sanguine he sped to a lover’s fond tryst,
    By the augurs of conscience tested and proved,—
So fondly the wheels of our fate would we twist
    As we list, from the course by Destiny proved.
“We’ll on to the city!” breathed Pride in his ear,
    “With the Jewel of Beauty that brooks not a flaw,—
“Yield, Venus, and Juno, yield each one a tear
    “To the fairest fair masque of the mad Mardi-gras!”

Down the river steaming with majestic glide,
    The floating palace comes,—and as it nears the bank,
Stuart, anxious searching from the levee’s side,
    Spies Celeste upon the upper-deck,—he clears the plank,
And in the ardor of a moment’s flitting race,
    Ten thousand lightning thoughts flash’d thro’ his brain,
As Illusion, false as hopeful, leads the chase:
    “She’d have our meeting private,—that is plain!—
“True love a gaping crowd cannot abide!”—
    And thus heaping unctuous promises at will,
He’s in at the death! He’s standing at her side!
    “Celeste! Celeste!” but calm she stood, and still,—
Then slow a recognition faint and cold,
    A slightest inclination of the head
She deign’d:—“Miss Valcour, if you please!” she said.
    “Hold! hold, Celeste!” he cried in anguish, “hold!”
“I conform to your wishes, Capt. Stuart, you see,
    And gladly resign this parcel to your hands.”
But as if bereft of all the senses, he
    Stood idly fingering the rubber bands
About the package. “And mine?” she ask’d at last.
    “I left them at home,” he stammering said—
A brief, withering look of scorn she cast
   Upon the culprit standing with bow’d head,
Then with relaxing brow she turn’d away,
   And like a cruiser with commission free,
Sped quick from sight. Poor boy. he had much to say,
   But clear his way for action could not see.

Of all the hells upon this mundane sphere.
   And with the “boss” institution even vieing,
Is the circumstance that forces one to hear
   Hourly the voice that tells him Love is dying,—
Or dead, for if Stuart’s passion wasn’t dead,
   The very keenest blade of Scorn had failed
In truth to clip a sighing Cupid’s head,
   And yet her woes Nemesis fell entailed,
For Celeste came and went about him there.
   In the cabin, their narrow world for one long day,—
Her every word a scalpel which laid bare
   Some tender nerve on Mem’ry’s circling way.

But with the reader’s kind consent we will
   Dispose of Mardi-gras, and some other things,
In an omnibus paragraph, or bill;
   This is done because too many threads, or strings
Let us say to help out the halting rhyme,
   Looks to much like a dish of cold meat hash’d,
Besides involving heavy tax on time,
   And time is money—when you have it cash’d.
The Prince, polished as Parisian plaster,
   Appeared with gallant tenders to Celeste,
And polite as a French dancing master,
   Even to Captain Stuart and the rest.
The Prince “proposed,” so Mistress Grigsby wrote
   Captain S. who had hastened home by rail,—
I’ll consummate a point right here with a note:
   Miss Valcœur’s letters he returned by mail.
The Prince “proposed” of course to Miss Celeste,
   And Grigsby said Society was shaken,—
That the gossips didn’t even dream of rest,
   Until was known the course the lady’s love had taken.
But I know the course its even current took,
   And all the P’s and Q’s could once relate,
As a diagram I pasted in a book—
   A map of the carpet,—a gaudy thing of state.
That Miss Valcœur was seated in a chair,
   And not upon the sofa, is conceded now;
Of course she was very beautiful, and fair,
He, of distinguished mien and Jovian brow.
Her feet reposed upon a Hercules
In the carpet wrought of threads of gold and red,
A nose-gay the hero was brandishing of trees,
Threat’ning a neighbor alligator’s head.
The Prince, kneeling, made a very graceful pose,
Highly approv’d, be sure, by the Attic school of art,—
His bended knee just covered the alligator’s nose,
And his good right hand, of course, was on his heart.
But stereotyped are Love’s addresses all,
So on this grand affair we will not deeply trench,—
Besides, Nature interposed a lingual wall
In his behalf,—for he proposed in French.

But not stereotyped are Love’s replies
By ‘a jug full,’ for tho’ taken from man’s side,
Woman’s the most original, unless my eyes
Badly deceive me,—and all this aside,
Celeste responded in the English tongue,—
Her French was good, but patriotism was her bent,
So to the “lingo” American she clung.
Its harshness with Dixie’s softer idiom blent:
“You love me, Prince, alas, that sweet assurance I
Before have had, and if I at its early grave,
(Here heaved her bosom’s swell the faintest sigh,)
Speak of conditions, it is, believe me, but to save
Us both, perhaps, from a future of misery and woe:
Know then, a vestal at my country’s shrine
I am, resolved all other objects to forego,
Until redeemed with Dixie is me and mine!
Go don thy harness, Prince, a Knight in gray
Alone should sue in Southern courts for love,
And then, not till the deluge all is pass’d away,
And home safe return’d again the message-dove!”
“But then, then, O, fair Celeste, wilt thou be mine?”
“Then, Prince, you will at least have earn’d the right
To sue; be brave, be true in Dixie’s battle line,—
True as your race have proven beneath the might
Of Fraud and Wrong in your own chivalric land;
The fiery ordeal now of love to Southern men,
Duty points just where the invading columns stand!
Yes, Prince, go forth to war,—and then—and then—“
“And then?” he murmured as he don’d the gray,
To head a column of grim visaged men,—
“And then?” his ears assail’d above each battle fray
On distant fields, for many a day,—and then?
It just occurs to me at this late hour,
That our dramatis personae have been slighted,
By an introduction very brief and sour,
Or none at all,—which should and shall be righted.
“Old Scotty” Stuart, our hero’s honored sire,
Before this century had grown to legal age,
Warm’d by the white heat of patriotic fire,
In the “Latin quarter” of the Western stage,
Volunteered to fight the battles of the “Greasers,”
For a pocketful of promises to pay,
If they conquer’d those bloated royal squeezers
Of every thing that a golden egg could lay.
Scotty shipp’d with a motley crew of “horse-marines,”
For distant Sota la Marina bound,
But how he came, first of all, to New Orleans,
Quien Sabe? A cyclone drove the frail old bark aground,
And as she was going to pieces just as fast
As the storm her rotten, yielding timber tore,
Scotty asked the Captain high above the blast,
In which direction through the maelstrom lay the shore?
Then bidding his comrades all a last good-bye,
The frightful plunge was made, and he struck out for land.
’Twas night, a ball of blackness was the earth and sky,
Lashed by all the wild elements in Nature’s hand;
Over foam capp’d billows rising mountain high,
And down mystic depths he pushed his frightful path.
“Yield!” shrieked the demon of the gale, “and die!”
But Scotty defied even the Storm King’s wrath;
And more dead than alive,—borne on a tidal wave,
Almost yielding in despair,—weak and sore,—
His comrades all gone down to a watery grave,
The sea, like Jonah’s Whale, spewed him out on shore.
But we’ll have to pass his wild adventures by,—
A lost treasure to “dime novels” a full ton;
He grew rich—married—and when about to die,
Received in gladness (from heaven, he said,) a son,—
The same distinguished in this our epic story,
As being of the charms of Miss Valcœur smitten,
Receiving, alas, as his meed of love and glory—
(Ye discarded sympathize,) the mitten!
Scotty’s life was an enigma—all hidden—dark,—
And so with himself its all unwritten pages died;
It was said—(but I always classed the remark
With the many wild rumors to his name allied,)
That he was of a noble house beyond the sea,—
That Lord Wat de Kallim came to see him once,—
That he read the Chinese on a box of tea,
And consequently was no “Cheap John,” or dunce.

_Quid Nuncs_ attached much importance to a ring,
By the old man preserved with a most jealous care;
The seal stamped a thistle, or some said the wing
Of a bird—a lizard—and some said a hare!
So much for Stuart,—and now for Camille
De Saint Ange, of Laroche Jacquelin the prince,—
Alas, that word stumps me for a rhyme, I feel,
Knowing none in the language, unless indeed, _wince_
Will do,—and this after Tengg has floated by on rhyme,
As light as a soap bubble, and as smooth as oil,—
But Tengg’s worth a dozen princes any time,—
And so is any other “Duke” or “King” of toil,—
Great men! who for others live as well as self,—
Good men! known as benefactors of their kind,—
Men as far above the depths of sordid pelf,
As gross matter is below the highest mind!
I’ll name them, yes, a few, and for their sakes alone,
Pray the immortals for our trivial tale a sigh,—
For though weight in grovelling matter sinks as sinks a stone,
In moral worth it mounts like gossamer on high:—
Pass J. S. Penn, and C. A. Leuschner true
The young Alcalde, and A. Leibman bold,—
Generous Brackenridge here’s a line for you,
Another for the Heatons and Leibold;
Then A. F. Higgs, whose bold, ingenious mind,
Grasped old Nature’s secrets in a tilt with heat,
When, lo! the Refrigerator car we find,
Which means, hungry thousands in the east, Cheap Meat!
Hail! our January, still erect and staid,
Who, save the Mercy’s plea, was never known to yield,—
’Mong them all the brightest and best temper’d blade,
From scabbard drawn since Bayard fell on Pavia’s field!
Come Ed. M. Phelps, and Levi, sire and son,—
Come Sibley, H. A. Glenn, John Brownson, and
Wheeler, and “Zip,”—the list is scarce begun;
Hail, Doctor Smith, and Coleman hail!—the band
NOTES.—“The Young Alcalde;” Mr. G. O. Stoner, so-called, I suppose to distinguish him from the “O.A.;” probably because, as “Fritz” suggests, they “vas so much apart you don’t could told dose boys alike, mineselluf!”

“Zip”: Mr. C. L. Thurmond,—too well known in Texas to require an introduction.

“Coleman”: Judge R. H. Coleman.

Awaits you, with Stayton, Hughes and W. S. Glass,
    Who’s not so brittle as the name implies;
Ho! Ireland and Peticolas, pass
    To the golden pale where friendship’s banner flies;
Hail! Viner on Indianola’s silvery beach!
    Fred Schoultea, to friendship as the needle true,—
Ed. Linn, and many more whose daily acts but teach
    The lesson that Merit will command her due.
And now, tho’ my paper’s full the list is not complete,
    But like the author, very poorly done,—
In fact so much the triumph savors of defeat,
    That I almost wish I never had begun.
But to the Prince Camille return we now,
    If indeed passed from your mind he hasn’t quite:
The coronet which—figuratively, graced his brow,
    Came from Legitimacy’s hands and Right,
And was a very potent factor in the State
    Centuries ere Orleans mask’d in Treason’s hood,—
Long before Satan in Robespierre found a mate,
    And while yet the Bonapartes were sawing wood.
Of course he couldn’t stoop to serve a bourgeois King,
    Or plebian emperor, which was all the same,—
And so he waited for returning Right to bring
    Fair France her sovereign lord, Henri V. of name.
Meantime tortured by ennui—his heart a dearth,
    He plan’d—as shown incidentally—a tour,
And discover’d—mi-hercule!—the end of Earth
    Mark’d by the marble pillars of Valcœur!
Now of Celeste: Just imagine all that’s fair
    In a form voluptuous, chaste and sweet,—
Perfect her Grecian nose, her eyes, cheeks, and hair,—
    Her small hands rounded well, and fairy twins her feet.
Fair daughter, to position born, and wealth and ease,
    She yet yearn’d for something far beyond her range,—
She knew not what it was,—a kind of heart disease
    I’ve felt myself—subtle—indefinable—so strange!

NOTE—I detest description, and give the reader a carte-blanche upon the bank of Imagination.
With hope-songs its lulling cadence mingling sweet,
   Thus gently flow’d the constant current of her thought,—
And if Pleasure—Love—sometimes stayed her anxious feet,
   One single draught convinced her it was naught;
And that she did not in cloister’d cell shut out the sight
   Of Earth’s selfish wrangles over sordid pelf,
And Wrong’s wild riot over all that’s right—
   It was because she did not know herself!
And do we know ourselves, O fellow creatures, men?
   Noisy, shallow Confidence will answer “Yes!”
But blushing Conscience mid nights silent watches, when
   Unpronounce’d a benediction seems to bless
A weary, sleeping world, and God’s spirit brooding low,
   And in sweetest union with the unfetter’d soul,
Replies in whisper’d sigh deep in ourselves, “No! No!”
   Familiar, still mysterious—Life’s golden bowl!
But moralizing now is premature,—I aim
   To preach a little while the consuming taper burns,
But wait till Death some of our characters shall claim,
   Or fair Celeste gets married, or religious turns.
Which of these paths by Option traced, fair read mine,
   Should she pursue? Does woman know herself? I fain
Would ask: If she does not, I do—eight out of nine—
   One always will defy the compass of your brain!
Bravo, Muse!—we are cantering right along,
   And, if nothing hinders, a period will reach
Next Monday evening to the carpentry of our song,—
   And though ill the structure, a lesson it will teach
I hope, not altogether destitute of good;
   The design involved no complicated plot,
Though right here I would have it understood
   The plan is to the soil indigenous, and not
By any construction a hot-house exotic;
   But our columns have marched too far now to halt,
Which proceeding would too much of the quixotic
   Savor, to tongues cultured to the taste of Attic salt.
So a knapsack let us don and fall into the line,
   As the columns for Shiloah’s field are passing by,—
Proudly they march, and the burnished arms shine,
   While the gay banners flaunt in the face of the sky.

A genius directs all their movements with skill,
   And summons success it seems at a call.
Grimly they march to the attack with a will
To avenge on this field Fort Donaldson’s fall,—
And soon thousands are grappling in deadliest fight—
The brave men of the South—the brave men of the North!
The vomiting cannon spew death in their might,
With peal after peal of thunder rung forth.
A tempest is raging! the crashing of trees—
The demoniacal shriek of iron and lead,
Proclaims that a demon the revel decrees—
That the living speed forth to the dance of the dead—
That the dead encumber the valleys around,—
When Hell and the Furies hurl up to the brunt
Every arm that can strike on the blood spattered ground,—
Every man, every gun. every sword to the front!
The storm is a giant when abroad in his rage,
But the storm king abash’d slinks from the sight,
When the foul gnome of war bursts forth on the stage,
With Riot, and Ruin, and License, and Might!

In the thickest of that day’s grappling brunt,—
Through “charge” and “guard,” and all of Murders devious ways—And foremost always at the very front,
Young Stuart let the Centenary “Grays.”
Beardless boys, responding to their country’s call,
Left college halls, and books, and ease, and peace,
To constitute themselves a living wall,
Round Dixie’s heart until the storm should cease.
Brave Hilliard! thy once familiar name I write,
As a votive offering at Friendship’s shrine:
Thy flame of life quenched in this crimson flood of fight—
The noblest sacrifice, I’ve thought, was thine!
And thou, gifted Hudson, “of the silver tongue!”
What rape of hope and genius, when thy breath
Was hushed beneath that flag to which you clung
With loyal grasp—chivalric unto death!
That flag—torn and disfigured by shot and shell—
Baptized in reeking gore thrice o’er again—
Sacred its every fold to hands remember’d well—
The living bore above the heaps of slain!
Ah, Celeste, couldst thou and thy sisters seen
The threat’ning blades that day which round it gleam’d
“Well,” would ye have said, “beneath its silken sheen,
The promise of the boys has been redeem’d!”

Glorious to Southern hearts that first great day,
As the “Red Cross” forced the foe the ground to yield,—
But great Sidney fell, and with the life that ebb’d away,
Passed too all hope on Shiloah’s bloody field!
“What is to be will be,” for certain fate decrees
The nation’s Judgment,—with individuals, faith
And works the spirit, perhaps, from predestination frees,—
When, lo! from the riven shackles spring the wraith,
New born to scenes of Elysian life!
Not so, O, Sidney Johnston—(life so fraught
With weal or woe to Dixie)—on that held of strife—
Of Fate inexorable as Juggernaut!
For the proud “Red Cross” which had flown so like
The bird of promise with the olive branch
Above the deluge its wings alas must strike,
Where Prudence seeks in vain the ark of hope to launch,
And thus inaugurate that iliad so long,
At of life, of wealth, and more, the heavy cost,—
Whose sad burden breathes each fitful Southern song,
Like anthems weird around the cause we lost!

Ho! bravest hearts with Breckenridge to stem the tide
Of dark invasion rolling fierce and fast!
And to that Golgotha, as to a waiting bride,
They rush to meet the still advancing blast!
And none, Hatchie, on thy blood soaked, slippery banks.
Made firmer stand—gave deadlier reply,
Than gay Louisiana’s veteran ranks—
Their banner’d Pelicans borne proud and high!—
The forlorn hope here General Valcour leads—
Eager the strippling “Grays” respond with cheer on cheer
And Centenary, by thy classic shade, their deeds,
A halo shed upon the distant mother dear!
Firm stood the “blue” with purpose fixed and dread,
Stern of mien and worthy the steel of any foe,—
And if the combat deepen’d high on giant tread,
It was Western men we grappled there, you know
“Rescue! to the Rescue!” a hundred voices cry,
Above the caldron of furies all enraged,—
When suddenly the Confederates descry
Their chief in combat to the hilt engaged
With a fierce Golia of the Stars and Stripes,
Who as a Vulcan wields his glittering blade
Like a luminous serpent in furious wipes,
Or at his foeman savage lunges made.
Quick to the scene young Stuart spurs his steed—
   Followed by others also, blue and gray,—
And as Valcœur, weak as a storm-lashed reed—
   Faint and bleeding, reluctant yielded way—
He, David-like confronts the fierce dragoon,—
   And then the thrust, the charge, the furious wheel,
And clattering clang of sabres sharp, as soon
Combat the magnet draws the tempered steel.
Who won the day—what boots it now to tell
   Since to Americans belong the glory,—
That Captain Stuart, sorely wounded, fell.
   Suffices for the record of our story.

THE HOSPITAL
I shall not describe the hospital for I know
   Most men who have attained to the age I bear,
Which is not old—nor young—have seen the show.
   Its an improvised granary, to which they bear
The harvest grown from seeds by battle sown;
   Nor is this all the fruit,—the long, rude trenches fed
In final gorge, by the silent workers known
   To friend and foe, as “The Gleaners of the Dead,”
Receive, be sure of it, the lion’s share.
   Yet is there here presented wholesome food
For reflection, which if digested with care,
   Must in our moral nature prove the germ of good.
The hero here is often tried by tests
   Far more severe than those which won his spurs,
While pierced by pain to manhood’s high behests
   True as the foremost of its worshippers.
Here white wing’d Mercy comes from distant flight,
   The ethereal silence through of “The Above,”
For Mercy is a true cosmopolite,
   And the harbinger of universal love:
For—lost all vestige of literature and art—
   With naught but void dubious the mind to scan—
And—wring every virtue from, the human heart—
   Her presence would proclaim the Brotherhood of Man!
O, holiest Influence, which alone incites
   The heart to prompt—the hand to do good deeds!
Infuse from central pole in radiant flights,
   Thy soul through universal thought as righteous seeds!
Sweet spirit, brooding like a suckling dove,
   Above this noisome lair of savage man,—
Responding to a silent prayer, I’ve felt thee move,
But never thy latent springs did mortal scan.
Yet I have gazed with rapturous eyes, and long,
Being of Beauty, on thy celestial face!
And like the echo of some immortal song
That stirs the soul, thy very lineaments can trace!
Ah, well, I reckon now—so many years ago—
Thy gentle touch as soft as eider down—
Thy murm’ring voice—the sweetest melody, and low—
That chas’d from my brow—half kissing—every frown!
Forget thee? Never! for while this pulse shall beat,
Of all the rare souvenirs in Memory’s hall,
And hallowed by epics of reminiscence sweet,
Thy own sad face remains the holiest one of all!
Where wing’d thy flight, O, angel Nora, say—
When done thy saintly mission in that prison pen?—
Thou only gleam of God’s eternal day,
That ever shimmer’d on my anxious, spell bound ken!

NOTE.—The text speaks of a “Central Pole,” and as this will doubtless be accounted geographical heresy by some, I will state that the Zetetic philosophy holds that the earth is a disc, the pole being merely the centre of the circle, around the circumference of which are impassable barriers of ice; in short, the Hyperborean regions of the ancients. Professor William Carpenter, 76 Chew Street, Baltimore, Md., is the champion of the theory in America, and his pamphlets on the subject are quite interesting and instructive.

Didst, as the virgin snow, thy chaste and icy face,
Lit, but not warmed by the radiance of love,
Dissolve in carnal Earth’s too amorous embrace,
And rise a seraph to thy own bright home above?
In sooth I know not, and may never know,
Yet in my heart of hearts I’ve reared an altar’s pile,
To which in brooding mood I often go,
To court again the gleam of my sole idol’s smile!
And if since then I’ve knelt at Beauty’s shrine,
A captive bound at Love’s ethereal throne,
It was because the spell was wholly thine—
The golden chain wrought by thyself alone!
And if thou cam’st, Mercy, on her lightsome tread,
With all that soothing love can most avail,
Oft I’ve hail’d thy presence when with cover’d head,
Good sisters of the Church’s sacred veil,
Their lonesome vigils through the silent night,
Like sentinels of love around the couch of woe Kept, and soothed the tortured brow with fingers light,—
Or breathed the Christian’s hope of peace in accents low.
O, sacred sisterhood! ye told your beads
    On every battlefield neath Dixie’s sky,
For sweet charity alone in blessed deeds,
    Which while the gem of truth is sought should never die!

Many days had passed since that devote to strife—
    Blood, and woe,—and silence brooded o’er the plain
Of wild confusion now. The cruel saw and knife
    Had ceased,—yet from an hundred couches, Pain
An hundred brows was racking, and oft the cry—
    “Water! water!” was from parch’d lips by fever wrung,
And Mercy’s ministers with muffled feet, and sigh,
    In their offices all of Mercy’s blessings flung.
Celeste had hastened to her father’s side.
    Whose wounds though numerous were not severe,
And feeling able soon to mount his steed and ride
    Away, he enjoined that she should tarry here,
A constant watcher at poor Stuart’s couch,—
    Who raving delirious now many days.
For his recovery the surgeons would not vouch:—
    “Nurse him, my daughter, as long as Hope her rays
Shall shed,—and when extinguish’d is his lamp of life,
    Direct that his soldier burial be made
With all respect and decency, for in the strife,
    His was the bravest heart—the very sharpest blade!
Generous Stuart! yes, generous as brave!—
    I owe him, Celeste, more than we can repay,
For he sacrificed his life my own to save!”
    Thus General Valcourt ere he rode away.
Celeste had just received a letter from the Prince,
    When the news of Shiloh’s battle filled the land,—
In which his first care was, of course, to evince
    His love for the lady, and the next how he’d planned
Huge campaigns in war—love—polity,—for all
    The infusoria of politics in wild chaotic state,
For harmonious fusion awaited but his call,
    For the blending of affinities, when mate would seek its mate;
And whipping of the “Yanks” was the smallest matter in
    His calculations, a position not at all self-sustaining,
Against which, and many others too, to batter in,
    Daily the Union batteries were training.
Sed—butan—or but—a conjunction which I hope,
Excusing particularity, you will note,
In this conjunction to the Prince, was a rope
Like isthmus,—in tenuity a mote,
That bridged the dark abyss of woe, and connecting
The Past and the Present with the Future’s mystic stream:
On this he stood looking eastward for the gleaming
Of a promise which would vivify his dream.
But (though bathed in a sun burst of glory was the South,
And puissant against all of Yankeedom to cope.)
The Prince, so he wrote, ‘was very down in the mouth,’
And begged but the honor—the privilege to hope!
And Celeste to sympathy inclined, gave away;—
Without a design, I aver, in the matter,
For she’d school’d herself to think “sufficient to the day
Is its evil,” which the idols of the present all may shatter.
To her a contingency by no means fraught
With regret, as she was alive to the fact that since
She’d look’d in her heart and its true meaning caught,
She didn’t love her lover,—had never lov’d the Prince!

There may be a law governing effect and cause
In physics, but he who would divine the rule
Governing women, must decide that all the laws,
Become sport of her caprice, and its very tool.
Besides, had she not pledged the honor of her word?
Condition’d, it is true,—but what if he relying Thereon, bravely did his duty undeterr’d,
As he was,—with the conditions all complying?
She felt, alas, she was not free to say him no.
And what of that other love which was first to ope
The rose leaves of her maiden heart? She laid it low,
And then wrote the Prince a license full to hope.
And sitting now by that low couch on which a life
Its brittle tenure holds by a single thread,
Stirr’d her gentle bosom was by reflections rife,
Of the cross purposes her tortuous way had led;
And breathing in her conscience deep: “Have I, O, God,
“My duty all perform’d? Show me the way of right,—
“My haughty spirit humble with thy chast’ning rod,
“And Sun of Righteousness, his waning orbs relight!”
A ghastly smile then lingers on his quivering lips,
Like the faintest ripple from some vision blest,
And then forth into spoken words thought merging slips
And in softest sigh from distance borne he breathes, “Celeste!” Then did she feel the need of some restraining rein?—

'Twas here,—as o’er dead hopes her dying heart beat toll,—
And when Nemesis whispered, “Vain, all now is vain!”
She felt the iron entering deep into her soul!

But woman’s lips, alas, are sealed by the cold Conventionalities of society,—a Custom as heartless as it is servile and old; Originating in that “good past” when they As mere cattle with the other chattels stood. Why she will thus to slavish forms submit, Is something I cannot see. Indeed, she should Rebel; the custom’s slavish—without sense or wit. Let every year then be leap year in truth,— The same sauce for goose and gander, then who knows How happy would be made the multitude of youth That hang back too diffident to propose! Nine times in ten her offer only would Anticipate his own heart’s warm desires,— For love’s electric, and I think the young folk should The current accommodate with the needed wires. As for me the very thought the barriers of ice, Which like a hyperborean wall of Night, Hedges round my heart,—thaws—; and so very nice The prospect seems, that every time, without a fight I’d yield. But so, alas, does not the world decide; And woman, denied the liberty to act, Must “do the best she can,” with inclination tied, Or not do,—which is oft the wisest course in fact! School girls smell of bread and butter,—so said the great Napoleon of rhyme,—but I’m sure they savor at a later day, Of something infinitely better, if not too late— For soon, you know, the sweetest fruits unplucked decay, For Time feasts on Beauty’s charms to glutton fill, And Age’s angles sharp are but the curves she wore: “You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will,” But the scent of the rose goes in spite of Tom Moore. Celeste had left the bread and butter atmosphere, And was just wasting her sweetness, so to speak, On the desert air, or Society’s, for I fear The distinction’s arbitrary—a kind of mental freak
On the part of geographers, who care not what they say.
    Beauty unadorned in travelling garb, I hold
Is most becoming—specially when the color’s gray,
    The wearer fair, with hirsute glories all of gold,—
And nothing contraband waved its venomed folds
    About her form of symmetry, for Fashion then,
A regnant queen no more intrenched in strongest holds,
    Had flown rejected from the bounds of Southern Ken,
And Patriotism held the coarser home-spun thread,
    As softer far than satin’s silkiest gloss,
And Dixie’s snowy fleece stood at the very head,—
    The Magnus Rex itself of gossamer and floss.
Home again, she pondered o’er the dubious ways,
    That Life its mystic, tortuous journey led,
And in Stuart’s conduct found the mistiest maze
    Of all the mass by dire Confusion fed;
Conflicting thoughts borne of his silence and his sighs,
    Her choking emotions veered from stage to stage,
And an album opening, she read through misty eyes,
    A boyish scrawl upon its yellow, aged page:

    Lines for Miss Celeste’s Album
    “Brief as this page my simple song must be,
       Which breathes a heart-felt wish for thine and thee;
    But ampler pages might be made to shine,
       In rounded verse through many a line,
Nor more of pure sincerity contain,
    Than Friendship’s wish in language chaste and plain.”

    “He loves me not!” she said, and with a heart-wrung sigh,
       The volume closed. “He never loved, I now can read
In these cold lines; alas, alas, that ever I
    Had “stopped to conquer” my sad heart’s sorest need!
I feel abased, O, grovelling soul, by mine own act,
    And despise my former prideless, thoughtless self,—
But, concealing from the world this tale of shame with tact,
    I’ll begin anew my course upon the plane of pelf!
Yes, like the drunkard, drown the very sense of shame
    In daily draughts—until at last so familiar grown,
Shame strikes the blunted sense but as the name
    Of a forgotten something, perhaps once known.”
Thus poor human nature, fallible and so weak,
    Urged by grosser human counsels, works it way,
But not so the mentor in her heart would speak,—
    The very God in man, a latent, slumb’ring ray.
LETTER TO MR. C. A. LEUSCHNER

Evasia, May 1, 1870

My Dear Friend,

Your favor of some time ago,
Lies before me unanswered,—so now I will try—
(School your patience, the story’s a long one, you know),
All your queries to honor in this my reply.
‘Scoop’ the prince! for in him I never had faith,—
A mere soldier of fortune, a seeker of wealth,
Whose smooth, voluble tongue was used as a lathe,
To turn out what his courage failed him thro’ stealth.
He left the army, you know, at Atlanta,
Telegraphing Celeste that a mission abroad
Demanded his attendan instanter,—
And that was the last ever known of the fraud!
Poor Stuart, tho’ brave as an eagle in flight,
Never failed to quail in the presence of woman,—
He once made a blunder, trivial and slight,
Which he construed, I suppose, as an omen
Of evil,—the merest faux pas with Celeste,
Who long since is a model of piety,—
’Twas over some letters, but you know the rest,
It destroyed his taste for Society.
She loved him, I’m sure, to the tip of her ears,—
If in these terms you’ll allow me to bound it,—
That he loved her I know by the proof of his tears,
Then, Carlos, why didn’t they marry? Confound it!
He fled the hospital, they tell me before
Half-healed were his wounds, or regain’d was his strength;
She urged him to go with herself to Encore,—
He declined her request on account of the length
Of the journey, and left the next day for Mobile,—
Tho’ the Valcœur plantation’s this side of the city;
’Twas a misfortune for both,—I always shall feel
They were made for each other,—more’s the pity!
This conduct of Stuart—it wounded Celeste,—
For he called on her name with a maniac’s air,
As she cool’d his hot brow his delirium to arrest,—
Saying: “Come hither, my love,—the mocking birds pair,—
The Spring-time has come; the breeze is caressing
That form which should melt in my own warm
embrace,—
To the tryst then Celeste, and heaven’s own blessing,
In kisses I’ll quaff from thy sweetest fair face;
Let devils fly off with the prince and his race,
For his _parlez vous_ slang and grimace I detest;
At your side then I come, at your side is my place,—
   Live, Celeste, at your side! in your arms die Celeste!”

**NOTE.**—False promises were the articles of merchandise “turned out” by the lingual lathe of Prince Camille.

Of course with all this, after she’s nursed him through
From the shadows of death to the sunburst of life,
She expected, I know, that again he would sue
   To regain all he’d lost,—love—promise—a wife!
Thus they parted, you know, and never met more,—
   At Richmond he served till the war was all over,
And feeling, of course, at defeat very sore,
   Sail’d with Lord Wat de Kallim for London or Dover.
He’s a very large interest in Texas, I’m told—
   A plantation or two on the Coletto branch—
Buried treasure galore in Mexican gold,
   And a princedom they call “the Garcitas Ranch.”
He was seen, I learn, by “Corduroy Bill,”—
   Who jilted—a fact—the Princess Beatrice,—
Some time—long since—on the Ronneburg hill,
   Casting something, it seem’d from a matrice;
But Stoddard is modest, you know, as a maid,—
   So long with the Japs and Chinese he remain’d,—
And so weird was the ruin that he felt quite afraid,
   And so his natural wish to question restrained.
Celeste was near Nashville,—I’ll never forget
   The last stand we made neath the “Bonnie Blue Flag!”
Hood, brave as a lion, his legions had set,
   When burst forth the storm o’er plain, valley, and crag;
The line gave away, and confusion extreme,
   Seemed to seize officers, men, and everything there,—
When an apparition—I swear—It seems like a dream,—
   With a battle-torn flag a woman as fair*
As the goddess of love begged the soldiers to stand,
   And victory yet from the enemy wrest,—
They couldn’t match her courage, but they bore thro’ the land,
   The fame of her beauty, and the name of Celeste!
And now a reply in good sensible prose,
   To always you friend,

Victor M. Rose

*Note.—Gen. Hood relates this incident in his “Campaigns,” etc. The correctness of Mr. Leuschner’s correspondent is doubted in many respects; and especially in regard to the “Jilting of the Princess Bee.”

“Marriage in High Life:

At Encore Thursday last,
The Prince de Saint Ange and Miss Celeste Valcour,
The love-knot by the Reverend Dubbs tied fast,—
And, we learn the happy couple make a tour
   Of Europe; and will next Friday morning sail
From Mobile, on board the blockade runner, Swift.
   The Prince will much our glorious cause avail
Abroad,—as he will the veil of falsehood lift;
   And bathe the picture in a flood of light,
And she will sing the sad songs of Dixie dear,
   Like Jewish maiden in old Israel’s night
Of bondage, to charm dull Power’s drowsy ear;
   By propitious breezes be their voyage sped,
May joy be theirs, and all their prospects thrive!”
   Thus in distant North Carolina Stuart read,
Of the fatal ides of March in ’Sixty-five.

Extract from the Liverpool Courier:
“The American war at last draws to a close;—
   Arrived: with cotton, the Swift—master, Harris,—
Prince and Princess De St. Ange on board,—suppose
   They will proceed without delay to Paris.”

Extract from La Patrie (Democratic):
“Monsieur de Saint Ange, who lately married
   A Southern heiress so his pressing debts could pay,
Grown furious since all his plans miscarried,
   For beating his wife was fined ten francs to-day!”

Extract from L’Ordre (Legitimist):
“Ho! Frenchmen, to the ancien regime so true,
   Since mad France rejects his majesty, the King,
I turn with confidence for hope alone to you,
   And to each loyal heart these good tidings bring—
Know then I’ve purchased Port Breton’s fairy isle,—
   The loveliest gem in green Pacific sea,
Where youthful Pleasure sports the endless while,
   By joys oppres’d like nectar laden bee!
Come, see the maps of veriest Eden, all,—
   See flowering wilds, and trees of choicest fruit,—
For all a plot of ground, a cottage hall,—
   Then allons! allons! each one himself shall suit!
Life never again will witness such a deal
   Of bounties: Call at the hotel de Saquerin
For gaudy maps, and so forth, (signed) Camille
   De Saint Ange de La Roche Jacquelin.”

Extract from La Patrie:

“We ridiculed one year ago the foolish scheme
   Of St. Ange,—but did not know it was a crime
Concocted by a villain whose only dream
   Is plunder; of his thousand dupes, in that short time,
Nine out of ten have perish’d on that bleak coast,
   Many being eaten by cannibals, who would
Daily come for their rations of French roast,—
   Which, though quite lean, they held was very good!
His cultured wife was among the first to go,
   He promising to follow soon, we learn,—
But,—sick and disgusted—for San Francisco
   She left—penniless—on the next ship’s return,—
The government will at once dispatch relief,
   To the few miserable that yet survive;
In the meantime, to apprehend the thief
   Let police and detectives emulating strive!”

Ah, poor Celeste, a lonely stranger and forlorn,—
   The sunny child of ease, to hardship now inured,—
’Twere sad, too sad, to dwell upon each hopeless morn,
   Which but a noon and night of misery insured.
’Twas night, and from the halls of opulence there shone,
   Amid shouts of cheer and gladness many a light,
As listless, seemingly, through the street alone
   She moved, to pass ere morning from the vulgar’s sight.
And San Francisco’s belles and beaux that balmy eve,
   Adown the avenue in happy troupes did teem;
She nothing heard, but with her bosom’s every heave,
   Some pang she felt suggested by the pantomime,—
And fancy sped o’er leagues interminable fleet,
   To light again the shades of childhood’s home,
“Encore.”
“O, could I as lightly speed,” she sighed, “these weary feet,
   And hail those sacred scenes, the loved and lost of yore!”
But a thousand leagues o’er pathless deserts wild,
   Where roamed, alas, the wilder savage, lay between,—
She recked not of bold snow-capped mountains piled
High up against the sky—of weary toil, and hunger
lean—
Of death, perhaps, miserable and abject at last;
The end alone she sought, unconscious of the means,
And a winged Mercury she felt herself as fast,
She fled the recent past with all its bitter scenes.
*     *     *     *     *     *     *

When? where? and how? she knew not: many days had past,
In which her mind seemed blank as the drear desert waste
O’er which she moved a sprite of some fell mortal blast,
In armor spiritual alone encased,—
When marching from the clouded battlements on high,
A host in gray burst on her raptured sight,
Neath Dixie’s banner’d cross—crown jewel of the sky—
With Glory’s stars bedecked, and bathed in Heaven’s light;
And then the brazen tongues of bands ten thousand strong,
Struck up the swelling anthem of eternal praise,
And *In Hoc Vince!* in mellifluous waves along
Was swept a flood of song to the remotest days.
Then knelt she at the foot of a lone crumbling cross,
Which marked the dreamless sleep of some wayfarer slain,
And counting as most precious gain her every loss,
Took up for-aye to bear the Church’s heavy chain.
And then he came,—the spruce young knight in gray of old,
And led her to the portals of a towering pile—
Henceforth her home—where vestals pure communion hold
With Saints, in Life’s Sahara an enchanted isle!
*     *     *     *     *     *     *

And then she waked to life, and knew it was a dream—
But not all a dream, for kind sisters went and came,
And on the noisy thoroughfare below did teem.
The Knights of Commerce sounding high a city’s fame.
She questioned not, and the illusion sweet hugged fast,
The while her humble part performed with pious soul,—

For never churchly recluse from Life’s wreck and blast,
But sacred held some fragment of the broken bowl!
Twice ten years, hi ho! have gone and come the day since
Poor Stuart, so diffident, his departure took
From the hospital; and for twenty years the Prince
In poverty regrets the day that he forsook
Honor, beauty, purity and love, blessings all
Once his very own;—but well, alas, he knows
They’ll come no more to “Open Sesame’s” earnest call,
For Time’s pregnant current never backward flows.

Go where the wither’d lilies on the flag of white
In all the earth find now a lingering bloom alone,—
One lonely castle over which her curtains Night,
     Pall-like is drawing to enshroud Tradition, shorn
In Chambord’s death of its last remaining tie.
     An air of thought mediaeval breathes above the scene,
O’er which the Past’s discarded tools neglected lie,
     Or Bourbon glories speak from many a screen,
By masters traced, of long centuries of fame.
     The end draws nigh, and loyal hearts bow low,
When—flickering long—extinguish’d is life’s flame,
     And the Past into the Present merges slow!

Forth from the solemn scene the Prince emerges now,
     Once more the cold unfeeling world to accost,—
Muttering—striking the while his grizzled brow:
     “The game is played!—the stakes were life,—and all is
lost!”

Stuart with Lord Wat de Kallim went, as told,
     To Europe; where his kinsman of high degree,
The Count of Albany, did a tale unfold—
     Strange, wonderful in regard to his pedigree.
My Lord, who says it’s true as preaching, every word,—
     And he’s pledged to the story tight as wax to stick,—
Was the Count’s prime minister,—and I have heard,
     He thought of dynamiting fat old Mistress Vic
Once upon a time; but other counsels prevailed
     Eventually, and—but we’ll let the story speak
Of all this in its own manner unassail’d
     By curiosity,—a very vulgar freak.

In the ancient walls of the crumbling Ronneburg,
     The Jacobites their last privy councils held,
The Count, Wat de Kallim, and Champ McFerg,—
     To devise the means of levying a Stuart-geld.
Fitly the ghost of this lost cause of long ago
     Its dwelling chose,—for the chaos of crumbling wall,
And ruin’d arches under the ivy creeping slow,—
     Its aisles down which the centuries seem’d to call
In mockery a railing accusation back
     At the Present,—in spirit accorded Just
With old Purpose bent upon the backward track,
   In quest of living principle beneath its dust.
Hither Stuart—himself of the royal blood,
   And, after the Count’s pretty little daughter, next
In succession—came and went in gloomy mood,—
   Always preoccupied, and seeming vex’d.
Wat de Kallim, a perfect master of analogy,
   Everything had studied to the cause at all related,
And who knew by heart the Stuart genealogy,
   Thus to Captain Stuart his position stated:
Old Scotty was grand-nephew to the Count,
   Who at Waterloo led the French grenadiers,—
And hence our Stuart, who yet the throne might mount,
   Was great-grandson of the dashing “Chevalier”
But the Count couldn’t live always, and so he died.
   The little princess, as indeed their interests all,
Were left in Stuart’s charge,—who by pledges tied,
   Stood head of Jacobites, obedient to Duty’s call!

Hail, Victoria, my loved, my native home!
   To me thy memory comes wreathed in a smile,
Such as when pilgrims the arid deserts roam,
   And parched with thirst, first hail the cooling Nile!
Almost together we commenced this earthly race,
   But with us how differently Time has dealt!
Age but imparts fresh charms unto thy queenly face,
   While I the sharp pricks of his silver threads have felt.
And when I in yonder campo santo am at rest,
   Thy streets will be thronged as gayly then as now;
But if by one kind heart my memory shall be blest,
   It little recks me when I shall depart or how.

Hail river that flowest by the slaughter house!
   Or does the slaughter house stand by the river’s side?
How often in thy limpid depths with sudden souse
   I’ve plunged, thy current’s uncurbed course to ride!
Who quaffs but once, ’tis said, thy cooling waters,
   Returns again with thirst no water can assuage,—
But I have thought the magnet was thy daughter’s,
   Victoria,—the conceded loveliest of the age!
But I’m no Paris, to adjudge the award
   Of beauty ’mong the fair; Glenn says Venus resides
In Victoria,—but to whom the apple of Discord
   Belongs, mi-hercule! Who—Who decides?
For I know maidens there myself, full twenty,
   As fair as ever woke to life a poet’s song,—
And then, doubtless, besides these there are plenty
    More, to whom the prize in Justice should belong!
In short, I think them—each and all—the prettiest are,—
    And had I been Paris—thus my counsels guided
By a prudence which no Jealousy could mar,
    Would—vide ut supra—the question have decided!

But man can’t live by bread alone, O, “Gabe” and Fritz,
    Ye caterers greater even then McConnico,—
I daily sighed—no matter where—each meal six bits,
    For thy fare “Epicurian,” “Hall,” “Delmonico,”
The “Thompson House,” or William Hunt’s “Exchange,”
    And with the falling shades of night when spirits droop,
Fancy skim’d with tireless wing the homeward range,
    To catch the church bells chime upon the Gaudaloupe;
And often in those musing hours I’ve seen with eyes,
    Whose latent forces breathed within the very soul,
And lit by rays from hidden sources in the skies,
    Thy hope, Victoria, thy promise and thy goal!
I saw—but ah! the mystic seal of Silence placed
    Upon my lips, forbids that I with pen profane,
Shall limn in vulgar characters the vision traced
    By spirit touch o’er Memory’s holiest fane.
The outlines ’close a giant knight all armor dight,
    With “PROGRESS” emblazoned on his shining shield,
Lead forth the queenliest bride arrayed in white,
    Whose dainty feet e’er prest, to nuptials bound, the field.
Victoria Regina, in words of lettered gold,
    Shines through the olive wreath which twining decks her brow,
While Plenty’s horn, the sage’s cherished dream of old,
    Swings from her girdle with promises enow.
Then years a legion down the vistas of the past,
    Are with their memories—a sacred heap—insured,—
When, lo! a matron, the weeds of woe about her cast;
    Supported by Progress, whose lights burn not as once they burned.
The goal is reached, and from a thousand points,
    The car of Commerce jostles o’er the flags of change,
While the unctious lotions Profit fair anoints
    Merits many efforts throughout the crowded range.
And then some Bard—hence, ah, many, many years,
    Will tell how there did come just at the vesper’s chime,
An ancient man, his cheeks suffused with tears,
And locks snow-white, like the truce flags of hoar
Time,
And stand wrapt in sacred contemplations where
Centuries agone there sported at his feet,
An infant daughter of his lions, and sunny fair,
Whose earliest prattle his own words did but repeat.
Ah, loved she was—and yet—though aged grown,
And bearing with a frowning, foreign, stranger mien,
As if the very spirit of the Past was flown,—
For nothing familiar met the ghost of Don Martin!* 
Or how eftsoons ye wayward Childe’s own flitting shade,
In restless wandering from the Stygian shore,
Like a lone bird—the long aerial journey made,
Sought rest at last within some sainted nook of yore,
To feel that genial glow the wanderer’s heart e’er fills,—
O, sweet nepenthe, conquering every pain!—
That bursts volcanic forth in seraphic thrills,
The granted orison of Home! Home again!
But not more now the adventurous Muse may dare:
The present is mystery, the past a legend strange,
The future—undiscovered—lies before, and there
Is pith alone in the one sad fact of Change!

*Note.—Don Martin De Leon, the founder of the city of Victoria.

Now in the year of thousands one, and hundreds eight,
Plus seventy odd,—Fritz Berner knows the date’s correct—
To whom the doubtful are refer’d.—one evening late,
You perhaps observed (I did) if you’ll reflect,
A gentleman of martial mien and foreign air,—
A little fairy at his side ten Summers old,
Whose ruddy cheeks, and brow so very fair,
Kissed by the sunbeams of her tresses gold,
Pronounced her English origin,—their way
Pursued down “Main” to Nazareth Convent,—
Quid Nuncs, posing, whisper’d “Who are they?”
And Gossip sniff’d on crumb of comfort bent
The fruitless breeze, which failed their bread to butter,—
And by failure baffled very stern, sublime,
Hoarded their spleen, and soon began to mutter
Curses on the “Market house” the thousandth time!* 
A veiled sister quick responded to their call,—
And soon as their glances met, “Celeste!” he exclaim’d,—
Then his error correcting,—“Madam,”—with a bow,—
“I bring my little ward, Celeste Stuart named,
“Sometimes called Countess of Albany, but now
“Simply Celeste,—sure God must have led the way
“To the place, of all others, I would have her come!
“Here little lamb, with a guardian shepherd stay;
“Peace, rest, at last is thine,—care—love—a home!”
“Welcome, little one,” she said, and bending low,
The welcome sealed with a maternal kiss;
Poor orphan’d heart, doom’d ne’er a mother’s love to know,
The draught to thy dry desert waste was bliss!

*NOTE.—When the average Victorian gets mad, he curses the “Old market house”;
and so persistently has this venerable and dilapidated institution been damn’d, that it is
said an atmosphere of sulphurous blue envelopes the whole; of the truth of which, quien sabe!

But who may know the tempest waves that lash’d
The rock of Purpose on fixed Duty’s shore,
As from the clouded Past the lightnings flash’d
The horded gems of Memory’s casket o’er!
Did she then with resolution waxing faint,
One moment waver at the frown of woe?
Or heed her lone heart’s wail of wild complaint?
She crushed it all!—A thousand times No! No!!
But to the matter in hand their converse was confined,
For that gauzy veil by lightest zephyr blown,
Stood between her and a selfish world resign’d,
As impenetrable as adamantine stone!

The “great / Napoleon of rhyme” refers to Byron, and the quote “School girls smell of bread and butter” is
from his Beppo (1817). “Tom Moore” refers to Thomas Moore, whose poem “Farewell—But Whenever
You Welcome the Hour” contains the quoted couplet: “You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you
will, / But the scent of the roses will hang round it still”; it was included in his Irish Melodies, a ten-
volume series published between 1808 and 1834. A section of the poem—from the line “Hail, Victoria,
my loved, my native home!” and ending with “Home! Home again!”—was originally published as a
separate poem in History of Victoria (pp. 92–96) and titled “Victoria Regina.”

**While the Spell of Her Witchery Lingers, and Other Poems (1886)**

While the Spell of Her Witchery Lingers
TO MISS MELITA YGLESIAS

Laredo, Texas, September, 1886

While the spell of her witchery lingers,

'Neath the Moon's waning crescent on high,—
While fresh is the touch of her fingers,

Which pulsed softly the soul of a sigh,—
Let me seize it—the moment auspicious,

To trace the words of a rhapsody rare—
The vision, the acme delicious,

The quintessence of all that is fair!

But there are songs too sacred for trilling,

There are thoughts uttered only Above,
And in the silence of rapture distilling,

Bows the heart at the shrine of its love,
And I write on its tablets by moonlight

The weird notes of a mystical song,
While her fingers with thrills of delight.

Pulse sweetly its rhythm along.

Ah, never was spell more entrancing!

Never maiden, never song half so sweet!
As each charm and each feeling enhancing,

At the tryst in the moonlight we meet!

The Bug

AFTER WALT WHITMAN

A child said, “What is the bug?”

Fetching it to me betwixt two chips.
How could I answer the child?
I do not know what it is any more than he.
I guess it must be a shirt of the fashion,
As the bosom seems to open in the back,—
Or I guess it’s an old boot of the Lord,
Hurled as a remembrance at some human cat,
Bearing the manufacturer’s trade mark somewhere on the sole,
That we may see, and remark, and say “Whose?”
Or I guess that the bug is itself a child,
The produced babe of the entomologist!

The Shirt of Our Daddies

O, give me the shirt with the plain plaited bosom,
    Whose fulness a badge of honesty bore;
The shirt of pure linen, the shirt of good times,
    The shirt of our daddies that opened before!

And away with this monster that buttons behind,
    Whose leanness gives token of gore after gore;
Hail, hail to the ancient, the shirt of the past!
    The shirt of our daddies that opened before!

O, it’s often I sigh, and alas! but in vain,
    For the truth and the peace of the hours of yore
Whose badge was Purity—in fulness and plain,—
    The shirt of our daddies that opened before!

Social Gangrene

Now Sirius raging at his constant post,
The sleeping guard o’er Canis Major’s host,
Fires the blood and all but drives us blind,
Playing the very devil with mankind;
Perhaps mankind, alas, but too prone,
To seek this game and play their hands alone,—
And if a woman in this case appears,
(Such potent power wields the fragile dears),
Beshrew me, else the prosy bill of fare
Will tempt the tongue with tid-bits rich and rare.
How flock’d the gossip buzzards low and great,
To feast o’er Jennie Cramer’s tragic fate:
Poor girl! whose very charms, Narcissus like,
Were fated her own life’s citadel to strike!
Or her’s, twin sister of a later day,—
The saddest verse, perhaps, in Texan lay;
Gone, gone fore’er and there but now remains,
The memory of their Sin with all its stains!
O, why did Vengeance then, a laggard, sleep?
When Crime through Innocence ran riot deep
And dozing Law, like some huge monkey-wrench,
Sat gauging to condone upon the bench!
Yet Vengeance ill directed often slays
The very object whose cause it most essays;
And late a pistol shot was heard whose boom
Cast far beyond its pigmy range a gloom;
And the human life then slain perhaps was not
The worst effect of this too hasty shot:
A ruined home, a matron’s spotless name
Besmirched by all a wanton’s ribald fame,—
A daughter pure as lily when it first,
To kiss the light, the ripened bud-seams burst,
Cast down before a mother’s dubious shame,
As though she’d been the object of his aim,—

And he—no truer in all Knighthood’s ranks,
Ere couched his ready lance for lady’s thanks,—
Must bear deep in his soul the ruthless steel,
Which cruel barbs Remorse’s iron heel!
O, direful Vengeance, then why didst thou wake,
Red handed Murder’s demon thirst to slake?
Ask her whose gentle fingers wove the snare,
With meshes all from Friendship’s silken hair!
Now "Vindication," too, from pistol’s throat,
With brimstone smell among the gossips float;
High spiced this latter carrion in sooth,
Because a minister of God’s own truth
Let loose the instinct of a savage beast,
Upon a brother parson’s corpse to feast,—
Then o’er the dying form thus foully wrong’d,
A publication to the city thronged
Around is made with much ado, when all
Feast on the story of a maiden’s fall!
Her innocence and his own with latest breath,
The dying victim pleads ere hushed in death,
She scorns with all the purity and truth
Of angel innocence and spotless youth,
This protection of her fame so oddly perched,
Which first to vindicate must be besmirched.
Doubtless the prayer her tortured heart upsendcs,
Is, “Save me, o God, save me from my friends!”

* * * * * *

Enough, enough, the repast is too foul!

* * * * * *

Yet is the gangrene eating deep and wide,
Who’ll say the caustic should not be applied?
To Miss ———

O, how transcendent the ideal
Of my fickle fancy dreaming!
Yet they tell me that the real
Doth appear to one as seeming,
Mid the classic cut of faces,
To surpass the very graces.
O, superbly tall and charming
Is her undissembled air,
And the heart that feels her harming,
Owns her, O, divinely fair!
For the syren’s opiate-smiling,
Is of danger all beguiling,
In the sweet Sans Souci there.
Alas, I sing but the ideal,
But one more fortunate will feel,
In the presence of the real,
The thrust of Cupid's steel:
Would I envy him the pain?
Yes, and slay again the slain!

J. A. Mc———

Some frail memorial I would rear,
To Friendship's memory dear,
And add the wish, with earnest so
That all thy hopes their chosen goal
In goodly time may near.

Jake’s Quadrille

S’lect your pardners,—fust quadrille!
Nigger in de cabin, can’t count sebben,
S’lute your pardners toe an’ heel,—
Punkin pie is nigger’s hebbin;
Fust four forrid right along,
Den to your places back agin,—
(Come back, Marse Joe, you’s gwine wrong!)  
Whoop up Humphrey for to win!
Now forrid agin left an’ right,—
O, I wish I had some sour mash!
Swing your partners, hold ’em tight,—
   Den sashay ladies an’ desash;
Chicken in de bread tray, hands all round,
   Turn dem pardners in de shade,—
O, tater an’ possum is de sound,
   Now all lem–on–ade!

This poem originally appeared, with a few minor differences, in *History of Victoria*, p. 55.

De Jolly Summer Time

O, dat water, water million!
   O, dat jolly summer time!
When we danced de big cotillion,
   To de banjo’s jingling rhyme.
Golden slippers, you ain’t nuffin’,
   Windin’ stairs, O git away,
When me an’ Dinah, we is huffin’
   To de banjo all de day!

To Little Ellen

I
Precocious fairy of the far North land,
   Thy name by friendship’s voice was told to me,
Where laved by Mexic waves the Southern strand,
   Retains for aye her kinsman’s claim to thee.

II
Perchance my wish some happiness may greet
   With smile approving in its ceaseless race,—
That we, my little friend, indeed, may meet,
   In kindly conversation, face to face.

III
Unto that time held sacred sole to thee,
   I’ll yield anticipation fullest reign,
And trace thy childish face with pencil free;
But to renew the pleasant task again!

I Am Coming!

I
On lightning wings the message flashed,
   O’er weary miles a thousand long,—
“I am coming!” as it dashed,—
The burden that it bore along.

II
“I am coming!” and his sinking life
   Clutched fast this straw of hope above;
And Death, a space in the unequal strife,
   Was stayed by white-robed Hope and Love.

III
She came, and ere his parting life
   Sought jewel’d rest amid the skies,
Obtained the sacred right of wife—
   To close for aye his sightless eyes.

IV
This done, the fleeting moment’s bride,
   With tearful eyes and heaving breast,
A vestal fast by mortmain’s tenure tied,
   Sought in her widowed home a troubled rest.

Note.—This was the burden of a telegraphic dispatch from a young lady in Illinois, in reply to one announcing that her affiancéd was dying in San Antonio, Tex. The faithful girl hastened to his side, and the “deathbed marriage” was solemnized. The bridegroom died the succeeding day.

Hon. V. O. K.

Of San Antonio, Tex.

I
Let others sing the praise of tyrants fierce,
   Who lord it o’er their subject race;
Or tell the deeds of gallant knights that pierce
The gauntlet to the goal in glory’s race.

II

But of no sceptred monarch do I sing,
   Nor gartered earl with record red;
But none the less my hero is a King,
   Albeit uncrowned his democratic head.

III

No tax on human kind his coffers fill,—
   No subsidies lend unction to his strife;
Unaided, save by his unbending will,
   Napoleon-like his own hand crowns his life.

IV

Where Worth has set her bright and sterling seal,
   And Merit won the smiles of coy Success,
A moment the approving Muse would steal,
   To wreathe his name First of Egalité’s Noblesse!

My Fate

VICTOR EUDE DU GAILLON

Emporté par les vents, la Folie, les Chimères,
Helas pour mon malheur j’ai traversé les mers,
Je pouvais en vingt ans, cultiver les beaux arts,
Vivre dans mon pays sans courrir les hasards.
M’y fixer sur un point y rester pour toujours,
Concentrer mon bonheur au milieu des amours,
Admirer des Gaulois l’entrepide valeur,
Chanter avec leur coq de la gloire et l’honneur.

A “Free” Rendering in English

Blown by the winds pursuing folly fast,
Beyond Misfortune’s sea was my lot cast;
Here the fine arts by Nature’s aid I’ll find,
And leave the hazards of my land behind;
Here, then, contented let me still remain,
To live the past with all its love again,
And sound in Western wilds each glorious name
That lends a laurel wreath to France’s fame.
The Chapparral Cock

I
O, clipper built on legs of speed,  
Thou feature’d frigate of a desert steed!  
The flowing plumage of thy jaunty tail,  
Unfurls in time of need a ready sail,  
And o’er the scorching prairie bears thee fast,  
The treacherous cactus thicket past,  
In which his house the sneaking rate has made,  
Unto the thornier chapparral whose shade,  
A bower seems for thine own comfort made,—  
Thine and the lordly rattlesnake,  
Who hails thy coming with a friendly shake  
Of the symbol’d years upon his blunted tail,  
At sound of which all save thy agile self doth quail.

II
I’ve oft thought, O, bird of lightsome speed,  
When I have watched thee at thy dainty feed,  
What public good thou couldst be made to do,  
If thou couldst attain the size of nursery bugaboo;  
The tongue that hankers for the feed,  
Of the green-jointed centipede,  
Could, methinks, in time of famine sore,  
Daily consume some score or more  
Of Bourbon fossils who remain,  
Like ghosts to chant the sour refrain  
Of caucus servitude; whose vulture eyes,  
The ever-ready carcass spies:  
Whose apotheosis of foul wrong:—  
“Unto us alone the spoils belong!”  
Would have long ago consigned to shame,  
The Spanish Inquisition’s stinking name.  
The reckless taste whose boundless bill of fare,  
The scorpion reckons as a tit-bit rare,  
Could in the harvest of the caucus glean,  
And even digest the old machine.

III
But guileless bird of the distant wild,—  
Innocent as the prattling child,—  
I wrong thee foully thus to bring  
Thee in this dank and fetid ring,  
To the wild thy refuge. O, paisano, take,
And herd thee with the rattlesnake,  
As far less harmless than the green  
Eyed Monster of the Old Machine.

The Unequal Dispensations of Providence

Victoria, Tex., February, 1883

“Parent of nature! Master of the world!   
Where'er thy Providence directs, behold  
My steps with cheerful resignation turn.   
Fate leads the willing, drags the backward on.  
Why should I grieve, when grieving I must bear!  
Or take with guilt, what guiltless I might share?”
—Lord Bolingbroke’s trans. of “Cleanthes”

I

We ken not half the causes that do work  
The many effects that link the chain of life,  
For hidden agencies around us lurk,  
Like flitting phantoms in the night of strife;  
And often counter to the current’s flow,  
Resistless sweeps the silent undertow.

II

Let every life the problem solve anew,  
For the chiefest study of mankind is Man.  
And learn, alas, when doubly vain to rue:  
’Tis not as ye would in life, but as ye can!  
A chosen few reap all the harvest’s yield—  
The many toiling glean the barren field.

III

Thus fate or Providence hath long decreed,  
Through malign prescripts of eternal rule;  
Some claim God’s grace did prompt the deed,  
And will elect from out earth’s busy school  
A chosen few to tread the courts above,  
As children of His great, though mystic love.*

IV

But not for me His justice to impeach,  
The merest mean atom of an earthly clod,
And in so doing reason’s bounds o’erreach,
And libel the name of the omniscient God:
Suffice for us that chalked out is the way
For us to tread as puppets in the play.

V
’Tis man’s whole duty, then, to resign’d,
For linked to duty are his interests all;
No more than this can grasp the finite mind,
Nor should it seek to pierce the future’s mystic wall:
Tis not for man to vindicate the ways
Of Providence through ignorance and praise!

*NOTE.—The love of God is described by competent authority as surpassing all understanding. Speaking of Pope’s “Essay on Man,” which was commenced at his instigation, Lord Bolingbroke says: “It is a noble subject. He pleads the cause of God, I use Seneca’s expression, against that famous charge which atheists in all ages have brought—the supposed unequal dispensations of Providence—a charge which I cannot heartily forgive you divines for admitting. You admit it, indeed, for an extreme good purpose, and you build on this admission the necessity of a future state of rewards and punishments; but if you should find that this future state will not account for God’s justice in the present state, which you give up, in opposition to the atheist, would it not have been better to defend God’s justice in this world, against these daring men, by irrefragible reasons, and to have rested the other point on revelation? God has made our greater interests and our plainest duty indivisibly the same.”—Epistle to Swift

The Caucus Tree

I
When Freedom’s twig a trunk had grown,
And Glory’s sun lit all the land,
The seed of a noxious plant was sown,
And tilled by knavish care and hand.

II
It sprang to power quick and well,
And a geni[e] lived in its boughs alone,
Whose breath, like the Gorgon’s fatal spell,
Transform’d the hearts of her dupes to stone.

III
They sang their peans with selfish aim,
And madly chorus’d the interlude;
Wearing, without a sense of shame,
The collar’d badge of servitude.

IV

Here tricksters bold with shysters came,
As partisans entering free,
To claim the spoils in the party’s name,
And bask in the shade of the Caucus Tree.

“The Caucus Tree” was previously published in the San Antonio Evening Light on May 13, 1882.

Selah

HE

“A little sweet,’ I called thee, yes,—
Though graceful, fair, and tall;
Nor meant thy sweetness less, dear Bess,
For of sugar thou art all!”

SHE

“And I did pout, alas!—
An angry frown my visage o’er;
But, Oscar, we will let that pass,
For I cannot love thee more!”

This poem was previously published in the San Antonio Evening Light on May 13, 1882.

Sonnet

ADDRESS TO A FAIR UNKNOWN

I know thee not,—may never know,
The sound that formulates thy name;
I saw thee only as thou came,
And heedless saw thee passing go.
And of me even less perchance,
   Thy pleasing ken will e’er possess,
Nor deem that once thy merest glance
   Or recognition even less,
Awoke within a stranger’s heart,
   The anxious query scarce supprest,
Of who, and from what realm thou art?
   Thou who wouldst grace the choir blest.
Hail! and adieu, O, fairy one,—
We greet the rising and the setting sun!

Theophrastus

How very brief is life’s ephemeral span,
Which partial Nature dedicates to man,
While for the antler’d stag and cawing crow,
Time curbs its current’s measured flow.
Thus ’neath the weight of o’er one hundred years,
Tyrtamus dies, complaining through his tears.

Theophrastus was the nickname of the Greek philosopher Tyrtamus.

Chickamauga’s Dead

“Zwischen uns sei Wahrheit.”

Suggested by my friend, Mr. C. A. Leuschner, of Victoria, Texas, himself one of the
modest heroes of the furious battle of Chickamauga.

I

The rumbling roll of the muffled drum,
   Strikes up in the silent vale,—
And the voiceless sound of a busy hum,—
   And the echo-less steps of a legion pale,
Rides forth on the mountain gale,—

II

As forth they march in the dubious light
   Of a moon in crescent shed,—
Converging fast from left to right,
To marshal here their phantom might,
For the pale parade of the dead.

III
The gray brigade with a spectral tread,
And the mystic blue brigade,
With the banners twined at the column’s head,
Of Chickamauga’s patriot dead,
Align their ranks for the weird parade.

IV
Here Deschler leads the Texan band,—
The same that tore through the mantling blue,
And charged the iron tempest through,
Bearing as only paladins can do,
The hope of a triumph on every hand.

V
There gifted Lytle, the noblest foe,
If one beloved can be reckoned so,
Rides at the head of this veterans true,
As they march with noiseless tread, and slow,
Seeming to glide through the weird review.

VI
The rustling sound of the marching host,
Dies out on the evening air,—
And leagues away, down the valley fair,
Relieved of toil, and free of care,
A tattoo sounds the drummer ghost.

VII
“They died, alas,” ye oft’ have said,—
But their death was not in vain;
They live for aye who here were slain,—
Their struggle was for man, their gain,
The deathless crown of the deathless dead.

VIII
O, free states north of the fickle line,
Greet free states now on the southern side:
O, wrangling states but weak allied,
Behold a nation now in pride,—
With strength and wealth, and all beside,
And count each blessing thine!
NOTE.—General Deshler, commanding the brigade of Texans, afterwards famous as Granbury’s Brigade, was shot from a field piece, which he had mounted, the better to encourage his men, and was killed by a conical shell, which almost severed his body in twain.

General W. H. Lytle, a cultured gentleman of letters, brave, generous, and noble of soul, commanded an Ohio division of Thomas’s corps, which constituted the center of the Union line, both wings of which being driven back, left the position in the form of a horse shoe, the corps d’armee of General Thomas constituting the point. Here were massed, in addition to some fifty field pieces, twenty thirty-two pounders; “and” says an eye witness, “notwithstanding the fact that the flame vomited from the throats of these guns seemed incessant, their murderous thunder was drowned in the continuous and deafening rattle of musketry.” Tons of lead and iron went chorusing through the air, and trees swayed, crashed and fell, as when the hurricane is abroad in his fury; and men melted away like the fragile fabric of the hoar frost in the morning sun.

Thirty thousand Western veterans, braver and firmer of purpose than the Old Guard of Napoleon, with sixteen shooting rifles in hand, rained forth their leaden hail in one unbroken volley. Into the devouring jaws of this demoniacal saturnalia, Longstreet hurled his corps of thirty thousand men, who, seemingly actuated by a supernatural frenzy, charged with bowed heads, as if to exclude from sight the active instrumentalities of destruction in their front. No human resolution could withstand such determination, born, as it seemed, of desperation from which had been eliminated every element of fear, and all thought of the consequences, and the indomitable Thomas sullenly retired from the field, disputing every foot of ground. In withdrawing the parks of artillery, the cruel wheels passed over the dead and wounded, thus intensifying the horrors of the unearthly scene.

A friend of the author was a member of an Ohio regiment, and in retiring from the field, passed the lifeless body of General Lytle and that of his mangled steed, and bore away the gold embroidered cap of the dead hero as a souvenir of the frightful scenes of that terrible day, but subsequently it was given in charge of a member of his staff; and he does not know what final disposition was made of the body of the gallant and gifted hero-poet.

Hon. Robert Lytle, father of the foregoing, was an ardent friend of Texas when she most needed friends, and he was instrumental, through the medium of the noble ladies of Cincinnati, in procuring for our struggling young commonwealth the famous “Twin Sisters,” which guns played so conspicuous a part in securing Texas independence on the ever memorable field of San Jacinto. The name of Cincinnati should receive the veneration in Texas which is accorded that of Lafayette by the people of the United States; and any monument erected to commemorate our emancipation from Mexican misrule would be incomplete and unjust did it not recite the assistance rendered to Texas by the noble people of Cincinnati.

Blue Eyes

O, soft blue eyes that sweetly beam,
   O, love-lit eyes of beauty rare,
To me each sparkling glance doth seem
   Some fairy telegraph in air.

Dear are the messages I seem
   Within my inmost soul to hear,—
O, eyes of rapture, do I dream?
   If so, I’d dream from year to year!
O, sparkling eyes of lustre bright,
   In glance reflecting heart and soul,
I’d bask forever in thy light,—
   I’d seek no other earthly goal!

Beauteous eyes that never wane,
   Let thy radiance o’er me stream,—
My cherished hopes, I know, are vain,
   But let me ever, ever dream!

Exemplars

For others by distant field and flood,

Where Duty sealed her noble work in blood,
Nor where the many unknown heroes lie,
When ye shall cast about with moisten’d eye,
Should even latent thought be formed to say:
This donn’d the blue and that one wore the gray,
But Truth and Honor bide no pent up bounds,
But walk their posts o’er universal rounds!

September, 1867

The last link is severed that bound me to earth,
   And life contains the chalice of woe,—
It seems but as mockery, the pealing of mirth,
   Which now from the halls of festivity flow.
My destiny accomplished, why linger I still,
   To wander mid scenes recalling the blest?
Of the cup of despair I’ve quaffed to the fill,—
   The star of my fate hath sunk to its rest!

Close forever the book of the future, I pray,—
   I’d scorn the gift to scan o’er its pages;
In the past let me linger where hope shed a ray,
   Round the wreck of my love through the ages.
Disturb not my slumbers, let me tranquilly dream,
   And be awake to the present never,—
’Tis the scenes that I love mid the visions that teem,
   Of my darling departed forever.

Ah, hope which once pour’d round my pathway your light,
Filling the cup of contentment and joy,  
You paled in the gloom of this desolate night,—  
Thy promises false, thy gold but alloy.  
A final adieu to the illusions of life,  
Far above shall I seek for the haven,—  
In the realms of Jehovah the sainted young wife,  
Now joins in the anthems of heaven!

Victoria, Texas, September 9, 1867

**Stephen F. Austin in the Balances (1890)**

*Tekel:* Thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting. –Daniel V:27.

Old Amanecker lived in the “jack oaks” in,  
Near little Brushy, which was and is a creek,  
An adept, ’twas averred, in every sin  
Transmitted ages from the subtle Greek;  
Life was at best a hazard game to him,  
No Sabbath the end noting of the week,  
And such sameness was his record’s level,  
Sandy McGuire swore he was the devil.

He could conjure and cast the magic spell,  
And was as callous as a snake to tears,  
And happiest was when misfortune fell  
Upon, or threatened to excite the fears  
Of some poor neighbor with the frown of hell  
And brimstone burning lake through endless years,  
For ’Ebrew sheol hadn’t then supplanted  
The hell of which orthodoxy ranted.

And reader (if this screed is ever read,  
And if not, to Literature the loss  
Will not be known until the silent dead,  
Or loud gabbing living, recross or cross  
The threshold which soon or late all must tread,  
As destiny the potent die may toss,  
Unless like Helen Wilmans some decline  
To shuffle off this mortal coil of twine.

And live forever and, perhaps, a day),  
Old Amanecker’s nature, too, was thine,  
And even those who loudest rant and pray,  
And who, expert in ruse, can “play it fine,”
And to Credulity but common clay
   Palm off as something next to the divine,
For whited sepulchres on every hand
Conceals the vile corruption of the land.

St. John says the Word was the beginning;
   Guy Bryan says that Uncle Stephen F.
Step’d in ere old Satan set to winning
   Mankind’s pure rectitude in lieu of pelf,
And sin’d not the while all else were sinning.
And periodically tells, and weak,
How he did pitch his camp on New Year’s Creek.

Now, for this bold Byronic song of mine,
   Four characters shall stalk the little stage;
You have the names, but me it doth incline
   The cast to set upon the breathing page,
Which may improve with coming time, like wine,
   And rile complacency to common rage,
For aims Iconoclasm from long taw
To topple o’er an idol made of straw.

Morgante Maggiore first shall burst
   Upon the boards by Amanecker borne,
Then Tom Thumb in Austin, perhaps the worst
   Of the batch, with his flimsy laurels torn;
Then Guy shall ape the ass whose funeral burst
   Breathed Coleridge’s elegy forlorn;
And fair Helen Wilmans wildly flying
The flag of “Faith Cure,” on will relying.

Now, Victor Hugo says twelve months had past
   Since King Louis met his royal spouse, Hortense,
And four hundred miles intervening cast
   To ridicule suspicion and suspense;
But Louis Napoleon was born at last,
   Long after gone the time prescrib’d was hence,
But it wasn’t safe to air the bastard deed,
And lies grow strong with time on which they feed.

Equally legitimate, and no more,
   The home-spun texture of a silly claim
Giving Austin the role paternal o’er
   The Mexican constitution; the fame
Of which did, hesitating, briefly soar,
   And in confusion fall to earth and shame—
A bubble prick’d, a phantasy, no more
Which once the flight of Oratory bore.

So, too, the records scorn another claim,
    Of Austin going by the spirit leg,
Where now flourisheth the city of his name,
    To be by Nature unto Texas wed;
For held he tryst with mortal as too tame,
    this god who only on ambrosia fed;
But that high dame of her proud race the last,
    Could tell how once he woo’d her hot and fast!

His deeds were many, and heroic as
    Surveyor’s charge with compass o’er the plain;
But if to battle he too tardy was,
    His fertile leagues link’d as a giant chain
From the gulf unto old Marion has
    As a monument inglorious lain,
Attesting mutely his keen sense of thrift,
    And the rapacious acquisition swift.

Nor can the heart whose manly pulses beat,
    Attuned to Freedom’s grand, inspiring lay,
Forget that Austin trod with hostile feet
    With Mexicans beside, the tyrant’s sway
And chains o’er brothers to extend complete.
    And marking desolate their vandal way
Unto the far eastern boundary line,
    O’er distracted Fredonia’s pillaged shrine!

Nor that he held back when dear Freedom’s car,
    To fulness freighted with our woe or weal,
Was setting forth to meet the van of war,
    With tories hesitating not to deal;
And if at hazard rescued was the Star,
    It was done ‘neath Sam Houston’s trusty steel,
By the bright boy chivalry of “the States,”
    Who fill’d the ranks to match against the Fates!

And his lot with the gallant Wharton cast;
    The cause to him was new, tho’ already old
To brave Travis and Fannin, who had pass’d
    Through butchery into the silent wold,
Betrayed by tories, on whose counsels mean
Austin had hesitated not to lean!
My friend, Colonel John Henry Brown, declares,
With the fresh simplicity of a child,
That Stephen F. Austin unjustly wears
Laurels of his sire, Moses of the wild,
Who rode a mule ‘mid multitude of cares,
To San Antonio, and a charter filed,
But of his mule, the most deserving fame,
Neither Guy nor John Henry has the name!

He enrich’d his family, that is sure,
And the toad, Gratitude, would swell in size,
To the statue of an ox, nor insure
The skin against the pressure of the prise,
So fatally does sleek deceit allure
To unmask the coup to ruin and surprise;
And now his heirs to the stern truth must turn,
And the fact that Austin wasn’t Texan learn.

For DeLeon, McMullen and DeWitt,
And Edwards, Powers, Robertson, and more,
Not to mention the Guachupins and LaFitte,
Had trod the land and spied its fatness o’er,
And Civilization a strong thread had knit
O’er all the West in settlements which wore
The garb of frugal Plenty and of Peace,
Nor did the tide its eastward movement cease.

Father to HIS people he may have been,
But Texas came from giant loins, be sure,
And in peril did on a giant lean,
Even Houston, than whom none were truer;
Let not the attempt through paint and canvas mean.
The transient thought from Right and Truth allure;
Still may his panegyrist whining speak,
Of that episode on New Year’s Creek.

Coleridge, one stanza will thy braying theme,
But one, in bold relief epitomize;
Justice to Henry Smith he did not deem
Worth while even briefly to summarize,
And oft his screed insidious did seem,
A shaft from cover sped to wing surprise:
As he withheld of rank injustice naught;
The chalice I present with justice fraught.

And nothing else would gallantry allow,
To Helen Wilmans in this truthful tale;
But the story would be long relating how
   Her will can wield for health and life the scale,
Chasing the furrowed angles from the brow,
   And coloring the cheek so wan and pale;
If you wish to join with those who bless her,
At Douglasville in Georgia State address her.

And now Morgante Amanecker may
   Stalk forth a grinning spectre on the stage;
He had not, though every dog has his day,
   And so he shall here at least his page;
Mad vigilantes on his pathway lay,
   With the lynch-noose, conceived in blindest rage,
And catching him as hunters catch a beast,
Swung him, food for the buzzard’s hideous feast.

And if you say, as rare Ben Jonson said
   To lewd Sylvester once upon a time,
"Your rhyme is patent, and the spirit dead,"
   I answer, “Yes, but true, although in rhyme,”
And point you to the notes, so plainly wed
   To truth, and in plain prose, defying Crime;
For truth I love where e’er her haunt may be,
And justice for the low and high degree.

Notes

*New Year’s Creek.*—For forty years, my memory does not extend further into the past, the public has been regaled periodically with the early exploits of Stephen F. Austin, which epic in prose monotonously reaches the climax in his quietly pitching his camp on a creek, the day being January 1st. The object sought is so latent that I could never guess the purpose of the chronicler, unless he sought to nominate Austin as a competitor of that King of France who with ten thousand men marched up the hill and back again.

Mr. Bryan boasts publicly of his invaluable accumulation of data bearing upon Austin’s career; but he has been so unfortunate with the few new facts he has aired that it is doubtful if he will soon give of his jewels to the vulgar public; which, however, has grains of salt for all he may impart.

*The Mexican Constitution, Etc.*—In his speech presenting Austin’s portrait to the House of Representatives in the year 1889, Judge A. W. Terrell claimed that Austin was the author of the Mexican Constitution of 1824; and in reply to a letter asking his authority for the assertion, he wrote as follows:

> Austin, July 2, 1889
>
> Victor M. Rose, Columbia, Tex.:
> Dear Sir: Answering your inquiry I state that Hon. Guy M. Bryan stated to me that he had the original draft of the Mexican Constitution of 1824 in the handwriting of Stephen F. Austin, and I think he said Austin’s journal stated that he drew it. Certainly he asserted that Austin was its author. It might well be. He was a most accomplished man.
Almonte knew that Austin had been a M. S. Dis. Judge, and he stood high in 1823 with the Mexican revolutionary chiefs.

Truly yours, etc.,
A. W. Terrell

But the Constituent Congress was not convened until after Austin had left Mexico, the emptiness of the claim is too palpable to be seriously considered. The constitution was adopted one year, five months and seven days after Austin’s departure.

“Another Claim, Etc.”
(Stanza x)

Mr. Bryan informed me that Austin, early in his Texian career, penetrated the wild, infested by hostile savages, to the site now occupied by the city of Austin; and that so charmed was he at the prospect, that he selected Capitol Hill as the site of his future residence; and caused the ground to be surveyed, filing the field notes, etc.; and he assured me the records of the Land Office would confirm his statement. I wrote a letter of inquiry to the Commissioner, and received the following reply:

General Land Office
Austin, Tex., June 28, 1889

Mr. Victor M. Rose, Columbia, Tex.:

Sir: I am in receipt of yours of the 25th inst., and in reply have the honor to state there is no evidence in the Spanish Archives of this office of any survey made to cover the site of the city of Austin for S. F. Austin, his partner, S. M. Williams, or any of the Mexican grantees of large concessions of land for whom Austin and Williams acted as attorneys. There is in existence an inchoate title to Samuel M. Williams, attorney of R. Aguirre and T. Vega for four leagues of land on the right bank of the Colorado, opposite the site of the city of Austin. This title was never perfected, surveys having been made subsequently, and titles issued to the same parties on the Brazos River and Williamson’s Creek, now McLennan and Williamson Counties. The site of the city of Austin was covered by the survey of an eight-league tract titled to T. J. Chambers, in 1835. This claim was in litigation for many years with locators and purchasers of city lots; it was compromised in part and finally seems to have died away after General Chamber’s death. I am,

Very respectfully,
R. M. Hall
Commissioner

“Unto Texas Wed”

It is a favorite expression of Col. Bryan to speak of Texas as the Bride of Austin. “That high dame,” Mrs. W. H. Wharton.

“If to Battle He Too Tardy Was”

“If Austin had had his way, the spring of ’36 would have witnessed the overthrow of liberty in Texas as had occurred at Zacatecas the previous April. Under his brief command, from October 11 to November 24, 1835, just forty-four days, the army dwindled from 1,100 to 500; Bowie resigned a position on his staff in disgust, and the troops at Goliad repudiated his authority. Had Austin remained fifty days in command, Bexar would not have been taken, as all the men would have gone home, as many had already done.”

Old Texian Letter

“Rapacious Acquisition”
“Austin’s glory was diminished by facts never published, viz.: (1) That he caused the most valuable leagues in his colony, before he was entitled to them, to be reserved for himself as premium lands. (2) In more cases than one, where poor men had selected the leagues to which they were entitled, he cast aside their claims and gave the lands to rich men, notably in the case of the league granted to George Sutherland on the east side of the Navidad. * * * Austin was a selfish, narrow-minded and jealous-hearted man. He lacked the essential elements of greatness in character. * * * His letters stamp him as a man of selfish and contracted views. Where, outside of speculative, business aspects of his colonial engagements, did he ever do one noble, disinterested act?"

Old Texian Letter

(Stanza xii.)

“Austin’s conduct in the Fredonian affair was reprehensible in the extreme; it was disingenuous, selfish and cruel. The cause of Edward’s, at Nacogdoches, in 1828, was no less righteous than that of the revolution of 1835–36. Austin aided the Mexicans in driving Edward’s colonists beyond the Sabine, in defiance of every principle of right; and he would have followed the same course in 1836 had his following not dropped off. (He received 500 votes for President, and Houston 5,000; and this after he had made atonement in part for his sycophancy to the tyrant.) ‘Austin’s Christmas letter to R. R. Royal, a quasi Tory, shows that he was the malignant enemy of Texian independence, and the enemy of all who favored it.’”

Old Texian Letter

The portrait of Austin hangs on the wall of the House to the right of the Speaker’s stand, as requested by his kinsmen presenting the same. “I do not think the past generation had anything to do with placing the portrait (in the old Capitol); but that it was put there by the keeper. * * * Later on, the journal shows that Hon. Guy M. Bryan offered a resolution, authorizing the Speaker, with a committee of two members of the House, to arrange for Houston’s portrait. Bryan, of course, was one of the two, and they decided to place Houston on the left of the Speaker’s stand. * * * If the stupidity and clannishness of a nephew could bring disgust on the memory of him who ought to be presented favorably to posterity, after discounting his mistakes and vacillations in the hour of trial, then Stephen F. Austin would be made almost contemptible in the eyes of honorable men.”

Old Texian Letter

Hon. Guy M. Bryan claims to be the literary executor of S. F. Austin. Austin died in 1836, and Mr. Bryan is now (1890) sixty-eight years of age; hence he could not have been over fifteen at the time of the former’s death. Rather a precocious executor, “don’t it!”

Last month, ex-Governor Fitzhugh Lee declined to act as marshal of the day during the ceremonies attending the unveiling of General Robert E. Lee’s statue in Richmond, on the ground of relationship; a delicate regard for propriety wholly wanting in the brazen conduct of Austin’s kinsmen in asking the place of honor for his portrait.

Prose Writings

The section contains a representative selection of Rose’s writings that were published in newspapers of the day. Included are the editorials and articles that he wrote while serving as editor of the Victoria Advocate, Laredo Times, Old Capitol, and Myrtle Springs Herald, as well as letters and articles that he submitted to the Advocate and the Galveston Daily News at various times over his career. Other than his essay on Camp Chase, which appeared in Ross’ Texas Brigade, no selections are included from his historical volumes because of their wide availability.
Because nineteenth-century typesetting was a manual operation, performed by a compositor working from longhand copy that could difficult to decipher, obvious typesetter errors (upside-down punctuation marks, transposed letters, substitution of similar letters such as $u$ and $n$, etc.) have been corrected. Nineteenth-century spellings have been retained, but Rose’s idiosyncratic spellings have been clarified wherever confusion might otherwise result.

**Editorials and News Items in the *Victoria Advocate***

**Hamilton Men**

It appears that some of those who followed Hamilton in the late election, as, for instance, the Austin Republican, are pursuing a very undignified course. That journal is evidently seeking to get into the good graces of the party in power, and heal the breach between the Hamilton men and the Davis men. That is, to our notion, very undignified, and subjects those who make these overtures to the suspicion that they are moved by an anxiety to get an invitation to the feast of fat things.—When a contest has been decided, then the overtures for reconciliation should come from the successful party, and not from the party that has been defeated. That a reconciliation ought to take place is certain, but it never will take place at the suggestion of the vanquished. When the Confederacy was whipped, it was the business of the victors to talk of mercy. When the Confederates talk about it, as they do in almost every Confederate paper, they manifest their weakness, and place themselves in a false position.—The Hamilton men should maintain a dignified silence. If the Davis men bestow peace upon them, accept it, but for Heaven’s sake seek private employment before crying to obtain that which is public.

The above we clip from *Flakes’s Bulletin*, the same paper that came to us last week “as implacable as fate, and as obdurate as a fury,” waging unrelenting war upon Radicals and Democrats alike. Really, the *Bulletin* is a nondescript. He objects to his “ancient neighbors” definition of the word Conservatism, and feigns indifference, as the *News* will be advocating Democratic principles in three weeks. He accuses the Democrats and Radicals of attempting to bleed the State, until exhausted of the last drop, she will totter and fall in her tracks. Then the *Bulletin* is neither fish nor fowl. Flake says the offers of reconciliation should come from the victors; “and if the Davis men bestow the peace,” accept it, *i.e.*, go over to the Rads. Now is this not a very dignified course for Mr. Flake to be advocating. What will he do, when among his new friends, in regard to the Loyal League and the Legislature, “to of the three public bodies, only that exclude reporters; for which as assertion Mr. Flake is the authority. “But for Heaven’s sake seek private employment before crying to obtain that which is public.” Does not this advice smack somewhat of “sour grapes.” “When the Confederates were whipped it was the duty of the victors to talk of mercy.” Most assuredly it was. The *Confederates* (but we thought “their drums had beat the last tattoo”), have not talked of mercy, but with admirable patience for months after the surrender awaited the victors to proffer the olive branch.—Sick with hope deferred, and believing that the terms of the victors were unnecessarily unjust and harsh, the *Confederates* claimed rights guaranteed to every citizen. The recent election has swept all such illusory hopes away; and during the Gubernatorial campaign a large majority of the followers of Gen. Hamilton
were ex-Confederates. Mr. Flake was one of the Captains who led them on to the civic battle. Surely his heart was in the movement; he could not have been influenced by the hope of public patronage. And now that the battle is lost, will he desert his followers simply because they can be of no more service to him, and pass over to his political foe, because, forsooth, they are flushed with victory, and enjoying the spoils of office, and he seek absolution for the past, and hope to find in the Radical ranks, the shortest road to public preferment.—Most seriously, if the Bulletin is a true exponent of the party it co-operated with in the late election, then were nine-tenths of its adherents misled; and had the “cloven foot” been thus exhibited before the election, the Conservative vote would have been but a corporal’s guard. But we imagine Mr. Flake will see the hopelessness of his “peace” feeler and he himself again by the time his “ancient neighbor” gets back into the Democratic fold.

“Oh what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practice to deceive.”

WAS NOT KILLED.—Some individual, instigated probably by “auld Sooty,” and certainly without the fear of creating false alarms, reported to the commander of the post that a number of “God and Liberty” exiles, with whom a freeman, fraternally engaged in the most interesting and highly moral game of monte, did (the aforesaid “God and Liberties”) set upon the “ward” and with pistols, did then and there end a career that should have had a more quiet exodus from this vile earth. Lieut. Larke sent out a detail to investigate and arrest the “God and Liberties,” who found the “ward” quietly pursuing his avocation in the corn field, and who insisted that he was not dead. It is decidedly wrong to originate false alarms, and the offence should be punishable. Who started the report we know not.

A DENIZEN of the livery stables in this city, and decidedly a b’ho’y, carrying at all times in his hat brick of no small dimensions departed with a load of passengers for the “Queen City,” of the bay a few days since. Imagine our horror when, a few days after Falstaff stuck his phiz into our sanctum door, exclaiming in almost inarticulate syllables, “Here’s your valentine!” We look up, and lo! the poor fellow’s proboscis was the size of a half grown watermelon, his eyes nearly closed by the swelling of his face, and to make a countenance not angelic at best—more hideous; several broad, deep gashes, with ounces of congealed blood surrounding them on every side, stood out in bold relief.

“Why is this thus?” we ventured to ask.

“Eight Lavaca butchers set upon me, and the doctors will have work there many a day mending ribs.” Subsequently we learned that four men had attacked him; then two; finally that in a state of drunkenness he had fell from the coach, with the results above enumerated.

SPRING.—Already, though encroaching upon the “Frost King’s” realm, fairy Spring has unfurled her colors to the breeze, and with genial sunshine greets her adoring subjects with brightest smiles. The earth is covered with soft green foliage; a carpet of Nature’s handiwork for her dainty feet, and timid flowers cautiously peep above the ground to do her homage. The little songsters of the wood twitter notes of praise from every leafy bough, and earth itself
acknowledges her royal sway. The Queens of men have honors within the circumscribed limits of their titular principalities; but it is only for Spring Queen to command the adoration of a world. Her sway extends alike over peasant and the King. She enters with the same familiarity the cottage of the laborer and the palace of the Prince. Hers is a mission of joy to all; an equal distribution to the high and to the low. Her favors are far beyond the reach of sordid gold; like the scriptural pearl, “without money and without price.” Reveling in her blessings, the beggar is as rich as the millionaire. There may be different grades in life. In nature men, like water, will find a level. The “grim spectre of the glass and scythe” claims his due, and the slimy worm enters indifferently the wooden box of the pauper and the grand mausoleum of the Monarch.

—Victoria Advocate, February 26, 1870

Letters to the Victoria Advocate

Victoria, August 28th, 1879
To the Editor of the Victoria Advocate

Some time since Mr. B. D. Culp originated a scandalous report to my disparagement, to the effect that I had disposed of a horse and saddle the property of himself. If all my friends, whose good opinion is dear to me, knew the author of this lie as I do, and as many other respectable citizens of Victoria do, I would deign no notice of his utterances. The subjoined statements are deemed sufficient to refute calumny. With apologies to yourself and readers for thus introducing a purely personal matter upon their attention, I am very truly,

V. M. Rose

State of Texas, Victoria County.

This is to certify that we can swear to the fact that V. M. Rose did, on or about March 1, 1879, purchase of B. D. Culp one sorrel mare and saddle; that V. M Rose had possession of said mare until he sold her to August Liebman[n] about June 1st. And I, J. W. Rose, will testify that B. D. Culp acknowledged to me after the sale to Liebman, that the mare was the property of V. M. Rose.

J. W. Rose
M. M. Rose

—Victoria Advocate, August 30, 1879

Victoria, Sept. 10, 1879
To the Editor of the Victoria Advocate

With apologies for again venturing to intrude upon your space, I promise to be brief, and that this shall terminate my side of this dirty controversy. In his extremity Mr. Culp seeks to divert attention from the original charge by insinuating another in regard to the land matter. About three years ago I desired to avail myself of an interest that I possessed in the land in question. As the minor had no legal representative, Mr. Peticolas advised me to appropriate
timber to the extent of $200, (my interest in the land being fixed at that amount according to the appraisement of Messrs. Jas. S. Ferguson and S. H. Barton, who were sworn and deposed before Mr. A. B. Peticiolas, notary public) and to execute a deed to all the land to the minor child. I supposed I had concluded a trade for the timber to Mr. H. M. Tippett, and caused the deed to be recorded prematurely, for Mr. Tippett declined taking this wood. Mr. Peticiolas wrote the deed in question, and the instrument, in his hand writing, can now be seen by calling on Mr. J. E. J. Moody, county clerk. I informed Mr. Culp of the existence of this deed, and we frequently conversed of it pending the trade, both believing that it could prove no bar to the consummating our trade, as there had been no consideration paid me, and no legal delivery of the deed. How wanton, and reckless, then, is the in[n]uendo of Mr. Culp that he accidentally [sic] discovered the deed—recorded, as it was, and held up to the eyes of the world for inspection. Reckless must I have been of consequences to offer the commission of an act whose falsity would have been as apparent as the noon-day sun. As Mr. Culp is not my conscience keeper, I shall not notice his impudent remarks respecting my conduct, and no wise connected with the business in hand. Driven from his original position, I trust a candid public will be able to judge between us when the statement of Dr. Gartrell, hereunto appended, is read, as I conceive he must be convicted by the very testimony he has invoked.

Mr. Culp intimates he made a payment on the land in question. It was on this account the money was paid: the amount of said payment being just $10 on an investment of 106 cords of wood at $2.50 per cord, less, say, $1.75 for cutting and hauling, leaving 75 cents per cord net, or $79.50, one half of which being mine, leaves Mr. Culp indebted to me on that contract $39.75. Besides, I authorized him to sell 320 acres of land in McMullen county, promising him one half of all he received over and above about $250 due Judge C. Carsner. So, at the least possible calculation, Mr. Culp is indebted to me over $100—sufficient to shield him from loss for a mare that he acknowledged to Dr. Gartrell he had “priced” to me at $20, and for a saddle valued at $10. How absurd is his statement that he made me a payment on the purchase of land before the deeds were executed and so little has the loss of the alleged payment troubled him since that I have heard no complaint whatever; nor did his conduct denote that of a man who had been robbed of a horse and saddle. “He only told it to my friends and relatives,” and though he whispered it to South Carolina, “it was to have remained intact” with my friends, etc. If condoning a crime is what he means, I am not the man to assist him. I do not wish it to remain “intact.” I desire that he go to the full extent of the law, and I will see that he does not lose the opportunity. But if this is not the first instance in the history of mankind where the honest victim wished to cover up the crime, and the bold embezzler was bent on an insane and suicidal intent to unearth the facts, then have I read to no avail.

The foregoing is a truthful expose of all my transactions with Mr. Culp. I never proposed to give him the land in McMullen county for the mare. The statement is ridiculous and absurd. I considered the mare already paid for, and that Mr. Culp so regarded it, his statement to Dr. Gartrell is convincing proof. If I cannot prove each and every allegation made above by perfectly credible witnesses, I am ready to fall by the record in the case.

To show the ingratitude of Mr. Culp, I would state that while he was disseminating these slanders, and long after, he was the recipient of my bounty, as I had pastured stock for him gratis; and it has not been ten days ago since he sent for the last animal of his remaining in my mother’s pasture.
I was woefully deceived in Mr. Culp; I dealt with him in a spirit of generosity and open-handedness; I trusted him as a gentleman and a friend. Let the world judge the return he has made me.

V. M. Rose

Victoria, Sept. 10, 1879

TO THE EDITOR OF THE VICTORIA ADVOCATE

As Mr. B. D. Culp, with whom I have but a partial acquaintance, has seen fit to lug in my name without my knowledge or consent into the controversy with Mr. Rose, I wish to state that my conversation with that gentleman was merely incidental, and that he had no warrant to use my name at all. Meeting me on the street one morning soon after the sale of the mare in question to Mr. Sitterle, Mr. Culp asked me what remedy he had in a case where a man had taken his mare and sold her. I informed him that he could recover his property. He wished to know what action he could take against a man who had so despoiled him of his property. I replied: “Prosecute him for embezzlement.” “But,” he replied, “I priced the mare to Rose, and there remains some unsettled business between us.” I then pointed across the street and said: “There is Rose now, go to him.” “No,” replied Culp, “he is drinking.” I replied that I had just passed him, and exchanged salutations with him, and that he was sober. Culp then requested that I should say nothing about the matter. If my language conveyed to his mind the impression that he could not recover his property if it had been illegally taken from him, he certainly places a different construction on the definition of words than does Webster or Worcester.

J. L. Gartrell

—Victoria Advocate, September 13, 1879

From Nockaway to Goliad

Kemper City

Victoria Co., May 24th, 1880

To the Editor of the Victoria Advocate:

In company with Capt. G. O. Stoner your reporter paid a dying visit to Goliad last week. The route thither from Kemper lies through the pastures of Messrs. J. A. McFadden, Stoner, Clarke and Fleming, which brings us to the county line, near the famous “Hall’s Point” plantation and pasture, now owned by Senator Lane, who has added a commodious barn to the premises, renovated and painted the nice frame dwelling house, and instituted other reformations that add to the beauty of probably the best farm in Goliad county. A splendid crop of corn is being grown upon the farm. From this point to the town the road passes through pasture after pasture, in all of which the nutritious grass was knee high, and the cattle fat in consequence.

The distract court was in session, Hon. H. Clay Pleasants presiding, and S. F. Grimes, Esq., ably representing the state. From Victoria Jas. S. Ferguson and R. J. Kleberg, Esqs., were in attendance on the court. Your reporter is pleased to note that Mr. Gus Patten, whilom a Victoria Boy, passed a very creditable examination, and was admitted to practice at the bar.

Among many friends encountered we cannot refrain from mentioning the courteous and efficient county clerk, Mr. James A. Burke, who, if deserts were recognized, would be governor.
of Texas. In the *Guard* office another Victoria boy was found at the “ease”—Frank Dickson—who renewed his pledge of fealty to the “city of roses.” Friend R. T. Davis, genial and hospitable as is his wont, was on hand. “Dick” favors the Camargo railroad despite old Simon’s anathemas upon all who do so. This road would run through the extreme southern corner of Goliad county, and would prove the death of the present flourishing and picturesque town. Our Goliad friends had better “lock their shields” with the Nockaway phalanx and induce the El Paso road to come to Alligator Head. This road will be but a feeder for Galveston at the expense of all West Texas. Your absent editor saw this matter in its proper light, and like a vigilant sentinel, sounded the notes of alarm. Goliad county has settled up with thrifty farmers who require a railroad to market their crops; but they should not, in their eagerness to get one, ignore their future interests. Vested rights are difficult matters to re-adjust, and a railroad the hardest of improvements to alter or amend.

Your reporter left the historic “burg” impressed with the idea that political “honors were easy.” The DeWitt delegation assured him that the title had set in the “Old Alcalde’s” favor, and the Sayers’ opposition was the old story of the fly on the bull’s horn, etc. Mr. Davis, however, subsequently informed him that “O.A.” was doomed, and that it was a just retribution etc. The intelligent voter can select sides and sail in. On one point of interest, however, Mr. Davis was found all right. He advocates a “coast district” in the forthcoming apportionment of the state, and the ———[illegible] will, doubtless, lend its ——— [illegible] to the attainment of that ——— [illegible] summation at the proper time.

The “tiger” doth mostly abound here, and the boys fight him “open and above board.” Why Goliad should seem to have a monopoly in the bald-headed men business, no attempt will be made to investigate. But such is the fact. Your reporter saw more bald heads glistening in the court room in ten minutes than could be found in Victoria in ten years. Your reporter hopes this is not the work of indignant wives. *Quien sabe?*

Capt. Tom Blair, and Mr. Jos. Doughty, the former from Bee, the latter from Refugio, were in attendance.

V.M.R.

*—Victoria Advocate, May 29, 1880*

The prominent cattleman James A. McFaddin is mentioned frequently in the “Kemper Kernels” columns, but with the erroneous spelling “McFadden.” The *Guard* was Goliad’s weekly newspaper, edited by Frank Dickson. “Old Alcalde” was a nickname for Oran M. Roberts, who was serving as governor at this time. The slang expression “fight the tiger” meant to gamble at cards, specifically the card game faro.

A Peep into History

Kemper City, Nov. 20, 1880

*To the Editor of the Victoria Advocate*

There is no doubt but that the *treasonable south* was a more potent factor in Garfield’s election that either the “solid south,” or the “rotten south.”

With what consistency the charge can be made by the eastern states, a few facts will suffice.
New England—so prolific of isms, is the birth place of secessionism. The war of 1812 was declared by these patriots “an unholy contest waged against a friendly power;” and in convention at Hartford, Connecticut, measures were inaugurated looking to a peaceable dissolution of the union of the states. A petition numerously signed, demanding the withdrawal of the eastern states from the union was presented in the house of representatives by the venerable John Quincy Adams.

If secession is treasonable, all these petitioners were traitors, and Mr. Adams as well as the American congress were guilty of misprision of treason.

Mr. Garfield’s party aimed a death blow at the sovereignty of the states by the legislation known as the “reconstruction acts,” alleging that this doctrine, which the Hartford convention had invoked fifty years ago before, was the pernicious enemy of centralization. And this in face of the fact that opposed, and successfully, the “Dred Scott” decision by the “higher law” than the American constitution, i.e. the sovereignty of the northern states. If treason is possible against a federation of states, this was an overt act of treason. Certain it is that no southern statesman ever advocated such an extreme view of state sovereignty. When Mr. Garfield’s party deemed the work of consolidation sufficiently advanced to subserve their purposes, we were allowed a breathing spell. But in the contested presidential election of 1876, we see Mr. Garfield again the advocate of extreme states rights views; and we know that the prize was rewarded to Mr. Hayes in conformity to the doctrine that congress could not go behind the seal of a sovereign state.

The doctrine of state sovereignty may have been preached more at the south than the north; but it has been more often practically applied north than south of the Mason and Dixon line.

The secession of the southern states in 1861, was at least a manly unselfish avowal of those principles, however ill advised the act may have been; and it must appear pharisaical to a disinterested observer to hear the people of the north addicted to the same practices through a long course of years fight their political battle upon this absolute heresy.

I do not claim that the democratic party can show a perfectly consistent record; but I do claim that it has never doubted the ability as well as the right of the people to govern themselves.

Mr. Garfield is glad that the doctrines of Hamilton are becoming more popular. Gen. Grant is the greatest living exponent of those doctrines. Grant will supercede [sic] Garfield in 1884, and if elected, the dream of Alexander Hamilton will be realized. “The state” will then mean the entire union, and the potent usurper can consent[ing]ly employ the grandiloquent expression of Louis XIV, “The state, I am the state!” This is the interpretation of the handwriting on the wall.

Respectfully,
Victor M. Rose

—Victoria Advocate, December 4, 1880

Thrall’s History of Texas: A Severe Criticism on the Labors of the Writer—Prominent Errors in the Work Pointed Out and Corrected by a Critical Correspondent, Who Desires the History to Contain Facts.

To the Editor of the Victoria Advocate:

The public have for some time been looking for the issuance of this work, which it was supposed would embody concrete improvement upon the numerous and hastily composed works upon the
same subject that have previously been read and condemned. Yoakum’s history came nearest the necessary standard, and we indulged the hope, that Mr. Thrall, with this pathway already made through the wilderness, would avail himself of his predecessor’s facts, and correct his errors. But after a perusal of Thrall, we think Yoakum must yet remain the standard history of Texas; and in the field is open to, and the want engendered for a “History of Texas.” A facetious friend remarks that a perusal of Thrall’s history only created a desire to read a history of Texas on the principle, we suppose, of Byron’s Scotchman who ate kittiwicks [sic] before dinner as a whet to his appetite.

The mechanical execution of the work—printing, binding, illustrations, etc. appear to be good; but one is impressed with the idea from the first page, that the author “is in a hurry,” “brevity is the word, and that we are merely to skim the surface of the occasion.” Indeed, the author seems to hold anecdote and gossipry as far beneath his province of historian; and that it is his especial privilege to be brief, unsatisfactory and dull to an intolerable degree. We reproduce the language of an eminent English critic in this connection, as he has stated the verdict of mankind on this subject in a much happier vein than we could hoped to have done; “A traveler to write a readable book, should be essentially given to gossipry. A stiff stateliness is nowhere so much out of place. Nay, even in history and biography, the lapse of time generally establishes the gossipry of the book as its only valuable feature. Who reads Boswell’s life of Johnson for aught beside! It is the great charm of Froissart and DeComines, and makes the writing of Montaigne inimitable. Homer indulges it; and we have learned that Aristophanes and Terence are more valuable to one who desires to gain an insight into the spirit of Grecian and Roman life, than Thucydides or Livy. No book, after Montaigne and Elia, is so delightful to me as a genuine old traveler, after Maundeville.” Thrall’s history is the casket or husk which, indeed, envelopes the period of time within which contained the cream of Texas Chronicles. But, alas! the gems are wanting; the husk is empty; and the reader must be content with the hurried announcement that the Alamo fell; Fannin’s command was massacred, and San Jacinto won by Houston, without any relation of the exciting episodes that constitute the main charm to the picture. There is more pathos in Kennedy’s unpretentious narrative of Ross and his beautiful Mexican sweetheart than in the eight hundred and sixty pages of Thrall, and there are fewer mistakes, too. Indeed, the work before us, though it is announced as “the second edition, carefully revised,” abounds in errors too numerous to mention. That the majority of these are caused by inadvertence is no excuse. The historian should not only be absolutely true and correct in all his data, but he should be above suspicion. We will subjoin a few errors to illustrate the subject. To extract all would leave but a fragment—a skeleton of “history” remaining. On page 246. “Three non-combatants were spared—a negro servant of Col. Travis, Mrs. Aisbury and Mrs. Dickinson. Lieut. Dickinson, with a child on his back, leaped from an upper window in the east end of the church, but their lifeless bodies fell to the ground riddled with bullets.” From this statement, we infer that she, around whose mournful story hangs such a halo of sadfulness and pathos—the “Babe of the Alamo,”—was a myth, and that Guy M. Bryan’s eloquent appeal delivered in the Texas legislature in her behalf, was the raving of a madman. On page 420. “Gen. Sheridan represented the Congressional element, and was appointed by Mr. Stanton, Secretary of War.” This will undoubtedly prove “news” to the average American politician. On page 431, we read of Capt. McAnnelly; and elsewhere of “Castroljon” (Castrillon) “Somervell” (Somville) etc. In speaking of the Tejas tribe of Indians, the author spells the name “Tehas,” as the Mexicans pronounce “Texas,” but the orthography is incorrect. On page 438 the Indian chief Jose Maria is called Rosea Maria—an error similar to the next preceding [sic] one. On page 407 we are gradually
informed that Lee surrendered at Spottsylvania courthouse. On page 435. “The vote was counted, and Messrs. Coke and Hubbard duly installed into their respective offices, and in this connection we are informed in a foot note that “soon after the meeting of the legislature, Mr. J. W. Flanagan was elected to the United States Senate.” Leaving the impression that this “fine old Republican gentleman” was the choice of a Democratic legislature. On the same page we are gravely informed that A. H. Hamilton thought if all the counties had voted, and the vote been counted, he would have been elected.” A great many people believe that Gen. Davis defeated Mr. Hamilton just as Mr. Hayes defeated Mr. Tilden. But to this disposition of the author to smooth down all facts that bristle with danger of opposition, we cannot now revert, but may do so at some future time should occasion demand it. Mr. Thrall doubts the statement of Rose, the only man that forsook his hazardous post within the beleaguered walls of the doomed Alamo, because he states the presence of blood in the ditch, whereas no Mexican had at that time approached within rifle range of the wall; and yet he tells us as improbable a story in the death of the indomitable Travis. He informs us that Travis fell early in the action; the siege continued eleven days, at the expiration of which the final assault was made, and the Mexicans entered the forts for the first time, when Travis ran a Mexican through with his sword. A lively corpse after eleven days sleep in death. On page 407 we are told, “In war dances Caranchuas and some other tribes drank the blood of their enemies, and tasted the flesh, but there is no evidence that any Texas tribes were cannibals.” In a recent conversation with the venerable Judge Truman Phelps, of Anaqua, Victoria county, Texas, he informed the writer that his father, Dr. Phelps, then a resident of Louisiana, participated in the brilliant campaign of Gutierrez, Magee, Perry, Kemper and Ross against the Spanish power in Texas, and that he was present on the disastrous field of Medina. He escaped the massacre and had proceeded as far as the Trinity river when he was overtaken by the pursuers under Ellisondo [Elizondo], and conveyed back to San Antonio. After witnessing the daily execution of Mexican republicans in this place, he was finally released, and after much hardship finally reached a Caranchua village on the Trinity in an almost starving condition. He was received hospitably, and given food—the flesh portion of which was a negro’s foot! This effectually disposes of the question as to cannibalism, and may furnish Mr. Thrall an hypothesis as to the fate of the Africans that escaped from the Bowie brothers, the traces of whose blood he imagines he can now see in the swarthy countenances of Texas Indians. It is probable that the seat of the Caranchua’s love for the “nigger” was not the heart, but the stomach.

But enough has been said. No tyro can read the work without becoming disgusted with the author’s indecent haste that rendered such flagrant errors possible. The untarnished reputation of Mr. Thrall for probity, honesty and truth, led all who enjoyed his acquaintance to believe that the “history” would be all as represented; hence numbers have purchased it, only to arise from its perusal with increased desire to read a history of Texas in which the rich mines of anecdote, gossipry and description shall be worked and made to yield their rich treasures. The history of no land abounds in richer storee [sic]. What a mournful interest broods, pall like, over the fate of Travis and Fannin. What a grand patent is stamped on the hearthstones of the early colonists. How we would love to read the story of their trials, their endurance, and eventual triumph. This history of Texas is not confined to battles, scouts and massacres; nor to Congresses, for “there were woven in the land,” and to those Spartan mothers, and wives, and daughters—gentle and loving as cooing doves, yet as brave and daring in time of peril as the mother eagle who defends upon her lofty eyrie her young to the death—who, in the domestic scenes of life, formed and sustained the mainspring of the Texan Revolution, is due our
admiration, our gratitude, and eternal remembrance. Let silence ignore their worth until “other men and other times can do justice to their memory.”

Victor M. Rose

—Victoria Advocate, April 3, 1880.


The Farming Interests of Victoria County

To the Editor of the Victoria Advocate:

A contemplation of the present status of agriculture in this county reveals the fact that our large planters are neglecting this for the easier—but we think not the more remunerative—industry of stockraising. From its proud position of the paramount interest it has allowed itself to be superseded by live stock. It is estimated that cattle will pay 33 1/3 per cent. per annum on the capital invested. This profit seems almost incredible, yet a calculation will show that a bale of cotton per acre, selling at $30 per bale surpasses the former result; and either surpasses in safety and profit combined any industry by known on the American continent.

The plantation—or, rather the lands lying idle that could be transformed into plantations—in Victoria county, properly cultivated, would result in a return of revenue far greater than that realized from the large transactions in cattle. Why land owners do not take steps for the realization of this wealth is a mystery totally inexplicable by any rule to which the accumulating nature of man is subject. The truth is, our people are too easily satisfied. The rugged, go-ahead farmers of the West would soon utilize the fabulously rich alluvial river bottoms, and realize in the fabulous yield of cotton, sugar cane, wheat oats, corn, potatoes, etc., a rich reward for their labors. That we are indulging in no fancy, let a few facts suffice. With the plantation of Dr. J. L. Gartrell seven miles south of Victoria—one of the best in the county, it is admitted—we are enabled from personal knowledge to present the following figures: Up to 1860, 250 acres were in cultivation. Corn and cotton alone were planted. From 1850 to the above named year, the cotton crop averaged 200 bales—sometimes less—but often more. During the same period the corn crop from 50 acres yielded from 2500 to 3000 bushels per season. What better results could be desired than that? The same results are now available—or better, as we shall presently undertake to show—on a capital not nearly so large as was required during the period to which the above figures refer. Then lands were worth $10 per acre, and slave labor cost fully, capital invested in slaves, $25 per month. Such lands can now be had at from $5 to $10 per acre; labor $12 per month, and cotton selling at from 10 to 12 cents instead of from 8 to 10 cents prior to the war. The alluvial lands of the Guadalupe valley in the county are adapted in a remarkable degree to the cultivation of sugar cane. We are now using molasses made of ribbon cane in Victoria county that has never been excelled by any Louisiana “sugar house.”

The Nicaragua rust proof wheat grows luxuriantly here, and yields from 20 to 30 bushels per acre, and with proper grinding this wheat yields more and better flour than any other kind.
The idea seems to have taken hold of many minds that the two industries of farming and stock-raising cannot be conducted in conjunction. This is erroneous, as in reality they should be inseparable. Basically is this true under the system of stock-raising now being inaugurated. With pastures, attention will be directed to the improvement of cattle, horses, sheep and hogs, in order that the loss in quantity may be made good by enhanced quality. Our people cannot realize the golden opportunities that are within their very grasp, and to develop which, and realize the full reward, only requires energy and industry. Five or ten dollars for an acre of soil that will produce each year fifty dollars worth of cotton, and that forever, for the soil, ten and twelve feet deep, is absolutely inexhaustible. There are thousands of industrious, honest, energetic men toiling on worn out fields who barely manage to “make both ends meet,” who would regard the possession of Dr. Gartrell’s plantation as more valuable than the Comstock mine. And to a live, energetic farmer, it would prove so.

Agriculture is the basis of the social and commercial fabric. Victoria possesses in the elementary principles a foundation unsurpassed by any county in the Union. This wealth lies dormant in the soil, but ready to respond with harvests of gold to him who will seek it with determination.

V.M.R.
—*Victoria Advocate*, April 24, 1880

The Best Harbor in Texas: Is What is Claimed for the Mouth of the Brazos

A Fine Location for the To-be Built Refrigerator—

Col. Victor M. Rose’s Views on the Subject Fully Set Out

Columbia, Brazoria Co., Tex.
December 27, 1887

Editor Victoria Advocate:

Dear Sir—I note a statement in the Advocate to the effect that the livestock men purpose meeting in convention at Cuero on the 17th of January next, and I desire to bring to their attention the natural advantages which the Brazos rivers offer for the handling of refrigerated meat. I will attend the convention as the representative of the people of Brazoria county, and will submit documentary (official) evidence in substantiation of all that we claim for the Brazos, viz.: That from twenty-five to thirty-eight feet of water is found at all times in the river to a distance of thirty miles or more above the mouth; that a temporary sand-bar, 1,000 yards wide at the base and 200 yards wide at the crest, only intervenes between thirty feet and water in the river and thirty feet in the gulf (I say the bar is “temporary,” because, after every rise in the river, the current scours a passage from twenty to thirty-eight feet deep. During the war there were thirteen blockade runners in the Brazos at one time, one of which was the Matagorda, of the Morgan Steamship line); that the bottom consists of a stiff, blue clay, rendering it the best “holding” ground for ships in a storm upon the American coast; and that ships lying in the open roadstead can, for that reason, be loaded from lighters [barges] much easier and with far greater safety than at Galveston, the bottom of which roadstead consisting of sand possessing a peculiar mercurial nature, in which an anchor can take no hold. In addition to all this Brazoria has unequalled facilities for grazing and feeding cattle awaiting slaughter and shipment.

It is but a question of a little time when self interest will cause more than one railroad company to join forces with us in opening permanently a passage through the bar; when ships
drawing thirty-eight feet of water could steam up to the refrigerator plant on the bank of the river and receive the meat, not breaking freight until the final destination was reached. Victoria and all southwest Texas are vitally interested in the opening of the mouth of the Brazos; for, in addition to its being the salvation of the livestock interest, it will influence the Mexican National Railroad company to extend their line here from Laredo via Victoria; and, also, the Santa Fe branch at Alvin, thence via Columbia and on over the present existing grade to “Old Caney,” in Matagorda county, and on to Victoria—to say nothing of Gould and Huntington, the former of whom now connects Houston and Columbia. In my opinion the livestock men should take the first step in this matter, organize a joint stock company and invite the investment of foreign capital. Even though the start is made upon a small scale, other and larger plants will come through the influence of natural business laws as soon as the success of the undertaking demonstrates its merit, which will be speedily, for the handling of meat by the refrigerator process is no longer experimental.

Once inaugurated, in a year or two the result would be grand beyond comparison. Texas would supply beef to all the cities on the Atlantic seaboard from New Orleans to Canada, and compete successfully with Australia and South America, having in our favor a saving of from 8,000 to 10,000 miles in the transportation of the meat. I can conceive of nothing that could so speedily and so beneficially effect the livestock industry of Texas. As the Advocate is the representative of the livestock men of southwest Texas, won’t you join forces with us for our mutual advantage? Hoping that you will do so, I am truly your friend,

Victor M. Rose

—Old Capitol, January 21, 1888

“Kemper Kernals”

Rose’s column “Kemper Kernals” appeared fairly regularly in the Victoria Advocate during most of 1880 (and possibly later in issues that have not survived). He reported on happenings in and around the small community of Kemper City, located southwest of Victoria off present-day U.S. 77. He also covers nearby Anaqua, an old community on the San Antonio River that was named for a tree that grows in the area and was called Nockaway among the locals. Rose devoted a separate column to Anaqua, “Notes from Nockaway,” in the August 28, 1880, issue of the Advocate.

Kemper Kernals

Barbed Fence—Change in Mail Schedule Needed—Religious Services
The Fleecy Staple to be Grown—Successful Stock Drivers—Orange Trees Damaged
Kemper’s Political Voice to be Heard From—A Few Lots to Dispose of
School Facilities—Improved Pasture

Capt. McFadden is introducing the barbed fence wire in erecting a fence enclosing his pasture, believing it to be superior to the common wire in general use.
The thanks of your reporter are due Judge R. F. Cole, postmaster at Kemper, for many courtesies. Great want is felt for a change in the schedule of mail arrivals at this postoffice, as but one eastern mail arrives per week.

The Rev. J. H. McCain, a most estimable minister of the Presbyterian church, preaches each third Sabbath in Kemper to a congregation which, in personal appearance, intelligence and decorum would compare favorably with any in the State.

Much more cotton will be planted in this immediate vicinity the coming season than last. Doubtless should enough be made to justify the investment, the capital city—in the near future, you know—will rejoice in a steam gin, with the Clement attachment.

Messrs. Walter Byrne and W. L. Stoner, who returned not long ago since from Alabama, whither they went to dispose of a caballado of horses, did so well, as we learn, that they contemplate making another drive the coming autumn. Mr. Wm. Hunt, who took a drove at the same time, has not yet returned.

I learn that the orange grove of Capt. McFadden was considerably injured by the late cold weather. Appropós of orange groves, Mr. Geo. L. Whitney, of Aransas county, is having a grove planted on the Stoner farm. It would appear that in our favored section the fruits of the temperate and torrid zones are to be grown side by side.

Pennsylvania instructs for Grant. Kemper has not yet spoken, but when she does it will be with no uncertain sound. Doubtless Bayard for president, and L. S. Ross for governor of Texas. I suppose that Ross—young, progressive and tolerant, capable and honest as he is, would be acceptable to even the sanguine citizen, who does not believe the “O.A.” is all O.K.

On dit that real estate is enhancing in value in Kemper City. Your reporter overheard a gentleman in answering interrogatories in this regard the other day say, that he had a quantity of lots worth from $200 to $2000, and he did not care to sell at those figures, unless a sufficient number was desired to make the transaction an object of some interest.

Mr. Morrow commenced a private school in the elegant frame school house in Kemper last Monday. Mr. M. is a thoroughly educated gentleman, and a graduate of Chappell Hill University, of North Carolina. No more efficient teach, or eligible locality for a school could be selected, and parent wishing to prepare their sons for admittance to college, would do well to consult Mr. Morrow before deciding otherwise.

The effects of the present winter will not be felt by the stockmen, as no cattle of consequence have died. A visit to the ranches of Capt. G. O. Stoner found him engaged in making a tank—by dredging an excavation in the earth—which is to be kept constantly filled with water, supplied by a wind mill power recently erected. In this pasture great progress had been made in improving cattle, and a marked effect can be seen in the half and three-quarter breeds. On this ranch, or rather pertaining to the plantation attached, we find fat hogs that have not yet been killed, as the price of pork did not justify the sacrifice. These will now be killed and reduced to lard. Sausage will also be made in addition to the rendering process. Despite the dry season of last year we find corn for sale by Capt. G. O. Stoner, Mr. W. L. Stoner, and Peter G. Stoner at seventy-five cents per bushel.

—Victoria Advocate, February 14, 1880

“O.A.” (“Old Alcalde”) was a nickname for Governor Oran M. Roberts, who had been elected in 1878.

Kemper Kernels

Convalescent—A Medical Man Wanted—To Depart—The Kidney Buckeye

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Mrs. Robert Carothers, who has been very ill, we are pleased to learn, is convalescent.

Kemper requires the services of an experienced physician. One not objecting to visits of from one to ten miles would receive a very fair practice.

Kemper will soon lose a good citizen, Mr. John D. Miller, who removes to Clay county. John is a whole-souled fellow, and will be a valuable acquisition to any community.

Despite the recent frosts, such vegetables as cabbage, beets, peas, lettuce, etc., are making good progress. Corn planting commenced generally last Monday, and cotton will soon follow.

Many horses and cattle, from eating the “kidney buckeye,” which puts forth its foliage early in the season, have been affected with a malady resembling blind staggers, and in several cases had proven fatal. Efforts to eradicate the noxious growth should be made.

The people of Nockaway are sound on the public school and immigration questions. No antiquated, retrogressive candidate may hope to scoop them in by pretty talk. L. S. Ross for governor, would be an acceptable ticket, and one upon which the agitated Democracy could unite and heal all dissensions.

Rev. Mr. McCain preached last Sunday, morning and night. A troupe of fair damsels from the “other side” invaded the State of Nockaway, and attended service. Talk about your classic “graces,” and the horsemanship of the Bedouins of the desert! The girls of Texas and Nockaway can discount all who have gone before, and then have charms enough to compete with Hebe.

—Victoria Advocate, February 21, 1880

Kemper Kernals

Interesting Local Dots from the State of Nockaway—No Visit from Rex

Red Brazilian Artichokes—Commercial Market Report—Visits an Apiary

“Repealed” his Case—“Never Shot it off”—Explains it all—The Jolly Cow Boy

(From our Special Reporter)

We are pained to hear of the death of the infant child of Capt. McFadden last Friday.

The mellifluous jackdaw is waiting patiently to greet the early corn with a paroxismal [sic] kiss.

Capt. J. M. McFadden disposed of one hundred and fifty beeves to Mr. J. M. Mathis, of Victoria. Price $16 per head.

Mr. Joseph Coward, an invalid, who returned with Capt. McFadden from Galveston, we are pleased to learn is improving.

St. Valentine’s day was observed at Kemper by the young folks, and many a token of embryo love—as valentines have been not inaptly called—passed through the mail.

The regular term of the court for precinct No. 3, has been arranged to commence the 2nd Saturday of each month. Your reporter learns that several causes are docketed.

Intelligence of the arrival of cattle speculators causes a ripple on the surface of things; and Nockaway denizens stand at “attention” ready to improve the occasion.

Pleased to note the return of our amigo, Mr. D. H. McFadden, who has been on an extended visit to friends in Jefferson county. Dave says there is no place like “Nockaway” in the forks.
Rex didn’t visit Kemper, nor did Kemper go to Rex. No blasted king in our’n; we take the resolutions of ’98 straight—no greenback-fusion-Republican-third-term-electoral-commission for Nockaway as a State, and for Kemper as a city.

On the farm of Capt. G. O. Stoner is planted a patch of “Red Brazilian Artichokes,” said to be a superior hog feed. Should the experiment prove successful, the “pork” question is solved so far as this section is concerned.

Eggs 12 cents per dozen in Kemper, and the hens are kept on double duty in consequence. Bacon 10 cents per pound, pork sausages 12½ cents per pound, and corn 75 cents per bushel. Guadalupe Bank firm. Consolidated cotton catterpillar [sic] motor, $300,000 bid - $355,000 asked.

A visit to the apiary of Mr. Peter T. Stoner well repays one the trouble. He has the latest improved hive; patent “smokers,” honey extractors, etc. At present he had about 25 colonies, but hopes to multiply that number by five during the present year; and with favorable circumstances he will do it.

Found on the Victoria road last Sunday morning an elegant Russia leather portmanteau, containing one dirty shirt, one derringer pistol, one pack of playing cards, and one bottle of “oil of life”—which, after a critical analysis by the peripatetic saeai [illegible; possibly sachem], was pronounced whiskey.

“Wild Bill,” the disturber of Rev. Michael Adams’ services (Divine services ?) has “repealed” his case, and goes before the county court. Nothing will be said about going farther and fareing [sic] worse, though “Bronco William” may have cause to call this homely old saw to mind ere he receives his grist from the judicial mill over there.

Kemper is organizing a rifle team, the members of which will soon meet to test the question of marksmanship. Judge Cole offers as a prize an Alderney bull; chances one dollar each. Your reporter was amused by hearing an enthusiastic youth, who was growing impatient of delay, exclaim; “Mister Cole, when are you going to shoot that bull off?” “My friend,” replied the Judge, “I did not purpose anything of the kind. I never shot a bull off in my life.”

As a very erroneous impression has gotten abroad that the ideal personages of your reporter’s lucubrations are caricatures of citizens of Kemper, he would beg to say that he is not capable of so heinous a breach of the conventionalities of life in a civilized States and that the “sanguine citizen,” the “silent man,” — [illegible] genus, are but the creatures of fancy as ephemeral as are his evanescent — [illegible] en Espagne. He has but kindness for all, and would be pained to cause the humblest of God’s creatures a needless pang.

On Monday last “Pettus’ Crowd,” in charge of Messrs. Will Lott and James Pettus, came down from Goliad to collect 1000 head of cattle that have been pasturing in the “Stoner pasture” the winter just passed. The weather proved too inclement — [illegible] consigned themselves to their fate. The ante, four-bits—the pot was full, and they kept it boiling until several, who persisted in straddling the blind and bucking regardless of consequences, were pretty well cooked. In the “we[e] sma’ hours beyant the twa” the reporter heard the Captain drowsily call a bluff as pretentious as Kemper’s, on a pair of fives; and he raked in the pot, too. The jolly, free and easy, liberal hearted “cow boy” of Texas is a being sui generis. Truly:

“Whatever sky is above him,
He has a heart for every fate.”
Like the Bedouin of the desert, his steed is his castle, and his lythe, active form bends neither to the blasts of winter or the scorching sun of summer. Flush to-day, he *planks* his silver dollars down one by one at the shrine of chance to see them swept away, to resume on the morrow his hardly avocation to *heel* himself again for the contest with the *tigre diablo*. Broke 999 times, he comes to the scratch smiling with confidence at the thousandth call, and would scorn the imputation of any bare suspicion of his not being able to “bust the bank” and revel in premature wealth.

—*Victoria Advocate*, February 28, 1880

Kemper Kernals
Growing Weather—A Salutary Lesson to Law Breakers
An Epicurean Dish—Pairing off

“Growing weather,” is not the cry; and “garden sass” seems to be growing against time. Corn all planted and cotton being ditto, is the report Nockaway is able to send her sister States of the empire of Texas.

The disturbers of the peace tried and convicted at the late term of Judge Cole’s court, came up last Tuesday and contributed the amounts due for misdeeds. It is to be hoped that this may prove a salutary lesson to the young and vigorous bucks, and that their attention in future will be turned more in the direction of producing “the fleecy staple” than in extemporizing “hoss races” on the public roads.

Fishing for catfish is the sport that engages the youth hereabouts when the inspiring “nigger shooter’s” twang fails to sound as merry music to the ear. Hats are extemporized as nets, and the fun is fast and furious. Crawfish sallad is a dish worthy the palate of the most exacting epicure; though our people absolutely ignore this luxury which could be made as “cheap as bull meat at a penny a pound.”

Now that the “little feathered songsters of the sylvan groves” are pairing off and preparing to go into the business of “nest hiding,” the Christian gamins of Nockaway resurrect the evil “nigger shooter” to indulge in the royal sport of *nocking* them down with pebbles. This is wrong, undoubtedly; but the gamin if remonstrated with, will cite you to his exemplars, Capt. Bogardus, the prince of Wales, and such like inhuman men. Man has dominion over the animal creation, but he should not abuse it.

—*Victoria Advocate*, March 6, 1880

Kemper Kernals
An Epidemic—Soon to begin Gathering Cattle—Invasion of the State of Nockaway
A Valued Recipe—The Kemper of the Future—A Jolly Pic-nic.

Quite an epidemic of colds prevail, and relieving cordials are in demand.

We learn the Capt. McFadden will soon commence gathering cattle for sale, delivering on the 14th inst. Yearlings at $6.25, and two year olds at $9.25.

Mr. C. L. Thurmond, Jr. visited Kemper last week on a tour collecting taxes. He “gobbled” up all the spare change, and “harnessed” on to “Wild Bill.”
The announcement of our worthy assessor hangs on the outer wall at Kemper, and Nockaway begins to feel that the “melancholy days have come, the saddest of the year.”

The late cold snap scared the farmers a bit, but fortunately passed off without inflicting any damage on the corn and cotton up. An enterprising insurance company would do a land office business in insuring against late frosts.

Messrs. John Fay and Baldy Luder invaded the State of Nockaway last Saturday morning, and made a reprisal on the herd of Capt. McFadden. When you commend the steaks procured of these gentlemen for some time to come, attribute it to this fact and give praise to Nockaway and McFadden.

Recipe for crawfish sallad—Boil ten large Irish potatoes, mash fine, pass through a sieve, take the yolks of four hard boiled eggs, mash fine, melt two tablespoons of butter, add one gill of strong vinegar, one tablespoonful of fine salt, one of black pepper, one of mustard, half a lemon. Pour over potatoes; then boil the crawfish, take off the hull, as shrimp, cut up fine and add to above.

Kemper City will ere long be surrounded by farms of from fifty to one hundred acres, tilled by industrious farmers. Measures looking to that end are now in process of evolution. Kemper is bound to rise; the farmers will demand the opening of the river to navigation, and the demands of trade will cause the railroad to be built. But I stop, for the infinite altitude to which she will rise causes a giddiness of the head only to contemplate it.

Last Saturday your reporter accepted the kind invitation of Mr. Jno. D. Miller to enjoy with his interesting family an improvised pic-nic on the river near the capital city. A jolly good time was had. A turtle, of the “soft shell” species, as large as the top of a center table, was caught, to say nothing of the other piscatorial trophies, which would have gladdened the heart of old Izaak Walton. But as the entire ship’s crew were called upon to land the turtle, it is doubtful to whom the meed of praise belongs. After one of the liveliest “scrimmages” ever witnessed in the State of Nockaway, the reptile must inevitably have escaped had not old uncle Andrew, of the “hard shell” persuasion, “socked” his thumbs into the sides of the struggling monster, and “pinned him dar.” At the suggestion of old Andrew—who believes in the “sacrament” of feet-washing, though not so unceremoniously as he received it on this occasion—a hole was cut in the rubber-like shell, through which a string was passed and his turtleship “staked” out to await that final catastrophe of Man’s inhumanity from which the boldest turtle will recoil, And makes the savory soup pot bubbling boil.

An excellent cold collation—among the dishes of which loomed up the epicurean dish of crawfish sallad—was spread upon the green sward beneath the veteran pecans, and partaken of with gusto.

—Victoria Advocate, March 13, 1880

The English author Izaak Walton first published his classic about fishing, The Compleat Angler, in 1653.

Kemper Kernals

Short Crop of Items On Account of the Inclement Weather—Preaching the Word of God
Probable Effects of Late Cold Spell—In a Transport of Joy
(From our Special Correspondent)
Rev. Josephus Johnson, the able and deservedly popular Presbyterian minister of Victoria, preached to a small circle at the residence of Mrs. Lynn last Sabbath, the bitter cold weather preventing the congregation from assembling at the church.

The cold snap of the past week was a parallel to a similar spell experienced here in March 1867. Writing while the cold continues, it is doubtful as to the extent of the injury done. Much corn and cotton was already up; these certainly must be destroyed; as well as the vegetables of the kitchen gardens. It may be of public interest to state, in view of the fact that as there is a scarcity of seed corn in the county, that Capt. G. O. Stoner yet has a limited quantity of the early yellow variety, selected and assorted for planting purposes.

A dash to the postoffice last Monday afternoon for the Advocate, and Judge Cole, in a transport of joy at again meeting one of the human family, announced that with the exception of the mail rider, he had not seen a living soul since the preceding Saturday. But things will come out of that when the railroad from Guymas on the Pacific, connects with the steamboats from Saluria at the capital city.

—Victoria Advocate, March 20, 1880

Kemper Kernals

Hindered by the Rain—Prince of Butchers—No Danger of a Flood—
Sounding his Reveille—Catfish Legal Tenders and Greenback Candidates—
The Best Turtle Story Yet
(From our Special Correspondent)

Farming operations are much hindered by the recent rains.

Capt. McFadden is — [illegible] engaged gathering cattle for sale.

John Fay, the prince of butchers, came to “Mac’s” again last week for more fat cattle.

Bob Ingersoll literature is making its way over the county, and hopes of liberty are springing eternal in the—etc.

Mrs. Lynn, a mile above Kemper, offers a rare inducement to those desiring improved stock, in the thoroughbred Durham “Wade Hampton.”

Mr. Gus Thomas and Mr. Schwartz invaded Nockaway last Monday in quest of fat cattle for the Indianola market. Of course they found them and were satisfied.

The windows of heaven must have been left partially ajar last Sunday, but as the rainfall did not approximate eight hundred feet that day no fears are felt of a flood.

The game cock of the prairie is now sounding his reveille every morning with amorous impatience, and too soon will the cruel sportsman be on hand to interrupt the social pleasures of these innocents. But “stood” grouse is palatable. Ingersoll’s sentiments on this subject will be looked for with earnestness.

The New York World says the next president’s name “hasn’t yet been mentioned in connection with the ‘Fraudulent’ succession, and that it commences with a ‘D.’” Does that mean Dorsheimer, the Devil, or Dillaye? But Dillaye has been mentioned in connection with, etc.—but then not enough to hurt. It will be news to many.

The catfish legal tender is a success in Kemper. Carry the news to Dillaye and Chambers. Who the deuce is Dillaye and Chambers any way? The facetious “cuss” says they will delay their inauguration and chamber their disappointment. But it must be distinctly understood your reporter is not responsible for the statement—not at all.

Mr. W. W. Hunt shot and killed an otter last week in the river about three miles above Kemper. So far as is known this is the first and only otter ever seen in these parts. Where did it
come from? During the late war, a porcupine, I am told, was captured near Victoria. Porcupines are not indigenous to this soil, nor has one been seen here since. How came that one here? Two gentlemen of veracity living near Kemper, informs me that upon one operation they were coming home from Refugio. When near the St. —— [illegible] ground was literally covered with turtles, which had evidently fallen from above, as many were mangled by the fall, and others, falling edgewise, were firmly imbedded in the soft earth. Another gentleman, a resident of Refugio county, recently visiting Kemper, informed me that when he crossed the San Antonio multitudes of turtle were crawling out of the stream and “striking” across the country. What could have caused this singular migration?

—Victoria Advocate, March 27, 1880

Robert Green Ingersoll was an Illinois lawyer and former Union colonel who became known as “The Great Agnostic.” Charismatic and eloquent, he lectured widely, and his published works were popular from the 1870s through the turn of the century. Stephen Devalson Dillaye, a New Jersey lawyer and journalist for the Irish World, was nominated for president by a faction of the Greenback Party in 1880. Barzillai Jefferson Chambers, a former surveyor for the Robertson Colony who eventually settled in Johnson County, was nominated for vice president by the same wing of the party.

Kemper Kernals
A Chance for Fame—Mosquitoes Again—Cows Bought at Good Prices
Kemper Disappointed—Departing Herds

If any man would invent a flea exterminator generations yet unborn would arise and call him blessed.

Mosquitoes are abundant on the prairie, which, considering the recent cold weather, and the season, is rather previous.

And now Lang will go the grand round lecturing to the grangers again. He gets bucolic on the eve of every gubernatorial election.

Capt. J. S. Crawford made a purchase of a drove of cows a few days since of A. Levi & Co., of Victoria. Twelve dollars and a half was the price paid.

Kemper was disappointed at the non-arrival of the ex-president. We had been led to believe that he would come, and the darkies were “skeerd” at the prospect. On dit, that the darkies say if Grant is elected he will make himself king, and put all the “niggers” and “poor white trash” into slavery. Jim Blaine must have had an emissary around here.

Capt. McFadden crossed 1940 head of cattle at Kemper on the 24th inst. Bennett & West, of Lavaca county, being the purchasers. The cattle were one and two year olds, and sold the former for $6.25 and the latter for $9.25. Quite a crowd assembled to witness the swimming, which operation was performed without accident or untoward incident to mar the occasion.

—Victoria Advocate, April 3, 1880

Jim Blaine refers to James Gillespie Blaine, who was favored by one faction of the Republican Party for its 1880 presidential candidate. Ulysses S. Grant, supported by another faction, also failed to win the nomination, which went to James A. Garfield.

Kemper Kernals
An organ is to be procured for the church.

If the capital city isn’t coming “out of the kinks” how do you account for the signs of the times?

The Nockaway horoscope for 1880 says Grant will fail to get the Chicago nomination. Remember!

Nockaway sends forth canvassers next week for the American illustrated stock book, a work that every farmer and stock raiser should have.

Capt. G. O. Stoner sold a drove of two year old and yearling beeves to Maj. W. B. Womack last week. $6.25 and $9.25 were the prices paid.

Dr. J. L. Gartrell and Mr. August Liebmann put in an appearance one day last week in search of mules and horses to purchase. Both gentlemen purpose driving this season. Success attend them.

Nockaway will doubtless be represented at the mass meeting Saturday, though we had everything “cut and dried” for a convention of our own. Resolves impeaching the O.A., recommends, etc. Pity all that should be lost.

Our old friend, Mr. J. D. Miller, whose purpose of removing to Clay county some time since, concludes as the time draws near that he might “go farther and fare worse.” In short, John can’t tear himself away from his old love, and Nockaway retains a good citizen in consequence.

—Victoria Advocate, April 10, 1880

Kemper Kernals

The time honored custom of “April Fool” was observed in Kemper, and caused a ripple on the surface of the occasion.

Has the Victoria crop of candidates failed? By this time “the other time” an “awkard squad” was out for each office.

The Templeton’s [sic], we learn, were anxious to visit the capitol city during their stay in Victoria, but the legislature of Nockaway being in session, the hall of the house could not be secured.

And now conventions begin to ripple the “even tenor” of the Nockaways way, and there will be no peace until November’s surly blast shall summon members to the bier of Ulysses the first and last.

A very pleasant dancing party was improvised by the young gentleman of this vicinity, at the residence of Mr. John D. Miller last Friday evening. The genial host and his charming lady dispensed their hospitalities to appreciative friends, and “Leave mad to see a crowd so happy E’en hid himself among the nappy.”

“When de dry drouf comes,” says old Simon, “crawfish backs down to de bottom of hees hole, and stays dar. Pokin’ sticks in de hole aint a gwine to ’sturb him, nuther; and ’dem foax
Kemper Kernals
On the Heels of April—Right side up—“Nuttin” in it—
Kemper’s fame like unto King Solomon’s Glory
A Wolf Hunt—A May Day Celebration Promised.

(From Our Special Correspondent)

A norther on the heels of April is rather a change of programme even in our varied climate.

We were pleased to meet Mr. Nat. Gaines last Monday. He visited Kemper in quest of venison.

De dry drouf is playing the bad with field produce, garden truck and sich like. Grass on the prairie continues luxuriant.

“Wild Bill,” who “repealed” his somewhat famous case recently to the judicial mill at Victoria, came out “right side up with care.” He avers that he didn’t know just exactly what an extremely innocent creature he was until persuaded by the eloquence of his attorney.

“Dat thing,” said old Simon, eyeing the fifteen puzzle with a leer of suspicion, “minds me of de greenback party. Hits always a scrambling like a snake’s tail wid his hed cut off. Ef you works it you haint got nuthin’ but hed ache fer yer pay. But,” continued the old man musingly, “there weren’t ‘nuff in de greenback party ter give er man de head ache.”

Rev. J. H. McCain preached to quite a large congregation in Kemper last Sunday, among who we were pleased to meet Mr. James Jemison, of Victoria, Mr. Joseph Coward, of Refugio, Mr. Schwartz, of Indianola, and Mr. Thomas, from “the other side.” Verily has the fame of Kemper gone abroad like the glory of Solomon, which attracted the distant Queen of Sheba, and lo! the half has not been told!

A wolf hunt by the entire male population of Nockaway is on the tapis. Parties diverging from the “forks” will drive the lobos [lovos] up the country to a line of living men, terribly in earnest, extending from river to river, and armed with Winchester rifles and six-shooters. If this descent proves interesting we are going to open negotiations for the Masonic emblems discovered in the Egyptian obelisk, and have Bob Ingersoll explain whether Masonry was not the first great cause instead of Jehovah.
To a stranger our beautiful undulating prairies would now present a charming picture, literally carpeted as they are with a wealth of wild flowers in prodigal profusion spread. The waves of the green grasses bend and rise to the amorous kisses of the sea breeze fresh from the throat of the fragrant tropics, while myriads of variegated flora as far as the vision can pierce the distant perspective, dispatch their argosies of nectar on zephyrships as free will offerings to distant climes in other lands. A Texas spring is pre-eminently the “ethereal mildness” of which good, lazy Thompson sang so sweetly. Through the operation of the divine afflatus he had Texas in his mind’s eye when he warped his notes of spring.

On dit that Kemper is to have a “May Day” celebration on the 30th of April. The object of the programme was not to perpetrate an Irish bull, but to avoid dancing into the Sabbath, which is the second of May. ——— [illegible] tickled the risibles of the assembled worshippers of Nockaway after church last Sunday by announcing the proposed fete champetre, and stating the necessary requisitions as, “a mutton, a hog, a veal and a May Queen.” The programme is a picnic in the umbrageous live oak grove adjacent to the capital city, winding up with a dance at the residence of Mr. John D. Miller at night. If Nockaway doesn’t get off on the wrong foot and allow the whole thing to fall through, the programme will also embrace the shooting off of the bull!

—Victoria Advocate, April 24, 1880

Kemper Kernals

(From our Special Correspondent)

A little shower fell at Kemper last Friday night. On the San Antonio river hail fell in considerable quantity. Amount of damage not reported.

Old Simon was hoeing the crab grass from his corn when the granger adage recurred to his mind: “He is a benefactor to his race who causes two blades of grass to grow where but one grew before,” “Ef any fool of a nigger was to kum here a doublin’ of dis crap of grass on me, he’d have to limp away, shoah!” Alas, the time honored adage.

The fete champetre is now billed for the 30th of April, and as this issue of the Advocate is going through the press, the beauty and chivalry of Nockaway will be assembled at the capital city enjoying themselves hugely. The “press gang” of the Advocate, as well as other friends in Victoria, would be welcomed, as the hoosier expressed it, “in the most hostile manner.” Come.

Our stockraising friends from Anaqua worked the McFadden, Stoner and Clark pastures last week. Among the gentlemen we met Messrs. Peter Fagan, David Phelps, Terrell, Byrne, John Fagan and others. Cattle will pass from one pasture to another, although Capt. McFadden thinks the barbed wire makes the most secure fence. This opinion is founded on his experience of the past winter and spring.

Mr. Frank Hogan discovered, while hunting in the swamp near Kemper a few days ago, an alligator measuring fifteen feet in length, firmly wedged in between two trees. The monster was dead. Mr. Hogan forwards you a tush, as being worthy a place among your collections. This old Saurian could doubtless compete with Don Carlos for the palm of being the oldest inhabitant of Nockaway.

In a recent interview with Mr. Peter Fagan, the depredation committed by wolves was a subject of conversation. Mr. Fagan, who was born and reared in this vicinity, says that the
wolves were never more ravenous, even in early times, than now, nor half so bold. Mr. F. reports a huge loco [lobo] pursuing a calf to within a few rods of the house, when finding himself baffled, he sat down in indignation and poured forth his notes of disappointment utterly oblivious to the surroundings of civilization. Capt. Stoner last week witnessed the capture of a “jack rabbit” by a loco in the “broad open daylight.” Of course many calves are devoured by these pests.

If there is one thing in the world that should command the utmost care of the government employees, it is the affairs of the postoffice. Any mismanagement there is felt more immediately by the people than in any other department. Imagine our surprise when the postmaster at Kemper opened the mails from Victoria last Thursday (April 22) to “unearth a package of letters superscribed in his own bold and readable chirography, “Galveston, Texas.” They remained at Kemper until the mail returned from Refugio Saturday, thus being delayed one week. Judge Cole informs your reporter that this is by no means an isolated case, but it is hoped that it will prove the last instance of such inexcusable negligence—for inexcusable negligence it certainly is.

—Victoria Advocate, May 1, 1880

Kemper Kernals
An Interesting Report for the Chief City of Nockaway—
Local Dots of Interesting Facts from the “Other Side”
(From our Special Correspondent)

Brick Pomeroy has suspended operations, and will not “fiat” off the national debt this year.
Complaints are made by some farmers that the corn that was “cut down” by the cold weather last March is beginning to tassel though not exceeding two feet in height.
Eight thousand dollars worth of beef cattle crossed the river at this point last Sunday. They were purchased by Mr. West of Capts. McFadden and Stoner, 500 head at $16 each.
Dr. Moore, a gentlemanly young physician of good capacity, had located near Anaqua, and purposes practicing his profession in this vicinity. We bespeak for the doctor the appreciation of our people, and wish him success.
Quite a “blow” was felt last Saturday from the northeast, accompanied by torrents of rain. Indications at the time of writing prognosticate yet more “falling weather.” Old Simon says, “de dry dronf and de wet rain is sorter like de democrats an de ‘publicans. Good crops lies betwixt and between.”
The present season has been most favorable to insect life, and garden vegetables have consequently been depredated upon to a considerable extent. Reports of the appearance of the cotton caterpillar have been circulated during the few days just passes. Should this pest commence so early it would make a “clean sweep” of the cotton “crop.”
Old Simon says: “Hit sounds a heap easier like to talk about fiatin’ off a debt than to pay hit off, kase de poorest man can make hiself rich wid promises. Some how or nuther when I goes to settle up wid my banker, I feels like I simperthises wid de fiat policy, but when I sells my cotton I sets my heart right square agin’ fiat in ebber form, and comes out flat-footed for hard money and silber dollars. Dare ain’t no use talkin’ about de convenience of a fiat money, for if silber dollars weighted 412½ pounds I’d roll em home, ’fore God I would!”
Every pasture owner should plant a hedge of the Cherokee rose. The common wire fence, it is believed, will last not longer than four or five years. The galvanized wire will stand probably ten years by renewing posts. The plank fence is expensive, and is the only one that gives absolute security against escapes of stock. The hedge offers security, permanence, economy and protection against northerns. A three year’s growth of the rose, properly cultivated, renders it impassable to all kinds of live stock. Our stockmen should give the subject attention.

The pic-nic last Friday was an event of which Kemperites may justly feel proud, and will long be treasured in the memories of many who, for one day at least, found respite from care and anxiety. The dismal cloudy morning was succeeded by a day of Italian skies and sun, as if heaven smiled upon the undertaking. Ere mid-day, wagons bearing the viands, and vehicles loaded with pleasure-seeking men, women and children, began to roll in. The spot selected for the day’s recreation was in a beautiful sward-carpeted pecan grove, “on the other side,”—Col. Graves generously giving the free use of the ferry boat for the day—immediately opposite the “capital city.” A bounteous collation of more “good things” than your reporter has seen for many a day was spread by Mesdames McFadden, Miller, Stoner, Jones, Lynn, Kay, Crawford, Southwell and Carothers, assisted by Messrs. J. S. McFadden, J. D. Miller, G. O. Stoner, P. T. Stoner, J. S. Crawford, Robert and Byron Carothers, J. T. Southwell, and other gentlemen assistants. After dinner a game of croquet was engaged in by some of the younger folks, while others conversed, etc. The time sped fleetly, as do the moments always whose wings are gold-laden and with the lengthening shadows of evening only did thoughts of returning home suggest themselves. At night the hospitable home of Mr. J. D. Miller was thrown open, and genial host and charming hostess bid their many guests a cordial welcome, and “twinkling feet” chased the glowing moments until “the we[e] night hours beyond the dawn.” The beauty and the chivalry of Nockaway was out in —— [illegible], as well as friends from a distance. As bright particular stars of the festive constellation, your reporter remembers —— [illegible] with pleasure Miss Folk, of Refugio, Miss Emma Hunt, of Victoria; Misses Post, Kay, Graves and McFadden, of Kemper; Messrs. Robert Carothers, Byron Carothers, J. D. Miller and J. S. Crawford, of Kemper, and Mrs. Wm. Coward, of Refugio. As satellites, reflecting the brilliancy of these luminaries, were: Messrs. Carothers, David Phelps, John Kay, John Dagg, Walter Garnett, David McFadden, Joseph Sturgis, Al McFadden, Capt. J. S. McFadden, H. B. Harvey, Dr. Moore, Judge R. F. Cole, Wm. Coward and Mr. Griffin. Regrets at the absence of Victoria friends were expressed. Anaqua is happy, Kemper is proud, and Nockaway defies the world to match her big-hearted, liberal men, and her beautiful and good women—all of whom either now take the Advocate or purpose subscribing right away if not sooner.

—Victoria Advocate, May 8, 1880

Marcus Mills “Brick” Pomeroy, a controversial Wisconsin journalist, was the leader of a Greenback Party faction and published two Greenback newspapers, Pomeroy’s Democrat and The Great Campaign. His extreme views finally alienated other members of the party, and in 1880 he gave up politics and moved to Colorado, where he became a promoter of railroad tunnels. The Greenback Party advocated “fiat money”—currency not backed by a supply of a precious metal like gold or silver. A full gold standard was still in effect at this time.
Kemper Kernals  
(From our Special Correspondent)

Nockaway endorses your stand on the proposed Camargo railroad subsidy. “Stick!”

Branding calves was the order of the day last week. Capt. McFadden finished Thursday, Capt. Stoner, Friday.

Ye festive mosquito, the multitudinous as well as the most persistent of collectors has arrived and commenced presenting his bills.

The Guadalupe and San Antonio rivers have both been on a bender the past week. What would John B. Gough say of that? A cold water twister!

Capt. J. T. Southwell, of Anaqua, has the most advanced corn witnessed the present season, being now near six feet high, and “silking.” His crop is assured.

Mr. Land of Anaqua purposes shipping a drove of mares to Florida the coming summer, a portion of which he will exchange for lumber, as he purposes building on the Harvey place, San Antonio river.

A jamboree is billed for next Thursday eve; or rather it will be “last Thursday” when these lines meets the public view—at the residence of Capt. G. O. Stoner. Nockaway is festive to the last, and grand you bet!

The circle of Nockaway beauty had an addition to its number in the arrival of Miss Jessie Donalson last Thursday. Miss Donalson is a sister of Mesdames P. T. and W. L. Stoner, and resides in Attapulgus, Decatur county, Ga.

A gentle ripple breaks the surface, and quick the waves of voice arise
Upon the water billows lash the land.
While animation lights all eyes
And would you know the cause of this,
My friend,
The solemn cause of this forsooth?
Then, as I speak, your full attention lend:
The baby, sir, has cut a tooth:

Mr. David Phelps, Mr. Toms and other gentlemen, not now remembered, succeeded last week in discovering and destroying a den of young wolves. The “litter” consisted of seven pups; five of which were killed and two carried away captive. More of the same kind of work would tell in advancing the condition of things hereabouts.

Capt. Southwell informs us that Anaqua is permeated by a spirit of generous emulation, and that the irrevocable fiat has gone forth that the Kemper pic-nic and jamboree is to be eclipsed though something terrible has to be done. You can count on Anaqua, for when she moves in earnest, she strides titanic-like, and in this instance she means “biz.”

Old Simon sayeth: —“Talk about gibben dat Karmargo railroad kumpany 1000 acres to de mile ob road pears like somebody a offerin’ me forty dollars to keep my own hoss and mar. Ef foax will gib away land dey needn’t go so far away from home to find a desarvin man; kase I’m hear! And I’s cropped from Ole Ferginnny to Nockaway, and never waz stuck by a subsidy in my life.”

Mr. T. H. Cromwell shipped a drove of mutton last week to New Orleans. The “Squire” thinks sheep “are the thing,” and your reporter thinks his (the Squire’s) head is level. The sheep
men of Nockaway—always abreast of the times—sold their wool before the late decline in prices. Other men—but beyond the lines of Nockaway—who held on for more “were left.” Truly in that day it were better to have been a Roman citizen than a King!

For the past week Kemper society had been rendered unusually pleasant and attractive by the presence of Mrs. Josephine Coward and Miss Sallie Folk, of Refugio. Both ladies are visiting Mrs. J. S. McFadden, and express themselves as highly pleased with the state of Nockaway. Mr. Geo. Harvey, also of Refugio, is spending a few days with his sister, Mrs. J. D. Miller. May their visit prove as pleasant to them as they have rendered it to us.

Last Saturday was the date for our regular term of court. But two causes encumbered the docket, and when his honor called “time!” the litigants in one case stepped smiling up to the “licklog” and declared that they had treated each other and retreated, shook hands fraternally; smoked the calumet of peace, and were parties litigant no more. They had resorted to arbitration, and compromised their differences. The judge accepted this result with benign satisfaction, and dismissed the case saying: “Go, win no more!” In another civil action, judgment by default was rendered. Nockaway has the most peaceable, and law abiding citizens on the American continent and the cogs of her judicial mill are rusting in consequence.

Last Thursday, earnest men were perambulating the State of Nockaway. Their countenances were serious, and bespoke determination. It couldn’t be that another pic-nic was on the tapis! Was the cause of this activity, then a funeral or a marriage? Your reporter became fired with a spirit of determination too—determined that the Advocate must chronicle the cause—whatever it was—of the effect just dwelt upon. Capt. McFadden was the first of the perambulators encountered, and was interviewed upon the spot. The Captain wished to purchase bulls! He started out to purchase Durhams, but finding these scarce he dispatched a messenger out west for a drove of the “broad born” variety.” Capt. McFadden purchased a toro—half breed Durham—of J. D. Miller, and Mr. Wellington one of Judge Cole, the latter a half breed Alderney. Why all became seized with the desire of purchasing bulls on the same day must be relegated to the category of those phenomena pronounced inexplicable.

Last Thursday your reporter, in company with Mr. J. D. Miller, paid a visit to the hospitable mansion of Capt. J. S. McFadden, and spent the day so pleasantly that its memory will long remain a green oasis in the desert of life. Capt. Mac. was absent, which was regretted—if any thing could be regretted in the company of such kind and genial friends. The valor of the dramatis personae was put to the test in the afternoon by a swarm of bees, which all hands and the cook attempted to hive. Friend David McFadden led the van, ably supported by Mrs. J. S. McFadden, Mrs. Coward, and Miss Sallie Folk. With shame, be it said, your reporter, Mr. Miller and Mr. Harvey brought up the rear, at a safe distance, in most un gallant style. We’d been there before! A visit was paid to his Brahma majesty, King Wade, who was found grazing on the tender mesquite grass in the pasture, his soft velvety coat looking as polished as if daily rubbed, when in fact his majesty takes “pot luck” with the “broad horns,” and it seems abundantly able to do so. Wade is a fine animal, and to one not acquainted with this species of cattle somewhat of a curiosity, resembling an intermediary degree between the camel and the cow. The advantages of these cattle are size, hardiness, quality of beef, good milk kine, and good travelers, lifting the feet straight from the ground like a horse, instead of the shambling pace of the cow. Capt. McFadden thinks this not the “sacred cow” of Burmah, as those bovine divinities are much smaller, but nevertheless, your reporter in viewing the splendid animal could not resist a desire to apostrophize, mentally, somewhat in this strain: “Hail, Brahma Wade! Thou visible modern link in the chain of time, whose links extend from the sounding moment of the present, adown the
vistas of sleeping centuries unto creation’s morn itself. Apis of the Egyptians, thy progenitors were deified when the officiating priest of Heliopolis gave his blushing daughter to Hebrew Yusuf (Joseph) for a bride! How long before this had holy fires been lighted to Apis by priests of “On” Moses sayeth not.” Some very fine specimen of the Durham were also inspected; especially two-year-old heifers purchased of Dr. J. L. Gartrell, are excellent animals, and seem to vindicate the claim to superiority. Want of space precludes us now from doing the stock of Capt. McFadden justice, and at a more favorable time we will resume the subject. He purposes visiting Washington county soon to purchase more cattle to add to his already large stock, his supply of pasturage being in excess of the demand.

—Victoria Advocate, May 15, 1880

Kemper Kernals
(From our special correspondent)

It is thought that the recent rains will insure a bountiful yield of corn.

Capt. J. A. McFadden left Kemper last Tuesday for Washington county in search of cattle for sale.

Capt. J. A. McFadden met with the misfortune of losing a fine Mal’ese jack recently, being gored by a bull.

Capt. J. S. Crawford sold last week a number of half breed yearling bulls to Mr. Garner, of Calhoun county. Price $15.

A purchase of 50 head of cattle was made last week by Volney J. Rose, in Lavaca county. Price paid, at time of writing, unknown.

A drove of several hundred beeves crossed the river at this point last Tuesday, being shipped on account of Mr. J. M. Mathis, of Victoria.

A most brilliant meteor was seen to course its way through the heavens over Nockaway last Wednesday night about 10 o’clock. Mr. Carrington and Gus. Black, who witnessed it, describe it as extremely brilliant.

We learn that Mr. Byron Carothers purposes visiting San Antonio shortly, in quest of the health-giving airs of that high and salubrious clime, Mrs. Carothers not being in good health. May they return with ruddy health, and with augmented attachments for Nockaway.

Nockaway’s attendance is never slim at a dance, a pic-nic, at church, or—we had nearly written funeral; but thanks to the providence of a merciful Ruler, funerals are scarce; and may it be long—long ere we are called upon to mourn the death of one of our number. We have none to spare.

In a recent conversation regarding the planting of the “rose hedge,” Capt. J. S. Crawford made some suggestions which your reporter considers invaluable; i.e., that the hedge should be planted under a fence containing at least one “barbed wire.” Animals once pricked with the “barbs” will always avoid a contact with the fence, and thus insure protection to the young plants. Besides, the wire supports the hedge until it becomes self supporting.

What beautiful moonlight nights we are now enjoying! Time was, ere these reportorial fingers felt the effects of age. Sonnets to beauty, and apostrophies to Diana would have contested the meed of notoriety with “Kemper Kernals.” But age is as frost to the germs of love, and this reporter’s garden sass of affection has been laid low many times to predicate another hypothesis on the pedestal of Cupid. But the nights are lovely, and breathe of love!
Our worthy teacher, Mr. Morrow, has been forced by unavoidable circumstances to relinquish his school. His place has been filled temporarily. In this connection your reporter would bear witness to the kind and disinterested motives of Mr. Morrow, who, after the present summer, purposes teaching elsewhere. Mr. M. is a graduate of the University of Chapel Hill, N.C., and is a thoroughly educated gentleman; combining with those qualities that so eminently fit him for instructing youthful minds, others of head and heart that stamp him in every respect a gentleman. We hope to see him connected with one of the leading institutions of leaning in the state, as professor of languages or mathematics, being well assured that he will confer honor upon any chair he may accept.

Mrs. Josephine Coward, and Miss Sallie Folk departed for their home in Refugio last Saturday morning. Friends meet but to part!—is the sad and inexorable fiat that shifts the scenes in the drama of this transitory life. How many times have we already met and parted in other realms long before fate demand the “final adieus” as tributes at the shrine of death? Is death’s farewell a final one! Shall we meet again upon a golden shore to inhale eternal draughts of circumambient bliss, where parting is no more! But our fair friends in this instance did not enter a hearse, but a carriage, with friend Joseph Coward holding the ribbons. “Bussing” at the departure became contagious, and a relapse to the rebuss was not unknown. Your cynical reporter nervously turned the pages of Zadkiel’s almanac to see if an omni-buss was threatened. He feared the late brilliant meteor might have been its precursor. The climax was attained, however, before universality was reached; and your jealous reporter did not get a buss! He was mad, of course. He wanted a buss, or rather a hundred busses. But disappointment is an old friend of his, and he bears bravely up—mean temperature 100 in the shade. To our absent friends we pour libations.

It is that faculty or pres[c]ience which can trace results yet in the future from causes now operating., that the “gifted few” are enabled to command success. Those sagacious stockraisers who abandoned the nomadic system of stockraising and went with the current that resulted in the introduction of pastures, have now abundant cause to felicitate their wise forethought. In a recent conversation, Capt. J. A. McFadden stated that he never realized the extent of the depredations on stock, and his consequent losses, until he had enjoyed the protection of a fenced pasture. This was a great advance; but the expense of keeping up pasture fences is greater than necessary; and neither wire nor plank afford absolute security to stock. The “rose hedge” security, nominal expense only after planting, and in addition to these, it affords protection against “northers,” and in some degree against the fierce sun of July and August. Forecasting the inevitable signs of the future, Capt. J. A. McFadden and Capt. Stoner announce their intention of planting a hedge around their respective pastures. Their action will be followed by others, and soon the pasture problem will be solved. Resolutions never go backward, and the pasture system is a finality, despite the longings of croakers who indulge hopes of a relapse to former “loose times.” The dogy and his congener the cow thief and desperado, are relics of the past.

The “jamboree” announced in last issue of the ADVOCATE occurred at the residence of Capt. G. O. Stoner, and was attended by the beauty and chivalry of Nockaway. Hospitable host and hostess left nothing undone that could contribute to the comfort and pleasure of their many guests. From the dazzling galaxy of beauty, your reporter retains in his mind’s eye (reporters have no hearts) the lovely faces and names of the following Madamoiselles [sic]: Miss Sallie Folk, of Refugio, Misses Ida Hunt, Addie Norris, Ida Byrne and Sallie Harvey of the “other side;” Miss McMickle, of San Antonio; Misses Belle and Lucy Kay and Jessie Donaldson, of Kemper, and Mesdames J. D. Miller, G. O. Stoner and P. T. Stoner. Among the chivalry, was
met Mr. Seymour Thurmond, who declared a Nockaway “jamboree” eclipsed anything in that line ever witnessed on the boards of the “city of roses.” Capt. J. A. McFadden, jolly and pleasant as ever; Captain Patrick Hughes, of the “other side,” and Messrs. Carothers, Miller, Kay, Phelps, Garnett, McFadden, etc. The festivities of Nockaway will not be resumed until the pic-nic, barbecue, and dance billed for July 4th. This will be a “rouser,” and those who fail to attend it will have left undone one thing which they will always regret as a neglected sine qua non to the full and perfect sum of the existence of man, woman or child. Don’t neglect it!

A recent visit to the magnificent stock ranch of Maj. J. N. Keeran, was productive of much pleasant greetings, and will always be recalled with pleasure. Maj. Keeran is one of the live stock men of Texas, and his establishment is on a scale which for mere magnitude will compare favorably with any in Texas; while in other respects the far sighted owner is surpassed by no one in the success with which he has improved the common “broad born” variety of cattle by crosses with the Durham and the Brahma. Maj. Keeran has about 50,000 acres enclosed, all of which is fully “stocked.” A number of splendid Durham and Brahma bulls were inspected, as well as the many young specimen of their issue. As valuable as are his herds now, their value will be enhanced in a few years three fold by the improved crosses above alluded to. Maj. Keeran is a genial, hospitable gentleman, who deserves success, and who will attain it, if figures don’t lie! It may be well to mention in this connection the importance given to the Brahma breed by the far-seeing and successful of our live stock men. Capt. J. A. McFadden and Maj. Keeran both think it is the bull for Texas. The half breed calves can be detected on sight by their superior size, and the peculiar marks that distinguish the variety. At all events, these two practical, and intelligent breeders will leave no point undecided in their experiments with the “sacred cross.”

Some idea of the extent of Maj. J. N. Keeran’s operations in the live stock line may be formed by the statement that he branded last year 3500 calves, and sold 1700 beeves.

—Victoria Advocate, May 22, 1880

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

The barbed fence wire and the hedge rose are now being discussed preparatory to adoption. Billious fever appears to have become epidemic hereabouts. There is scarce a family adjacent to Kemper in which one or more of the children are not sick.

We regret to learn that Eva, the little eight year old daughter of Capt. McFadden, was bitten by a dog last Sunday. The wound, though painful, is not regarded as dangerous.

Capt. G. O. commenced cutting oats last week. The yield is pronounced large, and of quality superior. Nockaway will produce the present season much more corn, oats, bacon and sich like than is demanded by local consumption.

On dit that a telephone is to be placed between the residence of Capt. G. O. Stoner, and Maj. Tom Fleming. Major Tom is El Rey de los tigres, and purposes entering into an alliance offensive and defensive with Nockaway.

Fleas and mosquitoes are numerous hereabouts. A Nockaway flea can give more intolerable annoyance, and turn up missing oftener just as he is wanted, than any reptile on the continent. His appearance bond ain’t worth a cuss!
Mrs. Emma Jeron, of Refugio, is on a visit to her sister, Mrs. J. A. McFadden. May she find Nockaway sufficiently attractive to cause her visit to be prolonged; for Kemper circles are graced by her presence, and rendered doubly attractive.

Rev. Mr. N. E. Carrington, of your city, had been with us for some time boring wells. Last week while en route for Victoria in his wagon, he met an alligator six feet long in the road. Mr. Carrington “roped” the reptile, tied him on the wagon, and conveyed him home.

“Coming events cast their shadows before!” and Nockaway is preparing for the census man, or so thought friend W. W. Hunt when a youthful stranger invaded the peaceful quiet of this domicile last Friday with the intention of making his sojourn permanent. Two for Nockaway in the last week; and both boys! Next!

Mr. Wm. Jones recently visited Victoria to have a surgical operation performed on the foot of his little daughter, a child of about eight years of age. Two years ago the foot was badly scalded, and much deformed in consequence. Dr. Moore performed the operation—amputation of one toe and the little sufferer is convalescent.

These are positively the dullest times chronicled in the annals of Nockaway. Nothing breaks a ripple on the placid surface of the occasion. The judge says the judicial mill grow[s] rusted by disuse, and that we will be compelled to import lawless “cuss” or two just to exercise the old machine. Can’t we get up a dog fight, a horse race, or a wedding? This being “leap year” the fair and gentle sex must take the initiative—especially if we are to have a wedding.

That great pest of the farm and garden, the mole, or salamander (improperly called the gopher) seems to be increasing hereabouts. Capt. J. S. Crawford showed your reporter a pond which they had completely drained by their excavations, while the prairie is being literally honeycombed by them. The theory respecting their carnivorous nature would seem not to be sound, as certainly much vegetation succumbs to their attacks.

Master Davis Stoner, a youth of about twelve years, last week lassoed a serpent of the rattlesnake-pilot species, which was six feet long, and “big according.” These serpents attain great size, are the most vicious of Texan reptiles, and when striking at an object give vent to a loud hissing sound. As to whether they are poisonous, opinion is divided. They bear a strong resemblance in color to the rattlesnake, have a thick, blunt tail, which it is said denotes a venomous class of snakes.

Old Simon dicit: “Hit does do a man good dese days gist to got to Vic-tory an ’sociate wid de perlite foax. Candy-dates is de most perlitest foax outside ob de French dancin’ master. Ef I wuz to lose my almanax, I could tell ’lection time wuz comin’. In de ‘off’ times I’s “Ole Simon;” spring ’lection, an I’m “Simon;” den arter awhile I’m “Simon Grubbs,” and den Mr. Grubbs,” and ef dey runs neck an neck on de home stretch, I’m good to be “Capt. Grubbs,” I know ef hit wuzent for ’lections and de wimmen foax, perliteness would pass away forever!”

“Things are not what they seem,” observed the philosopher, “but assume the hue of the mind, guided by associations. To illustrate: That is a peach tree to your views because your minds are not directed by any tender associations that cling about its branches closer than ivy, and sweeter than the echoes of a soft, low love song. But to me it is the figure of a sacred tryst. Under its boughs she stood and listened to the story of my love. She smiled sweetly, and simpered affirmatives bristling with provisos, and I—well I was credulous—I was susceptible. But I shouldn’t have taken the thing to heart, no way, if she had not fixed upon a goslin as it were. Imagine Ivanhoe unhorsed by a school boy! To you that is a peach tree. To me it is infinitely more! No, sir, things are not what they seem!”

—Victoria Advocate, May 29, 1880
Nockaway was busy last week harvesting oats. The yield was good.

Our worthy fellow citizen, Col. W. P. Graves, left last Monday for San Antonio, to be absent a week or two.

The river commenced rising very suddenly here about noon of Monday last. Not a drop of rain had fallen.

Mr. Wm. Hanes, of Saluria, moved a drove to 250 head of cattle from Matagorda island to the vicinity of Kemper, arriving last Sunday.

Mr. Wm. E. Jones will have charge of the Sunday school at Kemper during the absence of our worthy superintendent, Col. W. P. Graves.

Fleas always make their exit about the middle of June. They are becoming charmingly less numerous already, preparatory to the grand exo-dust.

Mr. Carrington bored a well last week for Dr. Bellow, going sixty-five feet, and getting fifteen feet of water, which would seem to be an inexhaustible supply.

A drove of five hundred beef cattle crossed the river at Kemper on the last Thursday for Indianola. They will be shipped on account of Mr. J. M. Mathis, of Victoria.

Master William Hunt, a youth of about fourteen years of age, recently roped a wild cat near his father’s residence “on the other side,” and dispatched his feline life.

Your reporter is glad to be able to announce an improvement in the health of the juvenile portion of the community, who have been suffering from billious attacks.

Mr. John Donalson and lady, of Refugio, spent several days last week in visiting the families of Messrs P. T. and W. L. Stoner. Miss Jessie Donalson accompanied her brother to Refugio.

Our friends on “the other side” attended a dancing party last Friday evening at the residence of Mr. Ben Smith. Our “warning” came so late that Nockaway’s attendance was slim: friend D. H. McFadden being our envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary for the occasion.

On dit that a movement is in contemplation to attain Calhoun county to Victoria for judicial purposes, the population of the former being too sparse to hear the burdens of county organization. A sad commentary on Calhoun’s former prosperity. A city slaughtered by its “friends.” (?)

Several cattle in the Stoner pasture have died recently of murrain. The remedy for this malady must be of the nature of a preventative, as the animal is often found dead ere any symptoms of disease are discernable. A preventative would be an invaluable acquisition to the breeder of live stock.

Your reporter was shown this week a curiosity in the newspaper line, being the “Matrimonial Times,” published in Boston, Mass. Advertisements appear in its columns inviting correspondence with a view to matrimony. In this delectable business the sexes are about equally represented.

Capt. J. S. Crawford has a tank a few rods in front of his residence for the convenience of watering saddle horses. On last Wednesday morning an alligator about three feet in length was discovered in the water. The little fellow seems perfectly satisfied with his new quarters. He will be allowed to remain undisturbed unless he develops a fondness for lambs.
Nockaway’s one candidate for official position appears in the Advocate this week. Your reporter cannot express the desire to express a kindly wish for his old comrade, John D. Miller, with whom he bore the rigors of an Ohio winter in Camp Chase. Times change, and men change with them. But,

“I remember thee, Glencairn, and all that thou hast been to me.”

What was it that Goslin, of the Quill, had to say about his prolific hen that layed [sic] a double egg every day? Judge Cole has a hen that lays two double eggs every day. Efforts to hatch these eggs all failed save in one instance, when two chicks were hatched from one shell. One of the twins is now alive and about grown, the other fell a victim to the rapacity of some nocturnal varmint. When hatched the chicks were joined together by a skin-like ligature from wing to wing.

A young vacquero was chasing a wild heifer over the “hogwallow” at full speed the other day, and so infatuated was he at the sport that he forgot he had a bottle of chrysilic [sic] ointment in his hip pocket. Capt. J. S. Crawford met him in the midst of his wild career, standing up in his stirrups, and “cussing” with such vehemence that the atmosphere for forty feet around was blue and sulphurous. “What in the name of Pluto is the matter?” was asked. A reply came trembling through the eddying volume of atmospheric profanity, modulated by the sympathetic voice of woe, and was written in words to this effect. “I was trying to tail that cow, my horse made a bobble and threw me against the cantle of the saddle, and “busted” that bottle of chrysilic ointment, and I’m blistered from my hip to my heel!”

“Only this, and nothing more,
Quoth the vacquero, Never more.”

—Victoria Advocate, June 5, 1880

The quoted line is from “Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn” (1791) by Robert Burns.

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

Mrs. J. L. Whitney, of Rockport, is at present on a visit to relatives in Nockaway.

Mr. Peter T. Stoner visited last week the towns of Rockport and Refugio, in the interest of his apiary.

Mr. David Phelps had an exciting race after a wolf last week. It was an immense lobo [lobo], and made its escape through the pasture fence in the nick of time.

That pest of live stock—the screw worm—is now giving our stockmen abundant work, as many of the recently branded calves are attacked by them.

The Guadaloupe has been swollen from bank to bank the past week, and the lowlands all covered with water, though not a drop of rain had fallen hereabouts. Present prognostications indicate rain.
Friend Joe. Sheldon, once a Victoria boy, but now a successful wool grower of Maverick county, passed through Kemper last Sunday en route for Lavaca. Joe. is every inch a man, and his success in life deserved.

Col. W. P. Graves leads the van of Nockaway in the melon line, already having ripe musk melons. Capt. J. T. Southwell, however, is not far behind with a large “patch” of water melons and musk melons.

Mrs. Emma Jeron departed for her home in Refugio last Thursday, so well pleased with her visit to Nockaway that she promises to answer “present” at the roll call of the “big blow out” on the 4th of July.

“Oh, how sweet, and yet how bitter!
To love Miss May and then not gitter!”

Thus sings a youth of Nockaway who has arrived there for the first time. The tender tendrils of every young heart are subjected to just this same tension. We’ve all been there before. Nockaway will be represented at the big masonic jubilee in Refugio on the 24th. But it is on the 4th of July that she intends spreading herself. Curleycue will be imported as the orator of the day; and if Uncle Davy don’t draw a crowd the galvanic battery man had as well cease trying.

Deputy sheriff Schwartz passed through Kemper last Friday with a recalcitrant witness, en route to Indianola, where Judge Pleasants is administering to Calhoun the summer dose of justice. The witness—a Mexican—is “wanted” to give evidence in a case of horse stealing—State against Walters.

Mr. J. D. Miller visited Indianola last Wednesday. Mr. D. H. McFadden turned his back on Nockaway last Thursday for a few days of sojourn among his many friends in Refugio. A letter from J. A. McFadden, written at Brenham, announces his speedy return. He finds but few cattle offered for sale.

The quiet of our peaceable little community was harshly disturbed last Wednesday morning by the shooting of Judge R. F. Cole, by one Pat Culkin, late the ferryman at this place. The wound—a five-shooter shot—is not dangerous, though excruciatingly painful. The ball entered the right arm and is imbedded in the fleshy portion just below the elbow. General sympathy is expressed for the sufferer, and kind friends are doing all that lies within human aid to alleviate his sufferings. Especially about all praise is the humanitarian zeal of Mesdames J. A. McFadden and J. D. Miller, who have been ministering angels indeed in their assiduous endeavors in behalf of the wounded man. Such evidences of heart and soul ennoble the human race, and make us proud of the common brotherhood on man. All honor to our noble country women.

Murrain among cattle seems to be an established evil against which our stockmen are now called upon to combat. Hitherto the summer months were regarded as an absolute security for stock, and the winter only was feared. Now the luxuriant grasses attendant upon the fenced pasture system affords plentiful grazing through the winter, and an excess in summer; hence the malady of which we speak—the cattle are becoming too fat. Among other remedies proposed, turpentine is said to be efficacious. But so swift is the insidious and malign effects of the murrain that any remedy must be resorted to more as a preventative than a cure. About twenty head of cattle have died in the Stoner pasture since the 1st of May which would more than average the
fatality of the preceding winters. As in all other matters, standard authorities should be consulted, as promising less risk in experiments than a resort to empirics.

—Victoria Advocate, June 12, 1880

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

Rev. McCain preached to a large audience last Sunday.
We are happy to announce the convalescence of our friend Judge R. F. Cole.
Melons are abundant, and ye chill and fever will surely bring up the rear.
Mr. Geo. Harvey, of Refugio, spent several days last week in the “Capitol city.”
Kemper is to have a month’s siege of preaching soon, or so reported, or words to that effect.

Off for Refugio, Mrs. J. D. Miller left last Wednesday for Refugio, in company with her brother, Mr. Geo. Harvey. May her visit be pleasant.

We are requested by Rev. J. N. McCain, to announce that there will be a protracted meeting commenced at Kemper city on the evening of Friday before the third Monday in July. In conducting the services Rev. Mr. McCain will be joined by the Evangelist, Rev. J. H. Zively, of West Texas Presbytery. A good attendance is hoped for.

—Victoria Advocate, June 26, 1880

Kemper Kernals
High Winds—Rain Needed—Good Health—Stock Pest—A Formidable Weapon Returned—Gone West—The Canvass—Truth of an Old Hym[n]
Lively Contest With an Old Saurian
(From our Special Correspondent)

The high southerly winds of last Saturday would indicate quite a gale on the gulf.

Rain is badly needed. The ground is excessively dry; the grass is losing its emerald hue, and gardens, melons, vines, etc., about “played.”
The health of our community was never better than at present, which leaves our worthy physicians, Drs. Bello and Moore but little to do.

That pest of the live stock interest, the screw worm, is becoming extremely annoying. Constant attention to the calves recently branded is required.
The lasso in the hands of a Texas cow-boy is a most formidable weapon. The present year has witnessed the lassoing of a serpent, a wild cat and an alligator in Victoria county alone.

Nockaway pilgrims to the Mission pow-wow have about all returned to the stamping ground, highly delighted with their visit. Mrs. J. D. Miller remains on a visit at the home of her father, H. B. Harvey.

Pat, the shootist, shook the dews of Nockaway from his ambrosial locks, and turned his footsteps towards the west—possibly with the intention of locating and growing up with the country.

The canvass for local candidates is even now heated, and there be yet four months more, by which time incandescence will have been attained. May the best man win?

Emerging from a weeks contest with fleas by day, and mosquitoes and fleas by night, a man recognizes the truth of the old hymn.

“It is not all of death to die, etc.”

A colossal fortune awaits the man who invents a flea exterminator. Such a preventive is really demanded in this section, and if not dear, if not unsafe to use, and if it is efficient, would sell readily. Are none of our inventors equal to the emergency?

As Mr. W. L. Stoner rode into the river last Saturday morning for the purpose of watering his horse, a monster alligator rose to the surface not exceeding three feet distant. Will’s canine companions “Towser” and “True-boy” plunged into the water and attached the monster, who by no means confined his operation to a defense; but met the dogs with open jaws to what would have been a hospitable stomach had not man’s dominion over the brute creation interposed to save them. The scene was lively. Dogs and alligator in inextricable confusion blent. Finally operations began to approach results when the alligator was in hot pursuit of “True-boy,” himself flanked and retarded by the super-canine efforts of “Towser,” who recognized the fact that if “True-boy” ever should be the recipient of his favors this was the occasion. Just as “True-boy” made the shore, the alligator caught him by the foot, but ere he could draw the terrified dog into his savage jaws. Mr. Will Stoner threw with quivering hand a lariat over his head, the other end of the rope being made fast to the pommel of the saddle. To draw the alligator to shore was an easy task; but no sooner had he reached terra firma into which to insert his huge claws than both horse and rider were dragged to the water’s edge. This operation would have continued indefinitely had not Mr. Joe. Sturgis arrived on the scene, and lent a helping hand. The game old Saurian was drawn out of the water and dispatched. He measured ten feet and some inches. An autopsy revealed the fact that he had breakfasted on a pretty good sized hog, and a little alligator—the old cannibal!

—Victoria Advocate, July 3, 1880

Kemper’s Gala Day!
The Nockawayans Feast Their Neighbors!

On Friday of last week quite a number of vehicles, ladened [sic] with human freight, were seen departing from our city toward the land of Nockaway, for it had gone forth as a royal edict, that the people of that fair land were to make a grand feast to themselves, and their neighbors were invited in generous hospitality to join them, as did Romulus invite the Sabines, in times now somewhat past. Among the party from Victoria was no less a person than ye reporter, who has
determined long since to miss no “good thing” in this life. A rapid drive behind a “spanking” team, going down the rich valley of the Guadalupe, where every now and then we passed large fields of growing crops, we soon halted at the campus selected for the feast. A large, and evidently happy assemblage of people were seen on every side—here, gathered under the shade of some huge pecan tree—there, walking over grounds carpeted with rich coating of grass, or, a little farther on, collected in small knots discussing politics, the crops, the presidential nomination or prices of beef cattle in Kansas. We drove on, however, and crossing the limpid Guadalupe, were soon beyond the protection of the glorious star spangled banner and into the land of Nockaway, and guests of that hospitable gentleman, Judge Cole, whose store we made our headquarters and arsenal for the campaign.

Nockaway was out in all her glory, old and young, white and black, without regard to age, sex or previous condition of servitude were on hand. The emergency was great, but Nockaway was equal to it. Brave men and fair women, old maids and handsome bachelors, peaceable citizens and voluble candidates were mixed and intermixed in so good a democratic style as to have made Dennis Kearney wish he was not a “sand-lotter” any longer. These things ye reporter took in as at a glance, but there were other things which required more time and deliberation to take in. There were two long trenches dug under favoring boughs and with a hot fire below and fatted meats above, the air was soon filled from them with the scent of the “good time a coming.” And it came, when the deeply toned voice of Capt. McFadden announced the dinner ready. The tables were long and amply provided—yea, abundantly so, but the whetted appetites of the guests were “immense.” The battle waged furiously for a while, the charge was gallant and firm, the slaughter was terrific, but still the mountains of barbecued beef, calf, mutton and pig and the huge piles of chicken, turkey, confectioneries and condiments loomed up larger and stronger every moment. Victory hung in the scales a moment, then our noble line began to waver—falter, and finally the battle was with the Nockawayans.

We met many of the good people from the other side. Among them the Messrs. Phelps, Messrs. McFadden, Messrs. Stoner, Messrs. David Williams, J. S. Crawford, J. T. Southwell, Graves, Andrew, Dr. Moore, and others, but none more agreeably and pleasantly, and none we wish more to see than our bon ami Col. V. M. Rose, who we found looking as young and handsome as ever. Everybody enjoyed the trip and carry with them pleasant recollections of the day spent at Kemper.

—Victoria Advocate, July 10, 1880

Romulus, the legendary founder of Rome with his twin brother Remus, organized a festival and invited members of the Sabine tribe to attend, a ruse to procure wives for the Roman men. Denis Kearney, an Irish immigrant, agitated against Chinese workers in California; he organized the Workingmen’s Party, known as the “Sand-Lotters.”

Kemper Kernels
(From our Special Correspondent)

The health of Nockaway was never better, though the weather is intensely hot.

Capt. McFadden is booked for Saluria next week, in company of Mr. Wm. Hawes.

Showery weather for the past week, but not sufficient to benefit the grass, which is much in need of rain.
Mr. E. M. Phelps, of Anaqua, accompanied by his estimable lady, and the Misses Bickford, visited Kemper last Thursday.

Judge Cole, we are pleased to state, continues to improve, though it will yet be some time before he can use his arm.

The colored people held a conference on the San Antonio river last Monday night, and we learn pledged themselves to support Mr. E. S. Roberts for assessor.

The family of Mr. Byron Caruthers returned home this week from an extended visit to San Antonio. The health of Mrs. Caruthers, we are glad to note, was much improved by the trip.

Readers of newspapers often find themselves speculating as to whether the many marvelous occurrences that invite their attention in the columns of the same are true. For instance, the Kansas city Times announces that a man at Helena, Texas is building an ark in anticipation of another flood.

Our fashionable habitues having hied themselves to Long Branch, Saratoga, Cape May, etc., for the summer, Kemper locals will languish in consequence. But the coming season will doubtless open brisk, and Kemper, engrossed in business and pleasure, will again plume herself as worthy of the title: The Capitol City!

There may be harder things to swallow than the following tale of the missionary, though old Simon doubted it. “A perary runner met a rattlesnake, and they just give a side wipe at each other, which flung ’em head to tail like. Simontaneously they commenced swallowing one another, and swallowed, and swallowed until there was only the two heads visible in the road.” Simon shook his head dubiously, and ventured to remark,” “Ef you stuffs a bag full of cotton, de dag is bound to be viserable. But it do ’pear two snakes could swallow each other and have nothing but heads,” and the old man plodded onward, evidently believing that there is something new under the sun.

—Victoria Advocate, July 24, 1880

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

Maj. Thomas Fleming crossed a drove of cattle at this point last week.
Fall gardening will now be in vogue. Nothing like a good fall garden.
Already the emerald hue of the grass shows the effect of the recent rains.
“Necessity is the mother of invention,” and bends custom to her will. Since the disabling of Judge Cole’s right arm, over a month since, he has accustomed himself to the use of the pen in the left hand, producing a chirography bold and legible.

Last week a hungry wolf killed a sheep in three hundred yards of Capt. J. S. Crawford’s house in the early afternoon. It is thought a dose of strychnine sent him to prepare the way for Garfield after the ides of November.

The “blasted muggy” weather (as a John Bull would say) that has been prevailing for several days has caused an epidemic of colds. To those suffering from “cold in the head,” it may be well to say that an onion roasted and eat[en] just before retiring affords almost immediate relief.

From Judge Cole, we learn that Nockaway sends the following delegation, in addition to the list reported last week, to sojourn during the summer months on Saluria’s sea laved beach:
Col. David Williams and family, and Miss Marian Post, Mr. Wm. Toms and family; Judge E. M. Phelps and family; Capt. J. T. Southwell and family, and Mr. Robert Caruthers and family. May our friends have a jolly, good time is the wish of your reporter.
Capt. G. O. Stoner, who recently visited Mr. Peter Fagan, at his residence in Refugio county, imparts the following data in regard to an alligator that probably ante-dates any living thing in west Texas: The length of this monster is estimated at thirty feet by Mr. Fagan and others who have seen him. Mr. Fagan, then a youth, first got sight of him in 1816, though his existence was well attested ten years previously. During these 40 years, he has not materially varied his place of abode, nor has he perceptibly attained any greater size in all this lapse of years. Efforts have been made to kill him repeatedly—in fact, mankind has waged an unceasing warfare upon him for nearly half a century, but so far all efforts have proved futile. Mr. Fagan once shot him with an ordinary citizen’s rifle and that the ball took effect was demonstrated by his lashing the water with his tail, and exhibiting signs of rage and pain. This exhibition of blind fury was only momentary, for seeing Mr. Fagan on the bank of the river, he made for him with wide opened jaws into which a barrel could easily have been “chucked.” As he almost touched the bank, Mr. Fagan fired again, aiming to centre an eye, but cut the ball-like exesscence [sic] just above. His previous contortions were nothing in comparison to the rage now manifested. The water was lashed into foam, and mud stirred up from the depths; finally he threw his tail into a box cider tree that inclined toward the water, and snapped off limbs as large as the thigh of a man. Mr. Fagan, who by the way, is not easily intimidated, now beat retreat. Mr. Fagan has ordered a Creedmore rifle, and says he intends to kill the monster if it takes six months. He purposes to have the hide stuffed, and the skeleton preserved entire. This reptile must be over one hundred years of age—possibly two.

As your reporter receives some letters making inquiry respecting Kemper city, its location, population, business, etc., he embraces this medium through which to reply: Kemper is located, and in this particular enjoys a great advantage over its sister city, Anaqua, which follows the postoffice around. In this respect Anaqua is a lively town. The population of Kemper on the 2d day of July, A.D. 1880, approximated five hundred souls. As we cannot afford to enumerate the census of the city in conformity to the wishes of each question, we purpose giving the above figures as the population of Kemper until another census is taken. If the figures are too low fifty per cent will be added to the enumeration of the next census, which it is hoped will satisfy indulgent people. Every man attends to his own business, and —— [illegible for several sentences] fruit for the “vultures of fate,” and a violator of the law would be a *rara-avis* in Nockaway. The lands are fertile and productive, and are capable of division under three general heads: Swamp, bottom, prairie. The swap lands produce fifteen thousand tons of alligator to the acre. The millennial dawn is not typified here by the lion and the lamb fraternizing, as the picture books have it, but by the figure of a bull-frog perched on the nose of a crocodile. Mr. Peter Fagan has raised the biggest crop of alligator this year, and he’s going to have fun gathering it—a regular jamboree of a time. Everybody and his wife are invited to attend and take a hand in the sport. Everything thrives on the bottom lands—cotton, corn, chills and cramp. The prairies produces grass and galls. The first is green, but if you imagine the galls are green you had best not give expression to that fancy. The grass grows old, and dies in the winter. The galls never grow old, and Fagan’s alligator never heard of one dying. This is a good range for galls, and a few more *manadas* would do well. The prevailing religion is the democratic, and Hancock’s general order No. 40, is the shibboleth of faith. In Kemper strictly, there is no marrying nor giving in marriage. This is a custom adhered to since the solemnization of the nuptials of Col. San Antonio and Guadalupe. The boss alligator attended that affair in company of a charming belle of the highly respected Mastodon family. A family that had great weight in public and private affairs of the day, but which, like the Stuarts, of Scotland, has become extinct. The
“Boss,” like Samuel J. Tilden, never married. Like Tilden, he never took his seat in the presidential chair. If there are other points of resemblance, our reporter will ascertain when he interviews the alligator, which will be after the matinee—provided the “Boss” don’t hold his own. He’d interview him before the matinee, but previous engagements, etc.

—Victoria Advocate, August 7, 1880

Samuel J. Tilden was the Democratic Party’s candidate for president in the election of 1876 against Rutherford B. Hayes.

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

Briars encumber the vineyard of the Lord hereabouts.

A dancing party, we learn, is billed on the other side to occur soon.

Gathering corn commences in Nockaway this week. The crop will be somewhat lighter than previously estimated.

The cotton caterpillar has appeared, and through prompt application of “London Purple” was made, his mad career does not seem to be materially impeded.

Old Simon says remorse of conscience may be a bad thing, but if a man wants to discount it, just let him make his supper off of catfish and water melons.

Judge Cole says the judicial mill needs lubricating, and if that state of affairs continues we will have to import a criminal for grist. Candidates for the position should not all speak at once.

Mr. W. L. Stoner contemplates driving a drove of horses east the coming fall. He will drive to Houston, and board the cars for Mobile, Ala., in which state it is thought remunerative prices can be obtained for good young mares.

Oft in the stilly night ye enterprising candidate keeps his tryst with the colored voter in Nockaway, distant so far from the courthouse. Your reporter hears concerning a pow-wow that occurred last Friday night somewhere in “the forks.” No particulars.

There ought to be a law against bores, for moral suasion has no effect on a confirmed creature of this genus. You are jotting down rapidly the train of your argument, or a narrative while your mind is freshly charged with the matter, when in he comes; takes up a paper to which you wish to refer, and asks: “Which has the largest circulation, the Kemper Battle Ax, or the Anaqua Morning Howl?”

The phenomenal north winds that have prevailed the past week has had the effect of lengthening our sick list considerable. Several of Capt. McFadden’s children, we learn, are confined to bed; while at Mr. Jones’ the situation is truly sad, Mrs. Jones and three children being prostrated with fever. Mrs. W. W. Hunt, also has been equally unwell. Our obliging and efficient physicians, Drs. Moore and Bello, are equal to the emergency, and are constantly in attendance.

Turkey fried in Greece, and served with German sauce, will soon become an international dish of great repute. The Kaisers Francis Joseph and William, will partake of it with gusto, while their cousin of Russia eats humble pie. Cabul and Candahar will claim the attention of J. Bull, Esq., and what with socialists, communist, and collectivist M. De Freycinet will have no disposition to engage materially in the eastern broil.

In Kansas City, Missouri, they are treated to a suicide sensation each week with harmonious regularity. In Nockaway the present is so calm and pleasant, and the perspective so
inviting that suicide is unknown. In fact the boss alligator, who has lived upwards of two
centuries, will be found protesting against his taking off when the time arrives. The commodore
says that suicide is about the last thing a man should think of.

During the excursion of Nockawayans recently to the bay, a negro girl in the employ of
Mr. Robert Caruthers, was delivered surreptitiously of a child. The inhuman mother proceeded to
excavate with her hands a shallow grave in the soft sand, and buried the fruit of her illicit
amours. Later in the day an elderly negress heard the cries of the child and went to its relief. A
pig had rooted it up. The child being alive, and had apparently suffered none from its atrocious
treatment. The wench when confronted with the indubitable evidences of her guilt confessed the
crime, and reluctantly received the little colored voter. This is a clear gain of one for Garfield if
he is in the ring twenty-one years from now.

—Victoria Advocate, August 14, 1880

Kemper Kernals
Latest Items From the Nockawayans—High Waters and Flooded Fields
Our Reporter Discourses of “Music and Moonlight”—Spoiled by the Pesky Mosquito
Mails Detained by Swollen Streams and Other Matters of Interest
(From our Special Correspondent)

Judge Cole informs your reporter that there is some talk of an addition to Kemper’s
architectural improvements, in the shape of a two story house, with a cupalo [sic], and a “bell
clock.” The judge suggests that the clock combination is to sound the alarm should Fagan’s
alligator move across the country.

Our worthy fellow citizen, Col. W. P. Graves, returned last week from a visit to the
Alamo city. The Col’s. usefulness in this community was appreciated during his absence, as the
Sunday school came to a stand still.

Our young friends of Anaqua, we learn had a dance at the Grange Hall last Friday, the
13th inst.

Johnny Kay, who has been quite ill is we are glad to learn convalescing.

Owing to the suddenness of the recent rise of the river it is feared some stock were lost.
Capt. G. O. Stoner, W. W. Hunt and Will. Stoner, improvised a boat last Saturday and went on a
voyage of inspection into the bottom. The “Peach Knoll,” a singular formation, whether natural
or artificial is not known, was above the flood, and here a number of deer and wild hogs had
sought refuge. Two deer were killed, the remainder “took water.”

The boss alligator is the only gentleman heard from who was not inconvenienced by the
recent flood. At ordinary water stage his anecdote is necessarily curtailed; but when the drift
wood comes down on the swelling rise, he doth a narrative unfold.

The “B.A.” says he ought to have been on the ticket with the “O.A.” as he is equally
opposed to modern improvements. He doesn’t care so much, however, about “the pay-as-you-go”
policy, nor public free schools, but he does hate that ingenuity which culminates in the
invention of a Creedmore rifle. The “B.A.” thinks of running on an independent ticker with Joe.
Sayers as lieut. governor. He will make Crane—the post oak Demosthenes—secretary of state,
and Patten—the leader of the Lavaca democracy—attorney general.

Dr. Moore won golden opinions during the recent epidemic of malarial fever by his
skillfull treatment, and thereby laid the foundation of a lucrative practice. Your reporter rejoices
in the success of his deserving friend.
Judging from the various engravings with which the papers adorn their columns, we conclude that no less than twenty-five W. S. Hancock’s are candidate for the presidency. Between Hancock and Garfield there is no difference of opinion; but the average Nockaway voter is puzzled as to which Hancock he shall support.

Of Tanner, Old Simon *dicit* “Dat man’s got de kindes stumack dat ever two legs war hitched to. A stumack what’ll stan’ sich foolin’ as dat for forty day’s, will stan’ ennything. I kin go barfooted all de time, an’ the grass-burrs an’ de bull nettles don’t sot me back; an’ I kin pick cotting bar headed in de hottest of August days; but when I axes my stumack to credit me hit always pints de finger of de mind at de meal bar’l an’ the side of bakin.”

The next legislature should repeal the present “road-law” by the passage of one taxing property for repairs done. The wealth of the state is owned by persons over 45 years of age, and they are exempt. A poll tax to be just must conform to the financial circumstances of the poorest, and hence, should not accede fifty cents *per capita*. Both these subjects are susceptible of elaboration.

The showery weather of the past week has been favorable to the increase of the cotton caterpillar, thus people continue to apply the poison. As yet but little damage had been done.

Mr. Peter Stoner was engaged in smoking huts the other day, and the smoke following the subterranean runway, came boiling up from an outlet in close proximity to the colored man who was plowing. Jack, ignorant of the cause, and believing, that “where there’s so much smoke there must be fire,” incontinently abandoned his team and fled the diabolical presence.

All who are pestered with fleas, mosquitoes, or other insects, can find relief by burning in the room a spoonful of Persian Camomile (*Pyrethrum roseum*). This is absolute death to the pests, and entirely harmless to man. Your druggists by keeping it on hand, and advertising its qualities in this respect, would soon be repaid for their trouble.

The sough of the wind and surf could be distinctly heard at Kemper several nights last week, though the Gulf distant, on the air line, at least, twenty miles.

For two nights in succession last week—8th and 9th, a large fire was discernable in the direction of the mouth of the river. What was it?

Col. Robert Clark, of your city, was in Kemper one day last week.

Some sickness continues, though many first taken have recovered.

A gloom was thrown over our little community last Friday by the announcement of the death of little Eva, the eight year old daughter of our friend Capt. J. A. McFadden. Our heart goes out in sympathy to the grief stricken parents. Their loss is irreparable; for earth cannot call back the smile that lit up that sweet, innocent face. In vain will they listen for the sound of her childish voice; the sound of her footsteps will be heard no more approaching the family circle. Little Eva has thrown off the rude habiliments of earth to assume the shining raiment of the angels? In the glorious summer land beneath the genial rays of eternity’s sun, she has found a haven of rest in the bosom of Him who said: “Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

Arthur Thomas, the mail carrier, came tugging into Kemper last Saturday, afoot with the Refugio mail on his back. He had been water bound on the Refugio side of the San Antonio for a week.

Mr. John D. Miller placed Nockaway under obligations last Saturday, by bringing in the mail that had been accumulating at Victoria for over a week. The average Nockawayan wrestled four days with the musty files ere he had become posted on current events.
Musquitoes [sic] are very annoying to live stock. Their number is legion; and if you don’t believe a Nockaway Musquito can discount a wasp in size you have a most imperfect idea of our natural history.

Don Miguel Cana, who farms on the river [for?] Capt. G. O. Stoner, came out of the flooded wilderness last Saturday by swimming his horse about two miles. The Don’s equine navigation reminded one of Dana’s “Spectre Horse.”

If Burns or any other man ever said that love and moonlight go together, he did not take into consideration the presence of the musquitoes. The musical notes of the gallnipper rouses the dormant instincts of cannibalism in every man’s stomach, and causes him to sigh for Bob Ingersoll’s era of the headless vertebrae from which we all sprang. Of course the musquito was one of the ascending links, and we can console ourselves that we once buzzed around in quest of human blood. Consoling thought!

—Victoria Advocate, August 28, 1880

The “Spectre Horse” is the ghostly steed in The Buccaneer (1827), by poet and essayist Richard Henry Dana Sr.

Notes from Nockaway
(From our Special Correspondent)

Our mails are in terrible confusion, and much inconvenience is experienced thereby.

The inference is drawn from present indications that we are going to have another rainy spell.

Mrs. Emma Jeron and Mrs. Josephine Coward, are on a visit to Capt. and Mrs. J. A. McFadden.

The bloody murrain continues to carry off an occasional bovine. Capt. Geo. L. Whitney lost a valuable Durham cow in the Stoner pasture last week.


Mr. Joseph Coward showed your reporter a lemon grown in Galveston, that measured twelve inches in longitudinal circumference, and ten inches latitudinally. The lemon was not quite grown.

Friend Joseph Coward returned yesterday from his home in Galveston to spend some time with his sister, Mrs. J. A. McFadden. Mr. Coward is threatened with dropsy, and speaks of making a visit to the mineral wells in Bee county.

Dr. Moore, our efficient, gentlemanly, and accommodating young physician, has been severely taxed by professional calls during the past fortnight. He reports the health of the community improving; though fears are entertained of some sickness when the waters subside.

Mr. F. H. Cromwell informs your reporter that the water at this place during the late rise only lacked eighteen inches of attaining the altitude of the rise in 1869, while at Capt. David William’s it fell three feet below that mark. The entire crop of Mr. Cromwell, Mr. Toms and others is lost. The Mission and San Antonio rivers were much higher than the Guadalupe.

The greatest study of mortals is man; and the greatest victory attainable by humanity is that gained over its own passions. It is unseemly for neighbors to wrangle. We have enough troubles without adding to them. Let us remember that we all have faults ere we judge too harshly our brothers. Remember charges unsupported by proof is slander. “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”
The cause of the state against Pat Culkin is assuming the proportion of a national affair, as almost the whole population of Nockaway was summoned to appear as witnesses at the examination last Tuesday. Pat, it will be remembered, commenced practice with fire arms last July, probably to enable him to enter the lists as a competitor for the Elcho shield. His nerve was steady, his eye true, and the result of his practice good. He hit the mark. Unfortunately in a moment of mental aberration he selected Judge Cole for his target. The target went back on the marksman. Pat spent his summer on the sea laved beach, and finally brought up at Goliad. After three months of frantic efforts he finally succeeded in inducing the minions of the law to apprehend him. You will be able to lay before your readers the result of the examination.

The gentleman from Australia has come and gone. He said he wanted 150 beeves for a soup factory, but was forced to take that number of hat racks instead. He found a man however on the San Antonio river who had a mouth like the crater of Vesuvius, him the gentleman from Australia hired for a soup cooler. He thinks this investment will more than cover losses on the first investment. His parting with the “gentleman in spectacles” was pathetic. Packenham shed tears as he shook his hands with “Sanco Pang,” the “Orangeman” chuckled a fiendish laugh:

And rolled all over the sand
In a fit of the wildest maniac glee;
When he danced a jig on his spider like hands
And turned summersaults home to tea.

If any one doubts that the soul of Dogberry is marching on, that skeptic, we are sure does not attend the courts of the honorable justices of the peace. It makes a man “larf,” it does.

—Victoria Advocate, August 28, 1880

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

Capt. G. O. Stoner lost last week a valuable Alderney toro by murrain.

We learn that Mrs. Bello, the estimable wife of our friend Dr. Bello, had been quite unwell; but hope soon to hear of her convalescence.

Mr. Coffin, of St. Mary’s passed through Nockaway last week with a drove of mules for the eastern markets. Good cotton crops ensure a speedy sale.

The “Dry Kye” was a misnomer during the late rainy season, as the “Plumed Knight of Nockaway” found when he rode in and felt the waters close together around the crown of his hat.

You didn’t know that lake Como was situated in the immediate vicinity of Kemper! The geographies are all wrong on this point, as the superb view from Judge Cole’s verandah demonstrates.

The young tail of an alligator, or rather the tail of a young alligator is said to be a dish worthy the tooth of an epicure. The tale of the Boss will furnish food for experiment. Pass up your plates and remember that with each mouthful two centuries contemplate the gastronomic action of your jaws.

As your reporter jots down a “Kernal” with his good right hand, the left is kept constantly employed in waging a defensive warfare against swarms of blood sucking mosquitoes. Sleep outside of a “four by six bar” is one of the things not deemed feasible by the average Nockawayan. O, for a pound of Persian chamomile! Why don’t your druggist keep it.
In reply to an anonymous correspondent your reporter would state that “Qui Vive” handed in his checks some time ago. If our correspondent was a friend of the late Q.V. it be may interesting to know that Curlycue talked him to death on the occasion of his celebrated visit to Kemper when attempting to find a way to enter Victoria.

The good ship Great Western is now plying regularly between the capital city and the landing on the other side. During the last rain she parted the hawser that spans the raging flood—which acts in the triple capacity of compass, rudder and stake rope—and otherwise sustained damage to one of her 800 horse power engines, all of which has been repaired.

One good looking friend, Mr. Frank Harris, returned last week from Nebraska whither he had accompanied Maj. Gart with a drove of cattle. Franks sports a pair of alligator boots, which have become the envy of all the boys in Nockaway. —— [illegible] will doubtless be inaugurated.

Your reporter heard from Judge Cole that he intends adding another story to his house, and otherwise improving and enlarging the same. The judge will, in connection with his business, lay in an extensive assortment of drugs, etc. Dr. Moore will in due time establish his office at the store of the judge, thus placing himself in a central position, where he will be ready to respond to all calls upon his professional services.

Sometime since we recounted the exploit of Mr. W. L. Stoner roping an alligator, and with the assistance of Mr. Sturgis, dispatching the reptile. All such experiments do not result so favorably to the captors as the following incident, which is well authenticated will show: Two gentlemen on horse-back came across an alligator over fifteen [feet] long on the prairie. One of them lassoed the monster, which by a series of cleverly executed evolutions of the body upon the rope b[r]ought him in contact with the horse. The frantic efforts of the horse to escape seemed unavailing. The alligator immediately commenced making a meal of the poor brute. Finally the horse extricated himself from the aquatic monster, but so badly used up as to be utterly worthless thereafter. Mr. Peter Stoner, and Don Victorianna came across an aged ’gator in the swamp, the Don proceeded to pummel his head with a mulberry club until life was thought to be extinct; where upon a rail was thrust into his mouth down to the bottom of the abdominal cavity, both eyes dexterously gouged out, and the dead ’gator left. Imagine the surprise of Mr. Stoner and the Don when they visited the place three weeks afterwards, to find the ’gator improved in health and only wanting the rail ejected from his stomach to be again a live alligator. Commisseration [sic] urged them to do this act of pity, and the ill used old fellow departed, one would think, in quest of food. His three weeks fast was doubtless exceeded by Tanner, the human alligator, but it is thought if the fasting doctor were to submit to the blows of Don Victorianna’s club, and have his eyes gouged out, and left with a fence rail thrust down his throat that he probably would not wag off with the champion’s belt.

—Victoria Advocate, September 4, 1880

Although the identity of the “Plumed Knight of Nockaway” is unknown, “Plumed Knight” was an epithet given to James Gillespie Blaine by Robert G. Ingersoll, who nominated Blaine for president at the national Republican convention of 1876.

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

They have been chasing the flying hours, twinkling feet again in the Grange hall, at Anaqua.
Mr. Wm. Toms and Mr. Robert Caruthers left last Monday each with a drove of horses for the eastern markets.

Last Friday night we experienced quite a “blow” from the northwest, lasting from about 9 to 12 a.m. Considerable rain fell, causing a rise in the river and the Coletto [sic].

Little Emma, the four year old of daughter of P. T. Stoner, met with the accident of fracturing the collar bone last week. The little sufferer is doing as well as possible under the circumstances.

The lumber necessary for Judge Cole’s proposed improvements is arriving. The capital city is catching the contagion of progress, and there is no telling what the result will be ten years hence.

Your reporter learns of the illness of Gracie Devine, of Anaqua, and of Mr. Joseph Sturgis, at the residence of Capt. G. O. Stoner. Dr. Moore reports other cases of malarial fever, milder in form in the vicinity.

Mr. P. T. Stoner, left home last Monday morning for Refugio, in quest of horses to purchase, which he purposed driving to Alabama and Georgia. Messrs. W. L. Stoner and F. H. Cromwell will also drive a manada eastward.

Mrs. J. D. Miller returned home last Monday from a visit to her parents, Capt. H. B. Harvey and lady, of Refugio, looking much improved in health, the consequence of a two months sojourn near the “deep blue sea.”

Our friend, Mr. Byron Caruthers, is preparing to remove to McMullen county; which will occasion a loss in her population that Nockaway can ill afford to sustain. May our friends succeed in finding a pleasant home, where success will smile upon all their undertakings.

Madam Rumor intimates that the lex non scripta which has obtained in Nockaway since time whereof the mind of man runneth not to the contrary, discountenancing marriages and the giving in marriage, will ere long be violated. It may be your reporter will contemplate a violation of this ancient law in which event he will be excused from filing a complaint against himself.

In reproducing another alligator story, your reporter would preface the narrative with the statement that these are not stories for marines, but are bona fide actual occurrences—or at all events are so reported by credible attestors. A party of cow hunters were encamped on the western bank of the San Antonio river, in Refugio county. A beef was killed in the afternoon, and Mr. S. anointed his boots liberally with the tallow. In making preparation for the night’s repose, Mr. S. made his pallet near the river, and neglected to remove his boots. All were wrapped in the somnolent embrace of Morpheus, when suddenly the stillness of midnight was broken by the yells of the gentleman in question. A son of Erin who had been sleeping near, attempted to explain the situation of affairs by excitedly crying. “Eres a man walking on his back!” And sure enough the phenomenon was presented to the visual organs of the crowd. The victim seemed gliding involuntarily toward the river. In passing a small tree he succeeded in throwing his arms around it, and having thus regained temporarily his wits, explained that an alligator was tugging at his feet. The cow boys attacked the ’gator, and drove him into the river, minus the greased boots that had tantalized his appetite.

—Victoria Advocate, September 11, 1880
Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

The recent demands for horse stock for the eastern market, has had the effect of materially enhancing that species of property. Mares being held now at $15 against $10 last year, and mules at $40 against $30 last season.

Capt. Y. O. McClannahan, the courteous and gentlemanly agent of the Messrs. Mathis, “did” Nockaway last week, and purchased of Capt. Crawford and McFadden, Stoner and Clark, a drove of about 300 beef cattle, for shipment to New Orleans.

Wilkerson, the little son of Capt. J. S. Crawford, discovered a nest of rattlesnake pilot. The eggs were as large as a goose egg, and were contained within the flexible shell somewhat resembling the cocoon of the silk worm. Each egg contained a perfectly developed snake full eighteen inches in length.

Capt. J. S. Crawford, has a bovine beauty in the shape of a yearling heifer, a cross between the Brahma and Durham. The Durham blood evidently gives size and weight, as she is full as large as a common two year old; while the Brahma is noticeable in her robust health, sprightly appearance, glossy skin, large pendant ears, and quick elastic step. In this cross your reporter thinks the acme standard is attained in live stock for this latitude.

—Victoria Advocate, September 18, 1880

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

Mr. Huff recently sold his place on the San Antonio river to Captain McFadden.

Colored revival is in progress on the San Antonio. Free will Baptist this time.

The “Plumed Knight” after a very severe spell of fever, is now “so as to be about.”

Wolves are again depredating on stock; several of Capt. Crawford’s lambs having been killed by the marauders.

The population of Nockaway continues to increase. Not a boy this time, however. The census enumerator will report to Capt. G. O. Stoner for particulars.

Alexare Dumas wrote a book on “The Three Musquiteers.” One would have to write three hundred books to do the musquiteers of Nockaway justice.

Lavaca county has a curiosity in the shape of a mule that gives suck to a colt. The dam of the colt died, the mule adopted the orphan, with the strange result given.

Rev. J. N. McCain officiated in the church at Kemper last Sabbath. McCain is not Baptist, though it would seem he is always the harbinger of rain.

To your readers who have a surfeit of alligator stories, your reporter announces the cheering intelligence that he has exhausted the material on hand, and will consequently give them a rest.

Mr. John Sloan passed through Kemper last Wednesday. Mr. Sloan purposes erecting a sugar mill, for the next crop of cane on his farm near Victoria, which will be a good move in the right direction. Cane is the crop of the near future for this country.

Capt. J. T. Southwell, Tom Wellington and Mr. Ward, of Goliad, were over at Kemper last week. Capt. Southwell informs your reporter that his yield of corn on upland was exceedingly good, while all planted on the bottom land was destroyed by the overflow.
Messrs. Peter T. Stoner, W. L. Stoner, F. H. Cromwell and Walter Byrne, have their horses ready for shipment, and ere another issue of the Advocate, will be plowing the briny deep en route for Mobile, Ala. Good luck, boys!

A humanitarian suggested the propriety to Mr. Peter Stoner of modifying somewhat the details of the story of the alligator that remained three weeks with a fence rail in his abdomen. But, Mr. S. says he can nothing extenuate in the matter, as it is but the truth.

The first to attend the eye of a stranger is the beautiful shell sidewalks and general repairs made on the streets by our efficient mayor. He has expended $900. The money was the proceeds from old wrecked lumber of the cyclone of 1873. Much credit is due the mayor, as he receives no compensation for his services.

In conformity to the warning some time since given in this column that the unwritten law of Nockaway in regard to “marrying and giving in marriage,” was about to be ignored, your reporter has the pleasure of announcing the arrival at Kemper last Wednesday afternoon of Judge R. F. Cole and bride. May their path in life lead through pleasant places, and prosperity’s sun ever shine with meridian splendor above their heads.

Your reporter was honored with an invitation on Friday last, by some of the fair sex, to attend the sociable given at the residence of a friend of ours adjacent to town. We boarded a small craft and hoisted sail, and soon arrived at our destination, we were kindly received and pleasantly entertained. Owing to some failure, our captain did not return at the appointed hour. Our return home was not so pleasant, but very laughable, especially in crossing the bayou. It became known that a “chiel” was among them taking notes, which caused remarks to be made as a day to never be forgotten, should it appear in the Advocate.

Don Augustine, who farms for Capt. G. O. Stoner, and resides upon the immediate bank of the river, awoke the other morning and found an alligator seven feet in length, reposing quietly upon the blanket at his side. Three or four other Mexicans were in the same room. A council of war was held. Don Miguel had been informed that the editor of the Advocate purchased all curiosities, and he doubted not but they could make a rise by selling him a live alligator. All were in favor of making the rise, but there was a “dead lock” in the convention when it came to the election of the common carrier. All declined the honor and the ’gator was dispatched.—the editor thus loosing [sic] a rare live specimen.

—Victoria Advocate, September 25, 1880

Kemper Kernels
(From our Special Correspondent)

Your reporter learns that Mrs. R. F. Cole will take charge of the school at this place. An arrangement eminently convenient and satisfactory to all interested.

Mesdames P. T. and W. L. Stoner leave this week for a visit to their parents in Atapulgus, Decatur county, Georgia. May they have a pleasant journey, a happy visit and a safe return.

Mrs. Stoner, who left Nockaway before the formulation of the present prosperous state government, purposes removing from “the other side,” and identifying herself with the great republic. An acquisition to our population welcomed by all.

That norther, like “the son of righteousness,” “came with healing on its wind” to all who were suffering with malarial fever, and intolerable heat. May the healing of the “son of righteousness” be as universal, and save us all form the heat of that long summer “over there,” is the prayer of ye penman.
In a recent letter to your reporter, the Hon. W. W. Lang, president of the Texas southwestern immigration company, expresses the wish that all counties of the states, wishing immigrants, should organize co-operation societies; to all of which will be supplied a full lot of statistical and other data regarding the resources of Texas, together with documents interesting to immigrants in general. Would it not be well for Victoria to take advantage of this offer?

Our good looking, young and courteous friend, Mr. D. H. McFadden, put in an appearance one day last week, and spent several hours in pleasant conversation. The only hope of the opponents of Kemper’s unwritten law is now centered on Dave. Verily, it is not good for man to be alone—and David knows this, too. Consequently you may breathe it in Gath, and whisper it in Askelon. “There’s hope for the old boy yet!”

From all accounts the new translation of the bible will indeed give us a new bible; or in other language, the word of God corrected, revised and elaborated by men. Is God, or man the founder of the Christian religion? If God is, can His work be improved upon. If man is the founder of the Christian religion, whence comes his authority. In the midst of such radical dissensions, who is to judge. These musings place your reporter de trop.

Mr. Cummins, from Refugio, spent several days at Kemper city last week. Mr. C. has just returned from a visit to Colorado, which state he admirers so much as to seriously contemplate making it his home. Mr. Cummins informs your reporter that the Welder Bros. are closing out their large stock of goods at cost, and intend driving several herds of cattle to Dodge city the coming season. Some idea of the extent of the operations purposed by these gentlemen can be had from the single item that they wish to purchase 500 additional saddle horses.

Your manly defense of Gen. Maxey, and unqualified endorsement of his candidacy in last issue of the Advocate, meets the hearty approval of every democrat here about. He was right in opposing the fraud, and corruptionist, Hayes, though in doing so he had necessarily befriended the devil. Hayes was the recipient of the stolen presidency, and he corruptly rewarded the sneak thieves who stole it. Gen. Maxey refused to dirty his hands with the unclean thing. If Throckmorton’s friends hav[e]n’t hoisted him by his own petard in this charge then your reporter does not know the force of logic and truth.

If the radical charge of fraud in the late taking of the census could result in a new enumeration of the population, the south would have the figures on ‘em. In Nockaway, alone seven little white strangers, to say nothing of the colored, have put in an appearance since E. S. Roberts was around. These seven are comprised within a radius not exceeding one-tenth of the territorial extent of the county, (7x10) seventy more than was enumerated. Allow 130 settled counties in the state, and (70x130) we have an increase in the population of Texas since the enumeration of 10,300 souls, almost enough for another congressman! And these “seven,” unlike the brothers and sisters of “the little country maid whose hair was thick with many a curl, etc.,” are all boys, but one. Six democrats for the future. With such harvests democracy will long be a power in the land. Pretty good —— [illegible] bureau itself, ain’t it?

—Victoria Advocate, October 2, 1880

By the fall of 1880, Samuel B. Maxey was running for a second term as U.S. Senator, having been elected to the office by the Texas Legislature in 1874. During his first term he voted against two of President Hayes’s nominations for the scandal-ridden U.S. Customs House. James Webb Throckmorton, a former governor of Texas and a congressional representative between 1875 and 1879, made an unsuccessful bid 1880 to capture Maxey’s Senate seat. The phrase “hoist with his own petard” is from Shakespeare’s Hamlet.
Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

Master McFadden has become a student of the Goliad Institute.

Mr. Thomas McCampbell, of Refugio, visited Kemper last week.

Farmers are experiencing difficulty in gathering their crops in consequence of the rain.

Capt. J. S. Crawford sold last week a number of Cotswold rams to Mr. Joe Ware, of Jackson county.

The rear-guard of the departing mosquitoes tips a stately salute to the advance of the coming flea.

“The out with the old, in with the new.”

Judge Cole informs your reporter that the postoffice at Anaqua has been discontinued, and that all mail addressed to that place will be distributed at Kemper. Evidences of life in the old burgh, yet!

Mr. Wm. Jones departed last Friday to Lamar to bring his own, and the family of Mrs. Lynn home. Mesdames Lynn and Jones have been sojourning on the bay some weeks in search of health. We are glad to learn that they will all return in much improved health.

Your reporter is glad to learn that you “fired at the wrong man” in your strictures on the misrepresentations of Mr. H. L. Merriman. It was hard to believe that the gentlemanly and courteous W. S. Merriman would do any thing not strictly honest and honorable.

On the principle that the darkest hour precedes the dawn, we suppose, the screw worm is not putting in its heaviest licks; and constant attention is demanded of the stockmen. The Durhams seem to suffer most from the pest, while the thick hides of the majestic Brahmas affords an almost absolute immunity. Another material fact in favor of that breed.

Dr. J. F. Moore, our efficient physician, visited Victoria last Saturday, and contributed to the state’s coffers the amount of his occupation tax for the coming year, amounting to thirty dollars. One would imagine from the amount of this tax that physicians are regarded in the light of a public nuisance, and are taxed with the view of their suppression, as are bar-rooms, circuses, etc. It is outrageous, and should be at least reduced two-thirds, if not entirely abolished. Indeed a majority of the thinking people are beginning to think with the minority of the late Dallas democratic convention, that occupation taxes are unjust principles.

“Uncle Joe Ware,” the venerable “old residerter” of Lavaca river, passed a night at the residence of Capt. Stoner last week. Mr. Ware came to Texas in 1830; and possibly, with the exception of Col. John J. Linn, of Victoria, is the oldest inhabitant of this section. His reminiscences of early Texan history is interesting. Mr. Ware agrees with your reporter, and Mr. Temple Houston, that no authentic history of Texas has yet been written; and that of all attempts, the latest—by Rev. H. S. Thrall—is the most signal failure. Would it not be well—(while the lamp of life holds out to burn)—for the old veterans of early Texas to organize a historical society; collect, and collate data, and give to the world an authentic history of Texas, bearing the seal of authority?

Appropos [sic] to Mr. Temple Houston’s critique of Thrall’s Texas history, in a recent issue of the Galveston News, in regard to the omission of names, in the biographical columns, of Texan worthies. Your reporter would add to that list of omissions the names of Capt. S. P. Ross, and his heroic son, Gen. L. S. Ross, neither of whom were deemed worthy a place in Thrall’s
columns. Capt. S. P. Ross came to Texas in 1838, and long commanded a company of rangers on the northwest frontier. He slew in single combat the Camanche chief, “Big Foot,” the scourge of the early frontier, and his name is now held in grateful remembrance by all the early settlers in that section. Gen. L. S. Ross, when but twenty years of age, and while spending vacation at home from his studies at Florence Wesleyan University, Ala., commanded 133 friendly Indians in Maj. Van Dorn’s campaigns against the Camanches, which culminated in the fiercely contested battle of the Wichita, which was a most crushing defeat to the Indians. Ross was severely wounded by a rifle shot in the arm and side. Returning to college as soon as his wounds would admit, he graduated in 1859, and in 1860 was in command of a company of rangers by appointment of Gov. Houston. On the head waters of Pease river Ross inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Camanches, in mid winter, killing nearly all of their warriors, which forced them to a treaty soon after. In this battle Ross slew the chief, Peta Nocona, in single combat, and rescued his white wife, Cynthia Ann Parker, from a captivity of twenty-five years. (See Thrall’s history page 155.) To say nothing of his services in the confederate army, the foregoing services rendered Texas should have justified him to at least a passing notice in a history of Texas. The foregoing items in the life of Gen. L. S. Ross are taken from the advance sheets of “A Narrative of the services of Ross’ Texas Brigade in the late war between the states” by Victor M. Rose, Kemper City, Victoria county, Texas.

—Victoria Advocate, October 9, 1880

Temple Houston’s review of Thrall’s History of Texas appeared in the Galveston Daily News of September 26, 1880.

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

Old Simon says Skidmore is a candy-date for the lu-nat-ic asylum.

Is it true that Bill Halfin is candidate for the post office succession?

Hay making is the proper thing just now, and the machine is running wicked like.

Another little soldier in Nockaway and Mr. Huff is the happy man. Nockaway against the world!

Dr. J. F. Moore reports the health of the state excellent; to which desirable condition of affairs the doctor materially contributed.

Wasn’t the sublime of contempt attained by a gentleman who told your reporter that his opponent “ought to be hung with buzzard guts?”

Nockaway begs to ask if it is true that an attempt has been made to steal the cupalo [sic] off the courthouse? Old Simon says he heard that such an attempt was made.

Mrs. Lynn, and the family of Mr. W. M. Jones, who have been sojourning on the bay for some months past, returned home last week considerably benefited by the visit.

Mr. Sol Halfin paid Nockaway a visit last Wednesday, doubtless in the interest of his candidacy, though so genteel an observer of the proprieties is Sol that no one would imagine he is a candidate. Still waters are deep.

Sheep shearing was the order of the day in Nockaway last week. Squire F. H. Cromwell disposed of his wool to Messrs. A. Levi & Co. at 18½ cents per pound. Capt. J. S. Crawford sold to the same house at 19 cents. Quite a decline from figures of last season.

Dr. J. R. Curd, agreeable and courteous as is his wont, visited us last Thursday. Foremost and conspicuous in Pickett’s gallant charge upon Cemetery ridge was the doctor; and though
Gen. Hancock gave them a very warm reception on that memorable occasion, the doctor nevertheless advocates the cause of the “superb soldier.”

A recent visit to Calhoun county, was enjoyed by your reporter. Especially will the hospitable reception of Capt. W. H. Thomas long remain to glad the memory. Capt. Thomas’ residence is situated on the “Chocolate” creek, twelve miles from Indianola, in the midst of a baronial pasture comprising 20,000 acres, in which 6,000 head of improved horned cattle, some of which are unsurpassed in grade and quality by any in the state. Capt. Thomas had just sold 600 head of beeves at $18 per head—$10,300, not a bad item in these hard times. In his live stock operations he does not neglect to provide for the beauties and comforts of life. His house is surrounded by exquisite groves of domestic and forest trees, orchards and vineyards. If life doesn’t glide smoothly with the Captain, it is only because woman’s sweet and refining influence is not felt around his hearth-stone. But then as he is still young, this last, best act may very appropriately be allowed to crown the whole.

We read the other day a book called “Lives of Winfield Scott Hancock and W. H. English,” by J. R. Cole, and published by Hubbard Bros., Cincinnati. Doubtless the book was only intended to subserve the purposes of the present canvass, for it is gotten up in haste, and with a carelessness that plays havoc with the English language. No less startling is the ignorance of the author in regard to the events of the war. An instance of this defect will be given, as time and space are wanting to do the whole subject justice. In describing the battle at “Frazier’s farm,” the author says: “The rebel general, Joe Johnston, was wounded by a shell, etc.” Gen. Johnston was wounded at “Seven Pines;” and Gen. Lee commanded at Fraziers’s farm. Of the same battle: “The magnate, Jeff. Davis, took command, etc.” all of which is an invention of Cole. One page 331: “As to their president, who came into office like a lion, ruled a season with a phosphate cabinet of dummies, and then retired more ludicrously than becoming, the act might have been justified; it was at least a burning shame that he was ever allowed to hold office again.” If this refers to Grant, it is just, but if to Davis it falsifies history. If our youth are to learn the history of the war from such “histories,” the coming generations at the south can but regard their ancestors as vile rebels. We denounce its pseudo-democracy. We denounce its falsifications of history, and spurn with contempt its bad English and culpable carelessness in the lies and greed of the author to reap his reward.

—Victoria Advocate, October 16, 1880

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

Mr. David Phelps has returned from a trip east.
Miss Emma Hunt, of your city, is visiting friends at Kemper.
Capt. J. S. McFadden, who has been quite unwell, has recovered.
The heavy frost of last Sunday morning “salivated” vegetation and sich like.
The plaintive wail of the frisky calf now resounds throughout Nockaway as the red hot iron presses its burning lips in a fond embrace.
Pecan picking progressed quite lively during the norther of last week, three dollars per bushel proving a great stimulant to the pickers.
Judge Cole has added an upper story to his house, from the piazza of which an excellent view of the surrounding country can be obtained.
Master Jeff Davis Stoner rode a deer down last week, and succeeded in capturing the “antler’d monarch.” This for a boy of ten years is a feat.

We regret to learn of the death of Mr. Robert Carother’s two little children, which occurred in Washington county, whither Mr. C. had gone with a drove of horses for sale.

The professional canvasser realizes since the election that it is not all of death to die. Time hangs heavily on his hands, and the “silver lining” appears only through the clouds of two weary years.

Miss Emma Canfield, of Goliad, assumed charge of the school at Kemper last Monday. If encomiums of pupils are indices of a teacher’s worth, Kemper will be proud of its latest acquisition.

It was not the republican majority in Kemper that paralyzed the arm of your reporter, but accounts of the flood that swept a “solid north” to victory. The causes are so palpable, so puerile, and so easy of correction that the old song, “On what slender threads hang eternal things” comes home to our hearts with the bitterness of the water of Marah.

Mr. Tom Wellington purchased last week of Mr. Huff 100 head of cattle for $1000, or $10 per head, which is probably the highest price ever paid for a stock of cattle in this section. As the cattle are crossed with the Brahma breed, stockmen regard the price as not at all unreasonable. What more cogent argument could be adduced in favor of this breed of cattle?

Mr. W. L. Stoner relates an amusing incident that occurred at Bruton, Ala., during his late trip thither with horses for sale:

A horse race had drawn the entire population to the village, and liberal infusion of corn whiskey had made them rip-rousing. Everybody had come to bet. All meant business. Lon Henderson’s roan mare was the favorite, though the bay horse found many friends willing to “back their ‘jedgmen’” on him. Difficulty was found in obtaining judges, so universal was the betting. Finally the bench was completed by the selection of the “gentleman from Arkansaw.” This individual was a curiosity. He had three mules for sale, but did not seem much concerned about it either. He was a formidable looking customer, black, wiry hair, black grizzly beard, black eyes, deep set in his head and about the size of a mole’s. The “gentleman from Arkansaw” didn’t converse much, and only in a brief, dogmatic manner. There was something about him that repelled intimacy, and in the hundred and one rough and tumble fights that occurred during the day the “gentleman from Arkansaw” was not once involved. This individual was Lon Henderson’s judge at the “outcome.” The animals were “turned loose,” and the bay distanced the mare fully twenty feet, and so the judges decided—all but the “gentleman from Arkansaw.” He announced in a curt, dogmatic manner:

“The mare kum out fifteen foot ahead!”

Hours were spent in fruitless efforts to change his decision.

“Mebbe he don’t know the different ’twixt the hoss an’ the mare,” suggested an elderly, innocent looking granger.

“Mister,” yelled an officious hotel clerk, snatching at the idea, “the roan is a mare; the bay is a horse!”

“S’pose I don’t know a hoss from a mare?” replied the “gentleman from Arkansaw,” contemptuously.

Finally indignation took the place of surprise, and there was talk of mobbing the judge; but somehow or other no one wished to take the initiative, and meeting adjourned sin die.
The next morning “Arkansaw” passed through town leading his mules. He stopped just long enough to place himself outside of a glass of whisky, and remarked to an interested gentleman who had bet heavily on the “hoss.”

“’Square, since you come down to biz, the mare did beat the hoss jist nine feet. I’ve fell six feet, an’ that’s six more than I ever fell afore. Hope to be in at your next race,” and rode off.

“Well, I’ll be ——!” exclaimed the crowd.

—Victoria Advocate, November 20, 1880

Kemper Kernals
(From our Special Correspondent)

Fat hogs are abundant in Nockaway. Pecans and acorns did the work.

Our friends Mr. P. T. Stoner and family, and Mr. W. L. Stoner, returned home last week from a visit to relatives in Georgia.

Marketable mares are now held for prices ranging at from twenty to fifty dollars. Quite an increase from the ten to twelve dollars asked a year ago.

The cold snap of last week was a “blue whistler,” and no mistake. Ice in Nockaway is something unusual in Nockaway, situated as it is in the forks of the horrid zone.

Welcome the new, and speed the parting guest, seems to be the rule upon which the clerk of the weather is now acting, as one norther follows fast upon the heel of another.

The young and festively inclined of our population attended a dancing party at the residence of John Hunt last Friday evening, and “chased the golden hours with flying feet” until the “wee sma’ hours beyant the twa.”

Now that the remains of Sir John Franklin, and the ten lost tribes of Israel have been discovered it is in order to locate the cause of the “Old Alcalde’s” decreased majority. Similar causes might produce dis-similar effects next time.

Your reporter in company of Capt. G. O. Stoner, assisted last Friday in the burial of Avarista Lopez, a young Mexican formerly of the state of Tamaulipas, and in the vicinity of Camargo. There is something sad in this passing away among strangers, in a strange land.

Despite the last propitious season, and the good cotton crop in consequence, Mr. P. T. Stoner states that many farmers in Georgia will not realize much after paying the excessive tax demanded for fertilizers. To farmers acquainted with our virgin soil of inexhaustible fertility this sound strange.

Your reporter is under many obligations to his friend. Mr. Charles A. Leuschner, of Victoria, for a diary of events connected with the operations of the Army of Tennessee. Mr. Leuschner was one of the best soldiers of the famous Granbury’s Texas brigade, of the yet more famous Cleburne’s division. Born in 1845, Mr. Leuschner was but sixteen years of age when the sectional war commenced in 1861. He volunteered immediately, joining Capt. Jake Rupley’s company, composed of Victoria boys entirely. The company was attached to the 6th Texas infantry, and to Granbury’s brigade. Their first passage at arms was at Arkansas Post, where the garrison of 3000 men were surrounded and captured by Gen. John A. McClernand at the head of 30,000 men, and supported by a formidable armada of gunboats, transports, etc. After three months of prison life, the command was again in the field; and in every section from Murfreesboro to Bentonville, Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge, Dalton, Ringold, Resaca, Kennesaw, New Hope Church, Peach Tree Creek, 22nd July, Atlanta, Franklin, Nashville—these indomitable boys, foot sore and weary, famished and thinly clad, bore their
banners through the snows of winter, and the heats of summer, disputing with an enemy who outnumbered them with a ration of five to one, every inch of the ill-fated confederacy’s territory. Many of them, alas, now fill neglected graves in the mountains of Georgia, and the valleys of Tennessee. They sacrificed their young lives upon the altar of duty, and who shall deny them the proud title of patriots, all? With the editor’s permission we shall again recur to the diary of Mr. Leuschner, as it abounds in reminiscences that should prove highly interesting to the general reader.

—Victoria Advocate, November 27, 1880

Rose published Charles A. Leuschner’s diary in the Advocate as a three-part series titled “Incidents of the Past: Events Connected with the Army of Tennessee during the Late War”; the articles appeared in the issues of December 11, 18, and 25, 1880.

Kemper Kernals
(From or Special Correspondent)

Ducks and geese are in abundance, and sporting is fashionable.

Capt. J. S. McFadden was engaged last week in completing his branding for the season.

Colds are prevalent hereabout in consequence of the bad weather. Wonder if it ever will clear up?

Capt. G. O. Stoner had a valuable cow to die last week, in consequence of eating the leaves of the wild peach.

Capt. McFadden has a valuable mare in training at Refugio. She will be ready for the running lists soon.

Mr. Martin, the gentlemanly and courteous canvasser for the Mission Valley nursery, paid us a visit last week.

Mr. Vainey, of Fort Bend county, paid Nockaway a visit last Monday, and purchased a drove of beef cattle of Capt. G. O. Stoner.

Friend Joe Coward, we are glad to state, had completely regained his health; and will ere long return to his home in the “Island city.”

Judge Cole informs your reporter that he celebrated the rite of matrimony between Mr. Page and Miss Jessie Sevier, at Carlos’ Rancho last Saturday evening.

About 4,000 head of stock cattle crossed the river at Kemper last Sunday. They were the property of J. M. Mathis, and were being removed from Tres Palacios to the Nueces. The herd was in charge of Mr. Will Ragland.

—Victoria Advocate, December 4, 1880

Kemper Kernals
Our Reporter’s Budge Full of Nice Things—
Racy Correspondence the State of Nockaway.
(From our Special Correspondent)

Mr. John Kay has returned from a visit to McMullen county.

The sweet potato crop was damaged somewhat hereabout by the late freeze.

Mr. Charles McFadden, a brother of “Jolly Capt. J. S.” is on a visit to Nockaway.

A “Christmas tree” will be a feature of the period in Nockaway.
What say our church going friends to a “fair” to raise means to purchase an organ for the church?

Mr. Robert Carothers returned home last week from Washington county, whither he had driven a drove of horse for sale.

Dr. Bello purposes visiting New Orleans soon, on business. The doctor lost a few sheep during the late cold snap—as did Judge Cole.

What about the “state ball” during the Christmas holidays, boys? Start it to rolling!

Nockaway must be equal to herself.

Mr. Huff purposes soon to leave Nockaway, and seek a new home amid the “fresher scenes and pastures new” of Tom Green county.

The genial sunshine of the past few days has moved the emerald grass from its earthy tomb, and the mocking birds warmth, and sing of the Lotus tree and the summer land.

The weather prophet of Kemper announces that we are to have no more severe weather the present winter, and that he intends having a “spring garden” in December!

Mr. John D. Miller informs your reporter that the hogs in Refugio county are dying upon the range of some mysterious distemper. That hogs die in numbers without any apparent cause.

Your reporter is under many obligations to Judge Cole for “Kernals” this week. The “capital city” is dull, and a colonel of light brigade of reporters would find Balaklava here to charge.

Judge Cole contemplates having a “hot house” of his own invention, for the propagating of flowers. The beautifying of homes receives too little attention with us. A little more care and attention to flowers and shrubbery would work marvels.

Last Friday was a busy day in the Stoner pasture. Capt. Stoner delivered to Mr. Varney, 113 head of beef cattle; and to Capt. Y. O. McClannahan, a drove, the property of G. L. Whitney, and sent twenty odd head belonging to Mr. W. A. Pettus to him.

We regret to say that our Sunday school had been discontinued for some time. Possibly this is to be attributed, in part, to the very inclement weather that we have had. But it is to be hoped that it will be revived again. The sound of the “church going bell” is a necessary adjunct to civilization.

That was not a bad jeu d’esprit of our friend Mr. W. F. Linn, who said: “As a druggist, I labored for two years in filling the prescriptions of physicians. I am now selling tombstone throughout the country that the result of my two years labor may be properly commemorated!”

Judge Cole is not one of those who subscribe to the biblical adage: “Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.” Saluria, in his visions of the future, looms up as the great entre port of Texas; and Kemper on the bluff as a Vicksburg or Memphis—“what is to be will be,” the predestinarians say, “if it never happens.”

Why do not the parents of Kemper get up a “Christmas tree” for the amusement of the children? This is a much better policy than the pious fraud concerning Santa Claus. The latter teaches children the efficacy of falsehood, and we “timber” them for it. By the former lesson they are only taught to believe that candy and toys grow upon a tree in the house—which is not false, “O, temporo [sic], O mores, and all of ’em.”

—Victoria Advocate, December 11, 1880

“O tempora, o mores!” (Oh the times, oh the customs!) is a quote from Cicero’s first oration against the Roman politician Catiline.
“Git your pardners,
Fast quadrillion!”
Whoop ’em up, boys!

Christmas is coming, and jolly Capt. Mc. has corralled five gallons of it already.
What says our immediate representative to the clearing out of the Guadalupe river?
Eggs are now wanted for Xmas fixings, and the hens are woefully derelict in their duties.
Capt. J. S. Crawford went to Hope, Lavaca county, last Wednesday, to purchase cattle.
Capt. J. A. McFadden returned from the Refugio races last week in good spirits. He bet on the right horse.
Mr. W. L. Stoner and W. W. Hunt purchased 41 head of saddle horses last week at $16 per cabesa. This is regarded as a bargain.
For colic in horses, Capt. G. O. Stoner recommends castile soap dissolved in warm water. Drench freely. This rarely fails to afford relief.
Mr. W. H. Sutherland visited Nockaway last Tuesday, and purchased hogs of Capt. G. O. and Mr. P. T. Stoner for shipment. Two and three-quarter cents was the price paid, on foot.
Friend Joseph Coward has departed for his home in the Island city; but he was provident enough to lay in a full line of Nockaway pickled beef, honey and fat gobblers. Joe intends to have good cheer at his rancho this Xmas.

In Bourbon county, Kentucky, whisky is preserved to such an age that it becomes a solid; and when a man wants a drink he just chips off[f] a sliver with a hatchet. In Nockaway it is never allowed to grow so old, but it obeys the law of fluids in seeking a level, and when a man wants a drink he insures against the jim jams, says his prayers, holds his nose, and then adroitly surrounds the “eye-opener.”

—Victoria Advocate, December 18, 1880

Mr. E. S. Roberts, paid your reporter a flying visit last Saturday.
Mr. Charles McFadden, visits Goliad during the Christmas holidays.
Mr. Peter T. Stoner killed a very large eagle near his residence, one day last week.
Rev. J. N. McCain arrived in Kemper last Thursday, and conducted divine services on Sunday.
Mr. Gus Thomas passed through Kemper last week with a drove of cattle for the pasture of Messrs. Mathis, in Nueces county.
In addition to the customary curriculum, Miss Emma Canfield is teaching the art of music on the piano forte, in the Kemper school.
After the Christmas holidays, let us resurrect the Sunday school! What say our kind patrons of that institution to the proposition?
Bands of “cayotes” serenade us frequently. Where wolves are so numerous, depredations must be committed; though none are reported of late.
Though the crop of “Colonels” is abundant in Nockaway, that of “Kernals” is by no means so; and ye reporter hails it as a good wind that blows him an item.

Capt. J. S. Crawford, V. J. Rose, and Frank Harris, visited Lavaca county last Wednesday, to look at some cattle held there for sale. Result of visit yet unknown.

Col. George L. Whitney, writes your reporter from his residence at Rockport, that he purposes having five acres of bottom land cleared, fences, etc., and planted in orange trees. He will plant trees four years of age.

For the past week the weather has been summer-like; and the green grass is putting forth rapidly. Mosquitoes have also made their appearance on the “hog wallow” lands of the prairie. It is refreshing to think that the first cold snap will leave them with a mission scarce begun.

A Singular malady seems to be epidemic among the canine race of Nockaway. The dog is seized with a mania to fight other dogs, and “runs a muck” among his species for a day or two, when he disappears—gone no one knows whither. No less than five dogs have gone through this programme within the past four months. It is fortunate that their attacks are confined to other dogs.

The apiary of Mr. P. T. Stoner, has proved successful beyond his most sanguine expectations. Many of the hives now contain honey to the amount of one hundred pounds, and the bees are industriously working all the time. Apiculture is a new field of industry in this section, but one that will repay attention with handsome profits. But the stings of conscience is nothing in comparison to that of the bee.

—Victoria Advocate, December 25, 1880

“Reminiscences of Camp Chase”

Kilpatrick succeeded in getting away from Lovejoy Station with about thirty or forty of the Texas Brigade, among whom are now remembered: Captain Noble; Lieutenants Teague, Moon and West; Privates Crabtree, Pirtle, Nidever, Mapes, “Major” White, Reuben White, Fluellen, and Ware. The march of the prisoners to the lines of General Sherman was fatiguing in the extreme. The Confederates had been in the saddle for three consecutive days, during which time they had partaken of not one regular meal; and the Union troopers were almost as destitute of rations, though what little they had was generously divided with their famished prisoners. The prisoners were well treated by their captors. It was only the “home guard” who delighted in misusing these unfortunates of war, just as the professional politician on either side refuses even now to be placated. The men who confronted each other in battle were too brave to feel pleasure in inflicting pain on a prisoner. The braves of Hancock, Custer, McClellan, and Rosecranz are not the men who have kept the “bloody shirt” waving; nor are the men of Joe Johnston, Beauregard, Max[e]y, and Ross, found among the impracticables, who, like his excellency, the late President Jeff Davis, imagine the Confederacy still exists. General Sherman’s convention with General Johnston expressed the sentiments of the soldiers on either side. Arriving at Sherman’s quarters the prisoners were placed in the “bull-pen,” and given a “square” meal of “hard-tack” and “sow-belly,” as crackers and bacon were called by the Federals. In the “bull-pen” were a number of whining, canting, oath-seeking hypocrites and sycophants, who, with the characteristic zeal of new converts, employed their time in maligning every thing connected with their suffering section, and in extolling the superior civilization of the North. The fiery and impetuous Crabtree could not brook this despicable servility, and he undertook to do battle, singly and alone, in vindication of the South. A lively “scrimmage” was on the tapis, Crabtree knocking his opponents right and left, when the guard interposed on behalf of the new converts,
whom every brave Unionist secretly despised. After a day or two spent here, the prisoners were placed on the cars and conveyed to Nashville. Here the forlorn fellows were placed in the yard of the penitentiary, and kept for several days, as General Wheeler was in the vicinity with a large force of cavalry, and a rescue was feared. Finally, by rail again, the prisoners were taken to Louisville, Kentucky. Upon entering the guard-house, each prisoner was required to deposit, in a large tub near the door, his pocket-knife, money, and whatever else of value he possessed. No account whatever was taken of the articles so confiscated, nor did the prisoners ever hear of their property again, or compensation for the same. The journey from Kentucky’s metropolis, through Cincinnati and Columbus, to Camp Chase, distant four miles from the capital of Ohio, was without incident, save the escape of Lieutenant A. J. West, of the Sixth Texas. Some time before reaching Louisville, and while the cars were flying at the rate of forty miles an hour, the night being intensely dark, this daring young officer jumped from the train, and, strange to say, suffered no accident or injury from the rash leap. He made his way through the enemy’s lines in safety to his own command.

Camp Chase was situated near the Sciota [Scioto] river, so said, for, during the author’s sojourn of near nine months in those delectable quarters, he had no opportunity for observation beyond the prison walls. The “Camp” consisted of three “prisons,” designated respectively, “No. 1,” “No. 2,” and “No. 3.” In “No. 1” officers exclusively were confined, “No’s 2 and 3” accommodated the twenty or thirty thousand privates on hand—a number sufficient to have averted the catastrophe at Petersburg. The “prisons” were enclosed by a plank-wall upwards of fifteen feet high. On the top of this wall a guard, consisting of about twenty “posts,” was stationed, with doubtless another line on the outside below, as certainly a heavy “relief” was always immediately on hand. A slight ditch, or furrow, on the inside of the wall, and parallel with it, was the “dead-line,” over which no “Reb” might venture, unless desirous of making himself the target of the vigilant guard. The quarters of the prisoners consisted of comfortable frame buildings in two rows, and fronting upon a common street. The houses were capable of containing near two hundred prisoners. Bunks in tiers of three formed the sleeping accommodations. Colonel W. P. Richardson commanded the post, and Lieutenant Sankey was Provost Marshal. The rations consisted of three crackers and about four ounces of white fish per day. Sometimes the bill of fare was varied by the issuance of beef and flour, but not in quantities exceeding the above estimate. In consequence of such short rations, the prisoners were constantly experiencing the pangs of hunger, and that some died absolutely of sheer starvation, the writer is indubitably certain. Three men occupied a bunk, and sometimes during the night one would die, when not unfrequently the remaining two would actually contend over the corpse for his rations and blankets. Men here—many—lost all self-respect, and the worst passions of our nature predominated over the good. Though the prisoners were not allowed money, yet they were given “sutler’s checks” in lieu, ranging in denominations from five to fifty cents. The sutler’s shop abutted against the wall, and through a crevice, about three inches wide and six in length, a prisoner, blessed with the possession of these coveted checks, could purchase stationery, needles and thread, gutta-percha buttons, tobacco, and a few other immaterial articles. Anything, however, in the nature of provisions or clothing was under the severest ban. Nothing eatable entered the prison walls save the meager rations doled out to the half-famished men. Many of the prisoners, addicted to the use of tobacco, would occasionally sell one meal per day for five cents, with which to purchase a half-dozen chews of the weed. In this way a considerable trade sprang up, and several prisoners conducted quite a grocery business. One, a Georgian, Waddell of name, earned quite a considerable little sum of money. The old skin-flint converted his bunk into a
store, and here higgled with the starving wretches who brought their rations to exchange with him for a small piece of tobacco, or extolled the flavor of the same rations to some would-be purchaser who had the “sutler’s checks” to pay for the luxury.

Robberies were not unfrequent, and an incorrigible Englishman—who was the subject of quite a voluminous correspondence between Lord Lyons and Mr. Seward—was frequently punished. This wretch was sometimes fastened to a cross, and his face laid directly under the spout of the pump, though the weather was bitter cold, and the water pumped into his face until respiration would be suspended. At other times, he was placed in a barrel having holes through which the arms protruded, and in this novel jacket he would be compelled to “mark time” in the snow for hours.

The author remembers meeting in prison No. 2, a young Illinoisan, who represented himself as the county judge at Paris, Illinois, imprisoned simply because he was accused of being a “copperhead.”

To add to the calamities of the wretched men, the small-pox broke out among them, and from twenty to thirty of the poor fellows were carried out in rude coffins each morning to the “silent camping-ground.” Of the small company of Texans, Reuben White and Al Nidever died.

An old Frenchman is remembered—they called him “Old Bragg,” who had been blown up at Vicksburg with the gallant Third Louisiana Regiment, and captured. “Old Bragg” had one leg missing, one arm and one eye gone, and the poor old fellow’s mind was sadly impaired. His whole thought was bent upon an exchange of prisoners, and each morning he would arise at daylight from his hard bunk and announce: “Boys, ze exchange he come to-day; zay tell me so last night! “ and forthwith he would begin to pack up his scanty effects and hobble to the prison gate, where he would remain the greater portion of the day in expectation of being called to commence the glad journey to his sun-kissed Louisiana. This was his programme, without material variation, for several months. The poor old fellow finally died before the “exchange came,” and sleeps in that silent camp, with thousands of his comrades, in the midst of a people who have no flowers to strew upon the rebel’s grave.

It may be noted that quite an industry sprung up in the manufacture of gutta-percha rings and other trinkets, which went to swell the traffic of old Waddell.

About the only diversion afforded within the walls was in walking around the camp, and, thus engaged, could be seen thousands of aimless men, unless the desire to “kill time” be an aim, walking around and around the camp like tigers, bears, and lions in their cages.

The author can not refrain from acknowledging the kindness of a fellow-prisoner, Mr. John D. Miller, of Victoria, Texas, who, though in a separate prison, managed to convey some of the desired checks to him. And, though lucre is not unwelcomed at any time, this certainly was the most heartily welcomed and thoroughly appreciated of any ever received, before or since.

Thus the winter passed. The spring came. Lincoln’s brutal assassination startled the prisoners, and the surrender of Lee destroyed the last vestige of lingering hope. Applicants for the oath now became so numerous, and, as they were treated with such contempt by the “reb to the last,” that it was deemed best to separate them, giving the rebs prison No. 3, and the “razor-backs,” as the applicants for the oath were called, prison No. 2. About this time Colonel Hawkins, of Tennessee, gained access to prison No. 3, and made the boys a brief, but eloquent, “talk,” concluding: “Remain true to the cause of Dixie; and, if our worst fears are realized, we can be able to say with King Francis at Pavia, ‘All is lost but honor.’” This manly utterance was applauded by the ragged, half-starved patriots to the echo.
Finally the “exchange came,” though poor “Old Bragg” slept too soundly to hear the summons, and the prisoners were conveyed south in batches of 500. The squad in which the author left proceeded by rail to Cairo, and thence down the Mississippi river to New Orleans. At Cairo, the kind-hearted citizens vied with each other in their contributions to the necessities of the miserable Southerners.

Without disembarking at New Orleans at all, the prisoners were steamed back to Vicksburg, and here disembarked under the auspices of a negro guard. This was the most humiliating experience of the whole period of captivity. The noble ladies of Vicksburg interested themselves in ministering to the necessities of the Confederates. The Texans were especially indebted to Miss Nora Roach—whom to call an angel, is but to compliment the saintly host that ministers around the “great white throne.” At Vicksburg, Ross’ miseries were paroled, and soon en route for their Texan homes.

The Unionists, while heaping merited censure on the Confederate authorities for the maltreatment of Federal prisoners at Andersonville, and other Southern prisons, deny the charge of mistreatment of Confederate prisoners themselves. In support of what is here stated as being the rule at Camp Chase, from September, 1864, until May, 1865, the author refers to any truthful Confederate there confined within the period specified. They could not have been treated worse and live, for many absolutely died of starvation. An exchange of prisoners was demanded in the interest of humanity. The Washington administration refused to sign a cartel, because it would give the South what she most needed—men. The Confederacy was unable to properly feed her own soldiers in the field. The Washington administration were well advised of this fact, yet it allowed Union prisoners to die of ill-treatment, when one word pronounced by Lincoln and his advisers, would have freed them. Posterity will judge correctly who is responsible for the graves at Camp Chase, Camp Douglas, Rock Island, Andersonville, Richmond, and other pens North and South.

NOTE.—During the trying days in Camp Chase, there were some who never relaxed in their fealty to the South, and who never forgot that they were gentlemen. Among these it is a pleasure to name James Arnold, Sixth Texas Cavalry, now of Wartrace, Tennessee; James Crabtree, J. D. White, Perry Pirtle, William Fluellen, of the Third Texas Cavalry, and John D. Miller, of Victoria, Texas.

—Ross’ Texas Brigade, pp. 179–184

Contributions to the Galveston Daily News

Slaughter of the Governor

If the Examiner newspaper, of Waco, voices correctly any considerable portion of public sentiment the conclusion is irresistible that the very worst form of communism is rampant in our midst, as in an article under the above caption an effort is put forth, through subtle assumptions which find no foundation in fact, and subterfuges which the upright journalist should scorn to array one leading industry and class of population of the State against another. No sane man will believe the assertion that the farmers are taxed to support the pastures; but the reverse of the proposition is indirectly true. The phenomenal [sic] enhancement of live stock had rendered it possible to reduce the rate of taxation, a blessing enjoyed by all classes of our citizens. If the
fence-cutters, aided and abetted by such journals, succeed in depreciating the value of this species of property, so that it shall be necessary to increase the rate of taxation, the intelligent farmer should not be at a loss as to whom the same should be attributed.

Again, the declaration that the executive is unable to enforce the laws, supposes that a majority of the people are violators of the law—a conclusion to which I can not subscribe. The stockmen are engaged in an honest business, and conduct the same in a legitimate manner, and contribute of their means for the protection of the same, and if the hoodlums who ply the hatchet and nippers by moonlight are patriotic Democrats, wherein could the farmer complain if contrahoodlums were to burn down the fences inclosing farms? And if all this is good, wherein is burglary and arson bad? The Examiner impeaches the Democracy of The News because it has spoken out for the protection of the life, liberty and property of the citizen, and has dared to denounce the vilest, most unnecessary and most inexcusable form which crime has ever assumed in Texas. But when that paper dons the pure robes of Democracy in which to masquerade as the champion of agrarianism, it is merely reenacting the role of satan in the livery of heaven. The stockmen simply ask for the enforcement of the law, and the governor is sworn to enforce it; and if the writer hereof was governor of Texas, before the humiliating confession should go forth to the world that he was impotent to execute the law, because a majority of the people of Texas were criminals, he would step down and out. If western Texas is to become the prey of vandals, the sooner that sad fact is known, the better it will be for all concerned; for the reign of the hatchet and nippers is insupportable.

Victor M. Rose

—Galveston Daily News, January 11, 1884

The Pending Gubernatorial Succession
(To The News)

Victoria, Tex., February 23.—The evidences of General L. S. Ross’s popularity, and the probability of his being called to the gubernatorial succession next November, as indicated in various expressions—editorial and otherwise—in recent numbers of The News, has the same effect upon the purturbed [sic] popular mind of this section of the State that oil is said to have in stilling troubled waters. I know well your commendable rule in refusing to manufacture political booms in the interest of individuals, and under ordinary circumstances would not come forward to suggest any point in the premises, trusting to the ordinary modes for the settlement of such things—the voice of the machine manipulators, the money and cheek of the aspirants—which custom has almost rendered a portion of our unwritten law; but the pending succession is invested with questions of more than ordinary moment, and involved in difficulties and perplexities which render the issue one of extraordinary concern to all citizens whose conservative principles rebuke the lawless spirit of border communism, which is striking at the very tenure of real estate, and aiming to dissolve the very bonds of society itself. That a suppliant majority of the late legislative body publicly condoned this crime against virtue and civilization, that the executive refrained from interposing his constitutional shield between the life and property of the citizen, and that a number of the press unblushingly champion the cause of the lawless, is sufficient proof that a change is absolutely demanded, if we elect that the clock of civilization shall not be turned back a hundred years in our State. there is no respectable element
of our population, numerically, whose votes can be won by the promise of license, and the
demagogues who have made this bid for popular favor, at the expense of millions of damage to
West Texas, will find that they counted upon a shadow; a political element confined to a few
lawless characters in sections where fence-cutting and the killing of sheep were so industriously
pursued. Those who know General Ross can assure their fellow-citizens that, as governor, he
would enforce the laws in obedience to his sworn constitutional duty. He would not order sixteen
companies of militia to suppress a negro “tempest in a teapot” at Gause, and then doubt his
constitutional authority to employ the same force to protect life and property in Bee county. He
is also too courteous and well-bred a gentleman to insult the representative of a leading journal
simply because it exposed his incapacity for the weighty trusts imposed upon him, should he
indeed manifest such incapacity. He would not reward his political fuglemen with appointments
to office, but would seek for fitness in the individual for the performance of the duties to be
intrusted to him.

I do not charge that any governor of Texas has been remiss in these particulars, but
merely wish to say that General Ross would be superior at all times to all and every of such
imputations. In this congressional district ninety-nine one hundredths of the Democratic voters
demand a change, and they would support no one with greater alacrity than the honest and
wholly competent Ross, whose political record is clean and creditable, no less to the sterling
probity of the man than his wisdom as manifested by the measures which he advocated in one
constitutional convention and several legislatures. He is a farmer, and could not be objectionable
to North and East Texas: and the pasturmen of Southwest Texas, who ask no favors and expect
to receive nothing but legal protection for their property through an honest enforcement of the
law, are willing to trust the executive reins of the State to the hands of L. S. Ross.

Victor M. Rose.

—Galveston Daily News, February 26, 1884

Two Gentlemen of Boreapolis
BY VICTOR M. ROSE
(Written for The News)

Our store of knowledge in regard to the manners and customs of the ancients is principally
composed of mere inferential deductions from the few isolated facts which have descended to us;
and in the far future, when modern theories and systems have been superseded by others again
and again—when the alluvial soil of the Mississippi valley is worn down to the very ribs of rock,
and America presents as sterile an appearance as Syria does to-day, we may be sure that the
peculiarities of the American people will be studied through the medium of inferential agents of
which we now take but little note. And especially is this the more probable should the mutations
of time effect the future as the past. Vicissitudes will mark the sway of empire, whose course
will be eastward when the circle toward the west has been completed; then, perhaps, north, then
south. All are familiar with the figure of Macaulay’s New Zealander contemplating the ruins of
St. Paul’s from a crumbling fragment of London bridge; and this is by no means the most
remarkable feature of the picture drawn by imagination upon the canvas of the distant
perspective. Enervated luxury, and grown senile, the nations now designated as powers will have
become effete, and civilization, bereft of its spirit of energy, will have grown dim in the settling
mists of another dark age. Climatic and geographical changes will not be less radical; the regions of the two poles will be sought for the salubrity of climate, and sunken continents arise from the ocean. Hordes from the East—Chinese, Indians and other races not now even originated—will complete by a tidal wave of conquest sweeping over Europe and America with a destructive earnestness the limning of the “ancient” landscape. In Anno Domini 18,084 Boreapolis was a free metropolis encircling the north pole. The days and nights were of six months duration; though such was the perfect servitude of electricity to the wants of man that this seeming inconvenience was wholly obviated. In the midst of the city, over the exact pole, towered to the height of ten miles, an immense cylindrical tower from which was drawn at will a current of positive influence; and a like structure occupied a similar position over the south pole, from which was summoned a supply of the negative diffusion; the two poles being connected with innumerable electrophones, whose sinuosities pervaded in all directions the habitable globe. During the dark period gorgeous displays of the aurora borealis rendered the hours devoted to business pursuits extremely brilliant, and during the period subject to the opposite solstice innocuous vapors were liberated from the bottomless well of darkness, forming above the summit of the giant tower, and affording a dense canopy of black cloud, which obscured the rays of the sun. At the moment of which we write the citizens were enjoying the festivities of some great occasion. It was the 25th day of December—the dark period—and the heavens were ablaze of fiery glories; but floating just above the loftiest domes and spires of the city was a fleecy damask-like exhalation from the funnel of a most wonderful loom, in which was weaved the evanescent warp and woof of the delicate threads of light and darkness, which—robbing the aurora of its fiery principle—caused the city to be bathed in a mellow roseate flood, such as a brilliant light emits through the heavy folds of a crimson curtain. Such a realization of the magnificence of paradise never broke upon the abnormal dreams evoked from the subtle influence of the poppy’s dew, and the scene perpetuated by Aztec legend—the solemnization of the nuptial rite when Popocatepetl espoused the Lady in White, and Cherubim danced upon the silvery shore of lake Tezcuco with nymphs of the flowery streams to the music of celestical [sic] pipes—must wax faint in the shade of the contrast.

The people were small—not exceeding a general average of two and a half feet in height—and the intellectual brow, the universal air of culture and development of the spiritual nature, revealed an almost total elimination of the animal passions from their composition. Some strolled leisurely down the wide avenues, engaging at times in pleasant converse, while others went hither and thither without exertion, seated in luxuriantly cushioned aerial volantes. Ships of monstrous appearance cleaved with their keels the atmosphere as they sped with the velocity of light for the most distant marts of commerce, while others were continually arriving.

It was noticeable that among the strollers the sexes were indistinguishable, for all were costumed in uniform habiliments; the world had received its maximum of population—science had triumphed over death, and the Saints had inherited the earth; there was no marrying nor giving in marriage in Boreapolis, and many other portions of the world in which the orthodox principle (for religion and politics were now but the concretion of right principles) had been received; and a universal adhesion to the truth was anticipated speedily, as the carnal minded were still amenable to the first extreme penalty pronounced upon sinful man.

“Salve, doctor, as the ancient Americans would say,” exclaimed a gentleman as he halted his volante, and allowed it to settle down by the curbstone.

“I have doubts in regard to the correctness of that,” said a gentleman of the same age—the citizens of Boreapolis were all of the same age. “Salve was a term of salutation employed by
the French, a branch of the very ancient Roman race, every vestige of whose literature was
destroyed when the Emperor Li Chang Lee burned Paris, London and Galveston—the three
centers of wealth, art and learning of that ancient period.” Li Chang Lee, the subjugator of
empires and the destroyer of libraries. What a pity he and the savage Tartar Usg did not butcher
one another under the apple tree of Hesperides in their memorable encounter. “I fear you are
wrong again,” said the historian and lexicographer; “in some ancient volumes printed in the
hieroglyphics of that age, and recently excavated from the ruins of a species of temple at
Galveston, in which the Almighty was worshiped in the form of a solid circular piece of gold or
silver and called the Exchange Cotton, I find that, possibly, Usg should be understood as
standing for United States Grant, a province of the empire of Texas, though some think it was a
man—the rebel lieutenant of the Emperor Li Chang Lee. These last contributions to our store of
information, enables us to form a pretty correct opinion, not only as to the manners and customs
of that peculiar people, but in regard to their national polity and physical appearance. They were
giants; and it is of them, doubtless, that the history of the Jews refers when it says “there were
giants in the land.” Many skeletons from Galveston show conclusively that there were not a few
men who attained the height of five, and even six feet. It is also proved that they were devourers
of flesh, eating cows and even hogs; though I believe there is no proof that they were cannibals,
buying men probably for slaves, and not for food. In regard to the American mode of salutation,
it seems that they were accustomed to seize one another by the hand, in an extremely vulgar
manner, exclaiming: “How kumon?” “Ah, I see you have some engravings illustrative of the
Galvestonians! What is this?”

“It represents a contest in Ireland, a country of which the capital was supposed to be
Seagreen or Seguin. The man on horseback represents the Irish, who we are assured, were
horned, like cattle, though Professor Ygles thinks the word is ‘corned;’ at all events, they ate
grass and picked their teeth with iron wire. The man with the hoe, confronting the cavorting
horseman, is a fisherman; he is digging bait. Here is an explanation of the picture, from a book
which seems to have published daily—not so slow, after all, those old fellows—and called THE
NEWS. A colored man—seems they painted their faces—went out to hang himself up to sleep on
a barb wine, at the hour of 1 a.m., when two grass eaters ‘held him up,’ and a third, with a Krupp
gun, demanded, ‘Have you any silver gods in your scrip, you son of a b——h?’ ”—the latter
word evidently meaning back-sheesh, sometimes called blackmail.

“Boss, I aint got but four bits, but you kin have that if you lemme off.” The colored man
met Mr. and Mrs. Smith promenading down the avenue—which is conclusive that those people
employ the night for their daily avocations, and the day for their nocturnal slumbers—and related
the rape of the silver god. Mr. Smith thereupon seized the Krupp gun in one hand, and proceeded
to carve up the three grass-men with his toothpick, which accomplished, he said he was going
fishing, probably using the flesh of the victims for bait. As the time was 2 a.m., he doubtless
captured nightmares, said to have been a species of female mere-horse which infested the waters of
Eads’s channel.

“By the way, that was an artificial channel, was it not, and wholly different from Eads’s
Panama canal?”

“Yes, great old fellow, Eads, and almost worthy to rank with our own celebrated
engineers. It was the channel which ultimately brought to Galveston the trade of the world, and
placed it first on the list of commercial cities; indeed, the origin of the great empire of Texas can
be traced from the same source. These people were not altogether idolaters, as we have
imagined. It seems that they acknowledged God the king, and a son, or prince royal, and an
undefined something called the Holy Ghost. They were fully as f[r]actious in religion as in politics, and the population was divided among even more religious sects than political parties. I would be happy to see you at my study, where I have many very interesting specimens, but, as I am about stepping down to Galveston, and due at home, via Peking, by noon, I must off.”

And, with a slight inclination of the person and wave of the hand, the two gentlemen of Boreapolis parted. Culture had bounced hand-shaking 10,000 years previously.

—Galveston Daily News, March 31, 1884

In his 1840 essay “Ranke’s History of the Popes,” Thomas Macaulay wrote, “And she [the Catholic Church] may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul’s” (Thomas Babington Macaulay, Essays, Critical and Miscellaneous [Philadelphia: A. Hart, 1852], p. 401).

Popocatepetl is a snow-capped volcano that can be seen from Mexico City. According to Aztec legend, the warrior Popocatepetl (Smoking Mountain) was in love with Iztaccihuatl (White Woman); before he could return from battle, his rivals spread the rumor that he had been killed, and she died of grief. A Krupp gun was a large cannon developed in the 1870s by the Krupp armaments manufacturer, a German firm. James B. Eads was an eminent civil engineer known for inventing the diving bell, designing a state-of-the-art bridge over the Mississippi at St. Louis, and constructing a jetty system at the river’s mouth that used the current to prevent silt buildup. Efforts that began in the early 1880s to deepen the port at Galveston were based on the recommendations of Eads.

Rotten Boroughs and the Presidency

(To THE NEWS)

Victoria, Texas, March 28, 1884.—I was very much interested in the suggestion of THE NEWS as to the expediency of allowing the presidential electors to be chosen by the state legislatures of the Southern States, as the safest means to guard against the work of another electoral commission, and the comments of the Republican journals, and especially of the Inter-Ocean thereupon. From a partisan stand-point the argument of THE NEWS was conclusive, but from an opposite point of view it was regarded as even more reprehensible than the alleged bulldozing of negroes into voting the Democratic ticket, because it practically doubled the effects of the bulldoze—or killed two birds with one stone.

I do not pretend to say that the Republican charge of intimidation of negroes, by Democrats in Florida, South Carolina, Mississippi and Louisiana, is true; though I confess it seems strange that with a majority in those States the negroes are outvoted. Perhaps enough of them vote the Democratic ticket to secure the result indicated, and if they do so without compulsion, or intimidation, it is legitimate. A very large majority of the negroes in Texas vote the Republican ticket, and have done so from the first; and in the position that I have assumed upon this point the conduct of the Texan negro has supplied the standard of judgment.

The rascality of the carpet-baggers defeated the attempt to republicanize the Southern States; their extravagant waste would have bankrupted El Dorado, seeing which the Republicans of the North cried, “hands off!” and local self-government at the South was the result, under Democratic auspices—a consummation result in the material benefit of blacks and whites alike. And it is not unreasonable that self-interest may lead many negroes in the States named to vote for Democratic candidates for state and county offices. Such is the case to quite a considerable
extent in Texas, while for the Republican national ticket they are unanimous. Assuming that the expression, “a free election and a fair count,” will be accepted by all honest men as the desideratum at all times at the bottom of our polity, I would suggest that the law governing the election of presidential electors and members of Congress, be more rigorously enforced, and amended so as to divide the conduct of such elections at each voting place equally under the control of the two great political parties. One thing sure: Though the Democrats should be defeated on the presidential issue in 1884, they would win a great moral victory, which would be so far-reaching in its results that four years hence we might count with certainty upon reinforcements from the Northern States sufficient to reverse the result, and upon grounds too high to be questioned. “Old Larum” became too odious, even from the standpoint of English conservatism; and the rotten boroughs of South Carolina, Mississippi, et als., will not be allowed to cast the deciding vote in the election of the chief magistrate of 50,000,000 people. To force the issue is to appeal to arms, with infinitely greater odds against us than we encountered in 1861–’5—and for a mere shadow—for it is of no consequence to the people whether the president is a Republican or a Democrat; hungry placemen only are interested. We enjoy local self-government, that boon so dear to the freeman’s heart. We are materially prosperous beyond any people on earth, and I can not believe that the people of the South will allow themselves to be driven into a false position, and invoke the bloody and destructive god of war merely at the instance of some thousands of hungry “outs.” If the Democracy can not elect a president without bull-dozing, they surely do not intend to “count in” their man. I fain would believe that no Democratic Hayes could be found who would accept an office to which he had not been elected. Victor M. Rose.

P.S.—Of course no sane people think of fighting for the presidency, but as there are a great many insane at large, I write for their benefit.

—Galveston Daily News, April 3, 1884

Biographical Sketch of Walter P. Lane

The following sketch is printed as it originally appeared in the 1885 volume of the Texas Veteran Association’s Proceedings. In 1887, when Lane, with the help of his niece, published his memoirs, Adventures and Recollections of Walter P. Lane, he reprinted Rose’s sketch with numerous changes in capitalization and punctuation as well as a few factual corrections (shown below in brackets). He also expanded Rose’s sketch to include an article that John Henry Brown had written about Lane and published in the Dallas Daily Herald in 1874 (with its misleading account of Lane’s role in the exhumation of the Mier prisoners) as well as two pages from Rose’s Ross’ Texas Brigade (these pages contained an account written by Brigadier-General Joseph L. Hogg, who described an engagement at Corinth that Lane had commanded).

General Walter P. Lane

By Victor M. Rose

The subject of this sketch was born in County Cork, Ireland, in the year 1817. His parents, William and Olivia, despairing [sic] of success in the old world, determined to emigrate; and with
their family landed in Baltimore in 1821. They subsequently located in Fairview, Guernsey county, Ohio, where they continued to reside until their family of nine children had attained the age of maturity.

Of Walter P. Lane we know but little prior to the battle of San Jacinto. Upon this glorious theater he appeared, a friendless youth, daring the chances of battle with a reckless, devil-may-care gallantry, that made him the cynosure of all eyes. The intrepid youth engaged a Mexican lancer in a single combat, and, but for the timely assistance of Mirabeau B. Lamar must have succumbed, wounded as he was, to his more powerful antagonist. Such signal bravery met with a prompt reward; and Lane was promoted, the day next succeeding the battle, to a second lieutenancy in Karnes’ cavalry corps. Young, ardent, and adventurous, Lane found in the wilds of Texas an exciting field for the gratification of his daring nature. And his next appearance upon the field of battle was in a sanguinary fight with the savages, October, 1838 [1835], on Battle Creek, in the present county of Navarro. In this unequal strife twenty-three [twenty-five] Texans held at bay, without cover, for ten hours, several hundred Indians. But seven [four] of the intrepid whites escaped the field of death; among whom was Lane, wounded and supported by his comrades under cover of the friendly darkness.

Gen. Lane was one of the first to respond to the call when the rupture between the United States and Mexico occurred. As captain of Company A, First Texas Cavalry, he contributed in a marked degree to the American success at Monterey; and had his horse shot from under him in the assault upon the town. His company was in frequent engagements with the guerrillas and Indians during the occupancy by the American army of Mexico; in one of which he was shot through the leg. At the conclusion of hostilities Lane was a major, and retired from the scene of operations with a reputation second to none for dashing bravery and cool courage. From this period until the commencement of the civil war, Major Lane engaged in the mercantile business in the city of Marshall, Texas.

Early in 1861 he was elected, without opposition, lieutenant colonel of the Third Texas Cavalry, and was engaged in the operations that culminated in the battle of Oak Hills, in which engagement he had a horse shot from under him in a charge on a Federal battery. The battalion of the third engaged in the Indian campaign in the winter of 1861-2, was commanded by Lane, and the intrepid officer led in person the hazardous charge that swept the hostiles from the almost inaccessible heights of Chustenahlah. In this charge the colonel again lost his steed at the hands of an Indian marksman. The Elk Horn campaign followed close on this, and at the furious charge upon Siegel’s ambushed division, a few miles north of Bentonville, Arkansas, Lane displayed a reckless disregard of danger truly sublime. The Confederate army attacked the next day the enemy, strongly posted a few miles back of Pea Ridge. Col. Lane had been placed in temporary command of a brigade of McIntosh’s cavalry division, and as his command came upon the field they were saluted by a discharge from a Federal battery of six pieces posted some three hundred feet distant. Lane immediately, in conjunction with McIntosh, led a furious charge upon the enemy, and captured the battery. Upon the evacuation of Corinth by Gen. Beauregard, Lane in command of the Third Texas (dismounted) cavalry, reduced to 240 rifles made an impetuous attack upon the enemy in his front, and though outnumbering his men in the ratio of five to one, drove him in great confusion from the field. So signal was his conduct upon this occasion that the highest compliments were elicited from Gen. Beauregard. Upon the re-organization of the regiment in May, 1862, Col. Lane declined a re-election, and returned to Texas, where he speedily organized a splendid cavalry regiment. He was soon raised to the rank of brigadier general.
The brigade of Gen. Lane participated in the Atchafalaya raid, June, 1863, and contributed in no small degree to the capture of Fort Defiance.

For the subsequent operations of Gen. Lane we are indebted to the Encyclopedia of the New West:

“In the fatal attack upon Fort Butler, adjoining Donal[d]sonville, a few days later, Lane commanded the force that took the town. On the 13th of July, 1863, in the severe battle of La Fourche, Lane commanded the right and Gen. Tom Green the left wing.

“On the 3rd of November, 1863, Lane commanded a brigade under Green at the battle of Berbean, capturing four pieces of artillery; nine hundred prisoners; a large amount of stores, and came very near capturing Col. E. J. Davis, who commanded the First Texas union regiment of cavalry.

“Lane was transferred to the coast of Texas, under Gen. Magruder, and remained there some time. When Banks’s invasion commenced up Red River in 1864, Lane was ordered to join Gen. Taylor in North Louisiana. Being in advance on the 7th of April, his brigade was the first to encounter the Federals in the field of Pleasant Hill. From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. he held in check a vastly superior force of the enemy, until being completely surrounded, and his ammunition exhausted, he deliberately cut his way through the enfolding lines, thus escaping capture. His loss was very severe, but the punishment inflicted on the enemy was far more severe.

“On the next day, 8th of April, Lane, co-operating with Gen. Prince Polignac, led a desperate charge across a field, cut off the right wing of the enemy, captured a great number of prisoners, one hundred and fifty wagons and twenty pieces of artillery, but in the moment of victory he was shot from his horse by a minnie ball, which entered his hip, when Col. George W. Baylo[r] succeeded to the command, and completed the triumph of the day. This was Gen. Lane’s last fight of any importance. He was disabled for a time, but as soon as possible resumed his place, and remained at his post until the close of the war in 1865.”

The character of Walter P. Lane is without a blemish. His fearless bearing in the midst of danger was proverbial, and he had as cool a head to plan as a daring aim to execute. His modesty is insurmountable, and it is only to a confidential friend that he can be induced to recount his many hair-breadth escapes at all.

In conclusion, we again have recourse to the pages of the excellent Encyclopedia of the New West, and reproduce an incident in the career of the heroic chieftain that will be of peculiar interest to the Texan reader:

“One episode in the career of Walter P. Lane will embalm his memory forever in the hearts of Texans. During the Mexican war, while he was major of Hays’ regiment of Texas rangers, under Gen. J. E. Wood, he was dispatched by the latter with a small body of men to go south in the direction of San Louis Potosi to discover all that was possible in relation to the movements of the Mexican army. There were two roads to San Louis Potosi—one by Matchuala, a large town, the other by the great HACIENDA of Salado, where the seventeen Texas Mier prisoners drew black beans, in 1843, and were shot. The two roads were divided by a range of mountains. Lane took the left handed or eastern road, and actually penetrated to and entered the city of Matchuala, with its twenty thousand people; and a garrison of several hundred men. He ordered and obtained dinner at a MESON (a compromise between a hotel and a wagon yard) announced that a large American army was near by and feasted his men to their full. Then remounting he retired obliquely across the mountain to the other road, and struck the HACIENDA of Salado. Seizing the alcalde he ordered the resurrection of the bones of the seventeen martyred Texans, demanded mules, sacks, saddles and all things necessary to bear them away. All were
furnished, and the remains of the dead duly placed in transit on mules. Lane tipped his beaver to the alcalde and the assembled villagers, and bore those relics to Gen Taylor’s headquarters. That sturdy old hero deputed Capt. Quisenbury [Dusenberry], a Texan, with an escort, to convey them to Texas. They were conveyed to La Grange, on the Colorado, and there with all solemnity, in the presence of thousands, entered on Monument Hill, overlooking the country for miles around. Few know, even to this day that to Gen. Walter P. Lane, Texas is indebted for the possession of these momentos [sic] of a heroism never surpassed. The names of the seventeen martyred heroes, all being Texans, who drew the black beans and were shot as malefactors for an act of heroism perhaps unparalleleed [sic] in history were: James D. Cocke, a printer and lawyer, from Richmond, Virginia; Robert H. Dunham, a sincere Christian of the Methodist church; James M. Ogden, a lawyer from Henry County, Kentucky; William. M. Eastland, a member of the Methodist church, from Tennessee, for whom at a later day, Eastland county was named, by John Henry Brown; Thomas L. Jones, a native of Louisville, Kentucky; J. M. Thompson, Henry Whaling, W. N. Cowan, C. Roberts, Edward Esty, J. Trumbull, R. H. Harris, Martin Carroll Wing, a printer from Vermont; J. Mahan, J. L. Cash and James Torrey, from Colchester, Connecticut, a brother of the Thomas Torrey mentioned in the memoir of Gen. H. P. Bee, as one of his two companions whose lives were adjudicated by a council of Comanches in August, 1843, the third one being Capt. J. C. Eldridge, also a son of Connecticut, an early Texan, now a paymaster in the United States army. To this list should be added the name of the old Caledonian chief of southwest Texas, Capt. Ewen Cameron, who, though he drew a white bean, was subsequently taken from his chained companions while en route to the City of Mexico, and murdered as a wild beast by the order of Santa Anna, simply because he had been a terror to Mexican invaders of our southwestern frontier. At the first opportunity Texas erected a monument to his memory by naming the first county created on the Rio Grande—Cameron, an act worthy of the admiration of the gods.”

"But to return to Gen. Lane—the Marshal Ney of Texas. With honor untarnished, with an inward consciousness of duty well performed he quietly returned to his home in the beautiful town of Marshall, Texas, where he has since resided, without pretense or ostentation, his noble and brave heart pulsating in consonance with high-toned chivalry, and receiving the respect and unstinted esteem and admiration of all who love the true, the brave and the just."
For the past three weeks the capitol board commissioners and superintendent of construction, together with Sub-contractor Wilke, have been considering the value of the work to be omitted and the cost of the work to be added in adopting the recommendations made December 9, in the able and comprehensive report of the expert architects, Messrs. Harrod, Clayton and Heiner. This report was conclusive expert testimony to the fact that the people of Texas will have a capitol building worthy of a great state, and that if recommendations of the expert architects in regard to the dome construction were adopted, all questions as to the safety and stability of the dome would be removed.

Soon after this report was made, estimates were submitted showing what it would cost to carry out all the recommendations of the examining architects. Carefully prepared debit and credit statements were submitted both by General Walker, the superintendent, and by Mr. Wilke, the sub-contractor. These estimates have been considered in detail, both by Commissioners Lee and McLaurin, by the governor and by the capitol board. Copies of them were also sent to the examining architects. The object of the governor was to secure the adoption of all the recommendations in their entirety. This would be at an extra cost of nearly $6,000 to Mr. Wilke over and above all he would save by the omissions of brickwork, etc., in the dome, recommended by the examining architects, and besides paying him $6,018.73, which was to the credit of the building on former changes, and in his hands. But Mr. Wilke finally agreed with the governor to carry out all the recommendations of the examining architects free of charge to the state.

Accordingly Secretary Dickinson prepared a supplemental contract, embracing all the recommendations of the examining architects, which was read yesterday afternoon, and after being carefully considered together with the drawings accompanying same, was unanimously adopted, and signed by Commissioners Lee and McLaurin, approved by the governor, and advised and consented to by Comptroller McCall, Treasurer Lubbock and Attorney-general Hogg, the remaining member of the capitol board, Land Commissioner Hall, being absent from the city on official business. Like all capitol building contracts, this contract will be drawn up in triplicate by the secretary to-day, and, after being signed by the state authorities, will be forwarded to Col. Abner Taylor, the capitol contractor, for his signature and that of his bondsmen.

After the adoption of this contract yesterday by the board, a reporter learned from Sub-contractor Wilke that he would have the state house, with the changes just adopted, entirely finished early in April, in time ample for the imposing dedication and great celebration to occur here early in May in honor of the completion of the new capitol of Texas.

The reporter then took a ramble through the colossal structure. In the basement he found sixty-three rooms, with neat cement floors and nicely plastered walls—far better rooms than were the executive offices in the old capitol building that was burned, and whose rocky ruins, now leveled to the earth, the stranger passes over on Capitol hill as he approaches the front entrance of the new granite edifice, the most massive state house in the union, that has risen, phoenix like, from the ashes of the old one. And these basement rooms in the new building are even more commodious and suitable for offices than the rooms now occupied by the heads of departments in the “temporary capitol building,” as the one now used is called, which has already cracked from base to top, and is only held together by iron tie-rods, that run through it from north to south and from east to west.

It being a little cool in the basement, the reporter hurried up to the first floor. Here the long corridor, running east and west 565 feet, and north and south 287, making a handsome
cross, is a thing of beauty, dignity and convenience. With walls and cornices of attractive design, all pure white, and sturdy, massive oak wainscoating [sic] and oaken doors. The interior of the dome, the “rotunda,” as it is called, is the prettiest rotunda of any capitol building in America.

All the executive offices are on the first floor, and they are nearly all finished. Each state officer will have five times more space in this building than he ever had before. And there are a great many splendid rooms on this floor that are marked on the plans for departments that do not year exist, such as agricultural, geological departments, etc., but they will al be needed in the course of time.

The grand stairways are not yet in, but will be shortly. They are to be just beyond the rotunda on either side, and the manner in which they are to be placed will make them one of the striking features of the interior of the building. The reporter therefore went up the private stairs of the governor, which connects his first floor suite of rooms with the second, the lower being finished in mahogany and the upper in walnut. These rooms have a southeastern exposure, and the breezes of the gulf will here fan the perplexed brow of every governor of Texas until the millennium, beginning first with present distinguished, chivalric and noble-hearted chief, Gen. Sul Ross.

The reporter then walked into the next room, which is the governor’s public reception room, finished in cherry, a most excellent consultation room. It faces right down Congress avenue, and its center is the center of the building and also the center of the Avenue. After meandering through a beautifully tiled vestibule and a few committee rooms, the corridor leading into the house of representatives was reached, and the scribe soon ascended the granite steps and entered an assembly room, which for size, light, and finish overtops any representatives’ hall in this country, even the one at Washington not excepted. No stranger ever yet entered this room whose first exclamation was not one of surprise and admiration. “In height and depth, and nobleness,” it is par excellence the finest deliberative chamber in the world, and it is to be hoped that no legislative district in Texas will send a gimlet-headed idiot, or a fossilized mossback, as their representative to desecrate this house upon its christening.

Beyond this hall, on the west end, are numberless committee rooms, enough to accommodate congress, much less a Texas legislature. At the east end of the building is the senate chamber, a counterpart of the house of representatives, except that it is not quite so long, and beyond it are its committee rooms. The glass ceiling of the house and senate is nearly all in, and it would be worth a trip to Austin next May, during the celebration, just to stand in these two rooms and see that wide expanse of ornamented plate glass overhead, without a pillar or post to mar the evenness and brilliancy of its scintillating beauty. On the north end is the state library, a splendid room for its purpose, open in the center overhead all the way up to the roof, and capped by a large skylight of the finest glass, with a very attractive balcony with railing on each of the floors, all presenting a grand effect and making it one of the finest features of the building.

Up a winding stair from the state library the reporter wended his way, and reaching the third floor he went through the supreme and appellate court rooms and on into the galleries of the house and senate. Viewed from these galleries, both of these room look even larger than when you stand on the floors beneath. While in the gallery of the house the reporter could not but think that this vast assembly hall is the place for all our state conventions to meet, beginning with the next one.

It being late, the reporter put off his climb up the winding stairs of the dome, which lead to an altitude of nearly 300 feet for another and brighter day—when all this beautiful city shows up in its variegated loveliness, and the surrounding country is charming to behold. As he
sauntered back through the magnificent structure now almost completed, a monument to the wisdom and civilization of the people of Texas of to-day, he could but recall the following exquisite poem on the new white marble capitol building of Connecticut, which was written by Mr. Charles Howard Fitch, an engineer engaged for years in its construction. With but slight variations it is not entirely inapplicable to our Texas state house. As well as the reporter recollects, it ran about as follows . . . .

—Old Capitol, December 31, 1887

Rose concluded the article with Fitch’s poem, “The Hartford House of State.”

The Ladies of Columbia Entertain Their Guests

The ladies of Columbia gave a supper and entertainment last Friday evening at the city hall to raise means to be used in the building of a Methodist church. Quite a good attendance was had, though many of the young men were at a dancing party at Mrs. Lanary’s, in the country. The ladies deserve great credit for the success of the good undertaking, which required no little labor, display of taste and ingenuity. A Gipsy camp first attracted attention; and so perfect was their disguise that it was difficult of belief that Misses Benna Sweeny and Hallie Bowers were the presiding genii of the sylvan camp. A pot of oyster soup added much of the realistic to the scene; and gallant gentlemen halting there didn’t know for the life of them whether to accept soup from the fair hands of Miss Benna or have Miss Hallie tell their fortunes, and most of them did both. It was but a step from Gipsy land to Japan, and ye reporter is quite confident that Misses Emilie Harris and Clara Duff were decidedly the most handsome of Japanese maidens. Each imparted a charm to her confectionary stand, and exercised, too, a visible attraction. Misses Bettie Patton and Effie Taylor dispensed pop corn, and were the fairest of imaginable vendors, and, as may be imagine, pop corn “went!” The fair Japanese waiters, all attired in the national costume, were Miss Fannie Mecham and Mesdames F. J. Duff and C. B. Seabourne. Misses Christie Smith, Mary Falkney and Mary Narbon were three sweet little fa[i]ries in charge of flower stands. Miss Duff and Miss Harris afforded a fund of amusement, as follows: An open umbrella, having a lighted candle on the extremity of each rib, was the objective point, and a blindfolded masculine, fan in hand, was introduced, and ex[h]orted to extinguish a light. His earnest wipes, often wide of the mark, called forth peals of laughter, and contributed in no small degree to the amusement of the entertainment. Excellent music was afforded upon the organ by Mrs. J. P. Taylor, and on the violin by Masters Tommy and Harry Duff. The proceeds of the entertainment netted $57, and Major J. W. Hanks is authority for the statement that every one present received his money’s worth of solid enjoyment. The OLD CAPITOL earnestly hopes that the ladies of Columbia may speedily attain the commendable end sought, which is, as before stated, the erection of a Methodist church.

—Old Capitol, January 7, 1888

The Cloven Foot

The OLD CAPITOL has a map before it purporting to be “The Railroad System of Texas, on September 1st, 1887, drawn for A. H. Belo & Co., publishers of the Galveston Daily and Weekly
News,” which reveals the cloven foot supporting the partisan report of Maj. Ernst, and the gibberygosh of the News in regard to the projected opening of the mouth of the Brazos; for upon its face that river, the largest and deepest in Texas, is conspicuous by its absence. This exceeds in assinity [asininity] the playing of Hamlet with the cast of the principal character omitted; and forces conviction to every honest mind of the absolute untruthworthiness of the dictum of Major Ernst, and the News; which is but the parroting of Galveston’s selfish aims for peoning Brazoria county, and aggrandising herself at the expense of all Texas. Major Ernst assumes that all his predecessors, many of whom were fully as competent as civil engineers, and unquestionably honest men, who have heretofore reported favorably in regard to securing deep water at the mouth of the Brazos, were ignorant or dishonest, in so reporting. Mr. Maurice Kanters, of Chicago, was one of those; the U.S. engineer who made the survey for Messrs. Phelps & Dodge was another, and these reported that the work was eminently practicable; Mr. Kanters going so far as to offer to do the work at his own expense, and to guarantee a suitable depth of water for $450,000, upon the principle of “no water no pay.” Captain Abram Cross, of Houston, a wholly competent civil engineer, backs his practical judgment with an offer of a similar nature. Mr. A. G. Follett, of Velasco, patentee of an ingenious substitute for the Jetty system, writes that “A perfectly competent civil engineer will head the lists of contributors in a joint stock company and guarantee to secure a depth over the bar of fifteen feet, and to maintain it for a period of ten years, for $450,000, on the principle of “no water no pay.” In fact this has been substantially the dictum of all civil engineers who have reported upon the subject since 1824 until Major Mansfield was misled by the oily tongued intriguers of Galveston; and there is good reason to believe that the instincts of the educated engineer enabled him to emancipate his mind from the thraldom of such errors some months before he retired; and that this honorable change in his opinion was the true cause which determined Galveston upon his removal. At all events, his subordinates who made the survey of the river from Waco to the mouth did not hesitate to say that his report was unfair, and not warranted by facts. Major Ernst and the Galveston News both labor to create the false and ridiculous impression that the object sought is to afford transportation to market for the cotton and sugar grown in Brazoria county; than which nothing could be more erroneous; and in the propagation of this error they claim that the desired end will be attained by the purchase of the so-called canal by the government. In pursuit of this quixotic enterprise Major Ernst employed an agent, Mr. J. L. Hudgins, to keep a memoranda of all vessels passing down the Brazos, and when Mr. Hudgins ventured the opinion that they would average one per day, Major Ernst replied that that would be too many! Even if the unwarranted assumption were true that the end sought was the marketing of the produce grown in Brazoria county, Mr. Hudgins’ memoranda would not include the shipments to Houston over the railroad, which comprise four-fifths of the cotton grown in the county. But the truth is: Galveston fears the opening of the Brazos to commerce; and this fear is quickened by the knowledge of its practicability, and at a small cost comparatively. Hence the abolition of the Brazos by Messrs. A. H. Belo & Co., from the face of their map of Texas. It is unpleasant to contemplate the Brazos as the gateway to Europe for interests as far west and south as Colorado, California and North Mexico. It would hurt Galveston; and, so, they conspire to defeat the purposes of a territory an empire in extent, and abounding in all the resources of a continent to further the selfish interests of Galveston; and in furthering this crime against Nature they seek to make the United States a particeps criminis through the purchase of the canal; which was never serviceable even in marketing the produce of Brazoria; and which would cost to put it in condition more than to open the mouth of the Brazos, to say nothing of its purchase, and the cost of maintaining it in
condition. Besides, not a fourth of the produce grown in Brazoria would pass through it; so that its purchase and repair at the hands of the government would simply amount to money thrown away. And in conclusion: since Major Ernst and the News profess to be actuated by a philanthropic desire to assist the planters of Brazoria to market their produce, the OLD CAPITOL is authorized to say that the people of Brazoria county—nem. con. [nemine contradictente, no one contradicting]—decline to accept the “blessing” which the good major, and the benevolent News would force upon them. The mouth of the Brazos will be opened, and a brazen monument on either side of the passage erected; one perpetuating the report of Ernst, and the other treasuring Belo & Co.’s map which abolished the Brazos. Now let the boycott commence; let Galveston be “taboo” to all Brazorians; let us petition congress not to touch the ditch called by courtesy “the canal”; and above all let us set earnestly to work to open to commerce the mouth of the Brazos; all that is necessary is for Brazoria to set the ball in motion; and subscriptions to stock will come rushing in from all points in Texas. This is Business!

—Old Capitol, February 25, 1888

Major Oswald Herbert Ernst, of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, was in charge of harbor improvements at Galveston.

To Brazoria

Ye old pencil shover accepted the kind invitation of Hon. John Adriance the other day and took a seat in his buggy behind a dashing span of roans, and clipped off the distance to Brazoria in about an hour. The farms along the roads were smiling at the passerby in the satisfied look of thorough cultivation. The young corn looked well; and the gardens were luxuriant. It was a dull day, and but few of the sovereigns were out during our brief stay; among whom were Mr. J. G. Smith, Capt. F. LeRibeus, B. F. Krause, C. K. Reese, B. B. Sassor, Judge E. N. Wilson, Wharton Bates, Dr. H. Stevens, Eugene Wilson, Dr. J. Graves, Hon. A. E. Stratton, M. B. Williams; Judge H. Masterson, C. C. Millican, G. C. Leonard, Jared Parsons; and last, though by no means least, the courteous Sheriff, M. J. Hickey, Esqr. As Brazoria’s site is the highest on the lower Brazos, with 30 feet of water, there is no telling what good fortune the future may have in store for the old burg. Of course the harbor improvement at the mouth of the river constituted the principal topic of conversation; and the opinions of the speakers were as different as their faces; the greatest fear, however seemed to be that our landowners would put prices up above the reach of the average immigrant. All agreed that lands ought to be offered for sale at their legitimate value; but no two could agree upon the figures; Mr. Sassor holding that river lands were worth $200 per acre, and Judge Stratton placing them much lower. Some cotton was seen still coming in to the gin. Dr. Graves declared that the physicians were about starving out, as an epidemic of health had seized upon the country.

—Old Capitol, April 7, 1888

Stephen F. Austin in 1835

As germain [sic] to the speech of Gen. Austin, delivered in Brazoria on the 8th of Sept. 1835, and which appeared in the last issue of the Old Capitol, four authoritative public documents of that period, and bearing immediately upon the point in issue are reproduced in this number.
These all prove that Austin was, hand and heart, with the colonists; and that he gave no other counsel than that of opposition to the central usurpation; and this, too, when the other Mexican states had either bowed to the storm, or remained tranquil in the desolation wrought by the vandal legions of the most execrable monster of the 19th century. Austin did more than this: He started the ball; he sounded first the tocsin of war for a specific and rational purpose to maintain the rights of Texas under the compact of 1824. Previous to that time the so called “War Party” had forced the Mexican garrisons from the country; but this was in the nature of a redress of personal grievances. Austin not only cristalised the war spirit, but he headed the army. Until Texas had in a legal manner severed her connection with Mexico, as she did in March 1836, Austin could take no other course than in defence of vested rights. More than this would have been treasonable. But when the sovereign convention of Texas spoke no man gave independence an earlier, or a more hearty support than he. This much for the undefiled truth of history. The Father of Texas needs no vindication to set right the public of Texas. His fame is as secure as was his character spotless.

—Old Capitol, April 21, 1888

Is the News Sincere?

The Galveston News is certainly put to her trumps, in her efforts to belittle the proposed harbor improvements at the mouth of the Brazos, and in the discussion of the matter, is to say the least, unfair. When the projectors of the improvements now contemplated at the mouth of the Brazos, first took hold of the matter, the News in several articles declared that there was nothing in the project; that the parties composing the Syndicate were simply a “set” of land speculators who were attempting to get up a boom in the prices of land in Brazoria county, and who would soon unload their worthless property upon an over-confidant people.

Instead of selling, the company continued to buy lands at almost fabulous prices. After they had succeeded in getting all of the property on and about the mouth of the Brazos necessary for the success of their project, they went to Washington and had a bill introduced asking for the simple privilege of doing the work at their own expense. The News was unable to find any reasonable or valid objection to the bill, so it made all manner of fun at the manner in which the bill was drawn, accused the framer of it of being a “greener,” and commented in a very significant way on the fact that Senator Coke, had marked on the bill “Introduced by request.” After firing this shot which the News no doubt thought would be sufficient to extinguish life, she brings her little gun to a carry, reloads and takes the position of “ready” at the door of the River and Harbor committee to watch further developments. The committee after making a few changes, returned the bill to the House with a favorable report, and immediately the News exploded another blank cartridge. Her special correspondent at Washington, says, that “when the matter was first brought to the attention of congress, your correspondent expressed the opinion that it would not be sanctioned.” Now that the battle is more than half won, and the bill is certain of an early passage, he desires to save the reputation of the News as a prophet, by “pointing out the important changes made in the bill by the committee,” which in truth are so insignificant, he “fears a casual reader might not notice them.” After pointing out what he considers the important changes in the bill, he winds up his lengthy article, by saying that “it must be remembered, however, that this (work) is looked upon as a purely local improvement of little or no national significance or utility, and hence such an objection (tolls) loses somewhat of its force.” Although
this syndicate and this bill have in view the establishment of a deep water harbor on the Texas coast, yet the News wants every one to bear in mind that this is a local affair, a matter of no national significance or utility. They do not propose to work at Galveston, so don’t pay any attention to them. This communication appeared in the issue of June 5th; in the issue of the very next day there appears a very able and convincing editorial on the great necessity for a deep water port on the Texas coast. In this article it is positively asserted that deep-water on the Texas coast (not at Galveston, but on the Texas coast) is a national necessity, and expressly declares that it is not a local issue—It even goes so far as to assert that one port will not accommodate the demand of the trade and commerce that will be built up, and pictures in a most able manner the grand benefits that would result from such a port—not a port at Galveston, but anywhere on the Texas coast.

The News in the publication of one of these articles is guilty of gross insincerity. If the great demand for a deep water port in fact exists, as the News declares in its editorial, then why belittle and stigmatise the work at the mouth of the Brazos as purely local, and of no national significance or utility? The mouth of the Brazos is South of west from Galveston about 50 miles; a line of railroad about 55 miles in length, extending from the mouth of the river, over a perfectly level country, without a single bridge, to Rosenberg junction, would connect the whole Railroad system of the state with deep-water—with a land locked, fresh water harbor.

Then why is deep water at the mouth of the Brazos, not of national importance? Every argument which the News can make in favor of Galveston except one, will apply with equal force to it, and several very potent ones can be made in favor of the Brazos which are not and can not apply to Galveston.

The only exception in favor of the latter place is the amount of capital now invested, and this would be conclusive in favor of the Island city were the necessity purely a local one, but being as the News says it is, of national importance we must look beyond the Taxable values of localities, and center upon natural advantages; these the mouth of the Brazos possesses over any other point on the Gulf coast, and the News with all of its unfairness and insincerity can not take them from her.

You have convinced us that the need for a deep-water port on the Texas coast is a national necessity, and we propose to supply the demand.

—Old Capitol, June 9, 1888

A Swing Round the Circle
People and Things Seen

On a trip through portions of Fort Bend, and Brazoria counties, much was seen that is worthy of note. But before entering upon the details I wish to express my thanks to Mr. J. H. Dance, of Dance Bros., Columbia, who furnished the “rig,” and was the pilot of the cruise. His knowledge of the country, and acquaintance with the people, rendered our tour both pleasant and interesting. When it is said that those who know Mr. Dance best esteem him most, it will not be necessary to further extend the prelude.

We first “took in” the splendid plantation of the Messrs. Dance, two miles west of Columbia. This was the ancient seat of Mr. Josiah Bell; and though it has been in cultivation continuously for over fifty years the soil is as fertile as when the plow first disturbed its primordial virginity. Mr. E. Crews, affable, and as courteous as Mi-Lord Chesterfield, is the
efficient manager—of the plantation—for his far-better half is queen regnant of the household, and an able one, as the excellent vegetable dinner of which we partook, amply testified. Proceeding northward, the famous “Damon’s Mound” was passed, around which is settled quite a community of industrious farmers; the old place of Uncle Sam Damon being occupied by Mr. H. L. Bryan, who is the post master. Mr. Joe A. Rhodes is the post master at Rhodes’ Ranch, about mid-way between the mound and Columbia. We reined up at Mr. White Armstrong’s, twenty miles from Columbia, about six o’clock, and spent the night under his hospitable roof. Mr. Armstrong informed us that a mud-hole in the environs of Richmond, rendered ingress into Fort Bend’s capital impossible; and that he was forced to go to Kendleton to procure necessary supplies. We told him that he could do better in Columbia; but to no avail. Query: Would it not pay the merchants of Columbia to make an effort to secure the trade of that section? We avoided the dreaded mud-hole by passing through the premises of a son of Ham, who exacted two bits for the privilege. He said he took in about $2.50 per day, which beat “crapping,” perhaps. Entering Richmond by the southern gate, Dr. Ferris expressed his surprise, saying he thought the town was impregnable to visitors. Richmond has two excellent hotels: The National, Col. David Nation, proprietor; and the Exchange, Mr. Harry Mason, proprietor. A Methodist protracted meeting was in progress, and considerable interest on the part of the gentiles was manifest. Mr. Jeff McLemore was just getting out the initial number at the Richmond Democrat, Hon. E. D. Linn, of Victoria, is interested to the venture; and the management insures the success of the same. Every body in Richmond favors the mouth of the Brazos as the proper place for a deep water entrance; and “Brazos harbor” was all the talk. We “nooned” Wednesday at Foster, named in honor of “Uncle Ran” Foster, who was Stephen F. Austin’s hunter. Here Messrs. Hankin & Bullwinkel have a store, gin and mill, and keep the post office. We were disappointed in not meeting our old friend Mr. Mason Briscoe, who lives near, as he was absent from home. Pittsville was reached later of the afternoon, and after a pleasant conversation with Dr. Harris, and Mr. J. Nesbitt, sought the hospitality of the venerable Mr. Church Fulshear for the night. Mr. F. is a native of Tennessee, his father having built the first frame house ever put up in Nashville. The family migrated to Texas in 1824. and Mr. Church Fulshear served in the San Jacinto campaign in Karnes’ spy company, a friend and comrade of the famous “Deaf Smith.” In former times Mr. F. was a votary of the turf; and he yet keeps that famous “Getaway,” (almost blind) who made on the Louisville, Ky. course a record which has never been surpassed; it is believed; the same being one and a fourth miles in two minutes, seven, and three quarter seconds. The Aransas Pass railroad grade passes just in front of the house. Mr. Fulshear has donated the company the alternate half of 100 acres upon which to build up “Lake City.” It should have been named “Fulshear” in honor of the old veteran, who is quite infirm, but an angel of the sisterhood of women. Mrs. Wilson, gives assiduous care to the matter of his comfort and general welfare. Nooned Thursday with Mr. Wm. Dunlap, an old Fort Bend boy, and a prosperous merchant near Stafford’s Point. Mr. D. was in the midst of the “honey-moon,” he having but a short while previous to our call returned from a visit to Alabama with a beautiful young bride, who will prove a charming acquisition to Fort Bend society. The next night was passed at “Arcola,” the princely plantation of Mr. J.H.B. House, a worthy son of the late T. W. House, long so well and favorably known as a leading banker, and merchant of Houston. Mr. House was on the eve of setting out for Houston, and kindly assigned us to his own comfortable quarters, and the assiduous attentions of his valet de chambre. This “gentleman’s gentleman” was not a person to be encountered every day. I was awakened the next morning by a hearty laugh, and peeped through the musquitos [sic] bar to see Mr. Dance convulsed with laughter. The tableau vivant
was about to this effect: The gentleman’s gentleman stood with hat in hand, and his poll was as slick, and destitute of wool as a billiard ball. The spell of intense seriousness which pos[s]essed him at the time rendered him oblivious to all surroundings; and he told the story of his alluring anticipations, and fell misfortunes with a simple pathos that would have drawn a grunt from a wooden Indian tobacco sign almost. He said “There come along here after de war a white man with hair oil for a dollar and a half, what he said would make a cullud pusson’s hair as straight as white foax. I tuck it, and”—here he passed his hand over the smoothe [sic] pate—“I haint had any hair since. But I was saterfied, any how, kase it didn’t take my character away; and I’d rather have character any day than hair.” Who blames Jim Henry Dance for laughing! The g. g. did not. Mr. E. B. Mills, the manager of “Arcola,” proved a hospitable host, and spared no pains in showing us his magnificent crops, and in explaining the system under which the convicts are worked. But “Through Sugarland” in next week’s OLD CAPITOL will present all this in the proper place. We dined at the state farm—“Harlem”—with Major T. J. Goree, superintendent of Penitentiaries, and M.R.J. Ransom, the manager, from the former of whom much interesting data was secured, which also will figure in the write up of the sugar interest next week. From Arcola we passed down the fertile expanse to Sandy Point, took dinner with Capt. and Mrs. G. K. Cessus, interviewed Messrs. James Tankersly, J. P. Freeman, and J. Riley Smith; and drove to the elegant residence of Mr. J. Lang, some two miles distant from the Point. Mr. Lang accorded us a hearty welcome, and showed us through his magnificent house, or palace, which perhaps cannot be excelled in all Texas. The foundation is laid in everlasting cement, the walls are of brick, and the wood work all of no less durable cypress. An admirable water works system supplies every room with cistern water, which flows through the piping upon turning a faucet; and electric bells, supplied by a battery in the basement, furnishes a medium of communication with the least of possible exertion. Heavy Turkish curtains of exquisite workmanship, and elaborate design, drape the large windows, which consists of but a single pane of glass. In passing through the spacious chambers the feet are half buried in the velvety Brussells [sic] carpets; and magnificent mirrors reflect the passing form from head to foot. Luxurious chairs, hid in the wealth of yielding cushions, invite to repose. A wash stand alone represented $90, while a wardrobe and bedstead was the quid pro quo for $225. The fluted pillars supporting the porticoes were cast in England; and the brass fire-dogs, tongs, and shovel, were turned out in New York expressly for this edifice, which surpasses that of the poet who dreamed he dwelt in marble halls. Yet Mr. Land said he felt sometimes as if, perhaps, he had committed an error in rearing this stately pile; for, alas, he is a bachelor! The breezes which come and go disturb no feminine drapery, and their sigh of mournful wailing is interrupted never by those sweet, low snatches of song from woman’s lips, which half redeems the consequences of the fall occasioned by her perversity. If this bohemian was Mr. Lang he would accept perversity worlds without end to secure the presence of a daughter of Eve, who after all was not half as mean as Adam. Mr. Lang gave much credit to Messrs. T. M. Jones & Co., Houston, who executed all of the fancy wood work, which can not be excelled by any architect in the state, or the south. We spent the night at the Darrington plantation, Mr. John H. Craig, manager, assisted by Mr. C. H. Winstead. Mr. Mat Aycock is the sergeant in charge of the convicts; his estimable lady, daughter of Mr. Hagemier of Columbia, keeps house, for this reason Darrington presents a more home-like appearance than any other of the big sugar estates. Nooned Sunday with Mr. Boatnet, who is a shareholder in the Topolovampo [Topolobampo] colonization scheme on the Mexican Pacific coast; to which Eden he thinks of moving some time. Passed the night with Mr. Sam Uzzell, and formed the acquaintance of two of the OLD CAP’s little correspondents: Master Willie, and Miss Ideth
Uzzell, two bright, and pretty children, who are instructed at home by Miss McMahon, of Houston. Mr. Uzzell lives on Chocolate, seven miles from Alvin, and about the same distance from Sandy Point. This portion of old Brazoria County is prairie, and adapted to the breeding [sic] of livestock, hence farming is incidental only. From Mr. Uzzell’s we drove over a good road to

**Fair Alvin**

Loveliest village of the plain, where the cooling sea breezes fan night and day the brow, where sickness comes not, and where the musquitoe is a stranger. Mr. S. N. Richardson, who saw the elephant under Stonewall Jackson, during the late unpleasantness, is the post master, and railroad agent. Mr. W. Z. Weems has a store, and runs the hotel, the bill of fare always comprising vegetables in profusion. Mr. E. H. Thomas, a live energetic business man, and withal one of the best in the world, carries on a wholesale slaughtering business, and supplies the Galveston market with beef, mutton and pork. Market gardening, and the dairy are marked features of Alvin life. We inspected the premises of Mr. Lafayette Winston, a description of which answers for the others. Mr. W. has a house in Galveston managed by his son for the sale of the products of his garden and dairy. He raises from 350 to 400 bushels of onions per acre, which sells for from $1.50 to $3.00 per bushel. Potatoes, and all the vegetables known to the latitude do well; and his milk, butter, chickens, and eggs always find a ready market, as do melons and strawberries. Mr. Winston has an attachment to the wind-mill which keeps a flow of cool water through a large square bottom trough in which the pans of milk are set, and at the same time runs the churn and washing machine. Miss Winston was the presiding genius of the tidy dairy and looked every inch a queen at her honorable post. Little Mordella Munson, a younger daughter, took pride in showing her pets, which were a brood of young ducks. The Le Conta pear flourishes about Alvin as nowhere else, and will ere long prove a remunerative crop. Mr. Richardson finds remuneration in shipping Cape Jassmines [sic] to St. Louis. Alvin butter commands 45 cts at all times, Irish potatoes $1.50; Cabbage 10 cts per head; poultry 30 cts, eggs 30 cts Mr. Winston sells daily 33 gallons of milk in Galveston at 35 cts per gallon; 11 gallons of buttermilk at 30 cts per gallon; 30 lbs of butter per week. Others engaged in gardening and the dairy are: H. Crain, Luther Kuucknele, A. B. Webster, J. W. Durant, J. B. Boone; Pat Jack, Julian Skeels, H. M. Jack, J. W. Cox, James Crier, A. J. Cooke, and James F. Ferry. Mr. C.P.S. Graham is the carpenter. The Santa Fe railroad conveys to Galveston daily from Alvin 40,000 gallons of water for the use of the company, the artesian well water not answering. Alvin is unquestionably destined to become a point of no little importance; for it would be hard to find a healthier place to live. Leaving Alvin, we brought up at nightfall at Mr. Godfried Moller’s on Austin Bayou; and heard some excellent piano music rendered by Mrs. Moller and her daughter Miss Maggie. Nooned with Capt. J. G. Kreit on Bastrop Bayou. The Captain has an experience on the Texas coast covering a period of over forty years, and knows every land-mark from Sabine Pass to Campeachy [sic]; and he says the mouth of the Brazos is the place for the harbor by all odds. The old veteran will live to see his anticipations verified. Tuesday night found us snugly ensconsed [sic] in the hospitable home of Mr. W. D. Hoskins, and smoking his meerschaum pipe, which fifty years ago was picked up on the beach by his father. It doubtless was connected with some marine disaster, but its history is one of the secrets of the sea. There is quite a neighborhood at Phair, composed of some of the best citizens of Brazoria county. Mr. Hoskins took quite an interest in extending the Old Cap’s circulation, and most of the gentlemen subscribed. Mr. Hoskins is the proprietor of a princely estate, known as the Montevideo Pasture, comprising some 50,000 acres, stocked
with cattle, and horses. Bastrop and Austin bayous form his fence on the west, Chocolate creek on the east, and Galveston bay on the south. Mr. Hoskins, like Abou ben Adhem, is one who loves his fellow man; and possession in his case practically means that he is seized of so much of the common stock, which he holds in trust for the benefit of the needy. May his tribe increase, and may he long live to enjoy the pleasure of doing good. We made it to Mr. Thomas Watson’s by the next night, where a hospitable welcome awaited us. Mr. Jamison was engaged in branding, and had been in the saddle continuously for twelve days. Mr. Jamison is a citizen of whom any county might feel proud and all Brazoria needs is more like him. At Phair we visited the apiary of Mr. John W. Bass, who was absent in Galveston. He had all the modern appliances, rendering his keeping profitable, and may certainly succeed in his chosen avocation, if he sticks to it long enough. Rev. Savage, of the Methodist church, is the resident minister at Phair; and Messrs. G. Cox, H. Erheart, Robert Moore, H. Evans, R. B. Cannan, J. Perry, C. O. Brown, John Wohrly, J. W. Cannan, Cass F. Holt, and W. W. Hoskins, who is the post master, are among the leading citizens. Thursday noon found us dining with Mr. S. E. Campell, the courteous and efficient manager of Retrieve plantation. Mr. Campell has a hog which, when fat, he thinks will kick the beam at 1300 pounds. In this case it is corn, and not blood, as the grunter was originally a waif picked up in the woods. Recently a party who wished to exhibit his hog at the Dallas fair, offered Mr. Campell $50 for him. But the manager of Retrieve says that the Goliath of swine shall feast and fatten to his natural doom,

Right on the Brazos farm, as remote from towering hills,  
As from Dallas prizes, and the constructive ills.

In conclusion it may be said that we found the crops good everywhere; and the yield will be much larger than last year.

—Old Capitol, June 23, 1888

“Protracted meeting” was an early term for a revival meeting. The “poet who dreamed he dwelt in marble halls” is an allusion to Balfe’s opera *The Bohemian Girl*. Abou Ben Adhem is a character in Leigh Hunt’s poem of the same name, famous for the line “may his tribe increase.”

A Trip through Sugarland  
Convicts at Work  
Armed Guards, and Blood Hounds on the Qui Vive  
Scenes, Notes, and Statistics of a Big Industry

We made the state farm, or “Harlem,” two miles from Harlem Switch on the Sunset railroad just in time for dinner, and esteemed ourselves fortunate in meeting there Major T. J. Goree, state superintendent of penitentiaries, who imparted much valuable information. Mr. R. J. Ransom, well known in Brazoria county as an excellent gentleman, and thorough-going, practical planter, is the manager, and also sergeant in charge of the convicts. Harlem comprises 2500 acres, of which 1750 are in cultivation. Last year, which was the first as the property of the state, there were in cultivation: 100 acres of cane, 300 of corn, and 800 of cotton. The present plant is distributed as follows: 450 acres in corn, 500 in cane, and 800 in cotton. The corn crop last year was sufficient for home consumption, and 600 bales of cotton were gathered. It is estimated that the present cotton crop will pay all expenses of the plantation, leaving the entire cane crop clear.
for profit. This it is thought will approximate one million pounds of sugar, and 1000 barrels of molasses. The force comprises 120 convicts, old men, boys, the maimed and refuse generally. In addition to the foregoing it should be said that there is a large garden on the place, and that the convicts are abundantly fed on wholesome food, and the same will apply to all of the sugar plantations visited. Major Goree is causing a large sugar house to be built, the brick for which are made on the spot, of dry dirt, by an ingenious machine which turns them out as fast as a quick man can receive them. There are 30 white convicts engaged in the work. A railway has been built from the sugar house to Harlem switch, a one mile, two foot gauge, on which a single mule draws easily a load of 10,000 pounds. All this, including the cars, was turned out of the state penitentiaries. Major Goree estimates that the cost of the necessary improvement at about $50,000, to defray which the legislature munificently appropriated $2,500. It was well for the state that a man was superintendant who would dare to assume the heavy responsibility of it, as Major Goree was; for it was necessary to make this improvement to render available what had already been invested; and thus not only prevent additional indebtedness but secure to the state a permanent source of revenue. It an abundant yield is had the present year Major Goree’s action will be applauded; but if the reverse should occur alas, too many would make success the test of merit. Harlem cost the state ten dollars per acre, which was “as cheap as dirt.” An additional block of 200 acres is contracted for, which naturally attach to the place. We visited the hospital, which was clean, and well ventilated. There were several patients, sore eyes being the complaint. The bake oven, kitchen, and office, were all passed in review. In the latter is kept a register in which every article of state property is carefully noted. A number of “trusties” were coming and going; they occupy enviable positions in the estimation of the miserable in the gangs. All wore the regulation stripe. A silent guard was on each side of the new sugar house; and the blood hounds were conveniently near. They are on the trail of the fugitive in five minutes after he “jumps”; and it would avail him not[h]ing to have the wings of the wind, and superhuman endurance to baffle that infernal instinct which makes a human, in the image of God, “game” for the keen scented beagle. Vulpine cunning can not baffle these animals, and a trail is “cold” indeed which they refuse to take. The following was the correct convict record on June 1st.—

3300 convicts; 1400 working without the walls, on the railroads, plantations, etc. The escapes from the latter from January 1st to May 31st were 16; during same period from Huntsville, and camp, none; Rusk, and camp, 7; from railroads 6; farms, 3. The following is the convict distribution: Huntsville, 720; Rusk, 332; Ball, Hutchings & Co. 5; P. J. Willis & Bro. 57; E. H. Cunningham, 145; Ellis, 145; Harlem, 174. In Waller county Col. Ellis has 34, Brazos co. Rogers & Hill, 123, Burleson co. H. K. White, 60; Robertson co. H. R. Hearne, 59, H. L. Lewis, 123; W. W. Watts, 50; R. J. White, 82; Ed Wilson, 56; Wm. Hearne, 136; M. O. P. Railroad, 144; Sunset R. R., 166; H. T. C. R. R., 99. So far as observed the convicts were exceptionally well treated here. Both Major Goree, and Mr. Ransom always addressed them kindly; and the Harlem experiment, it is thought, presents at last the true solution of the convict problem. The high rate at which they were hired to individual planters works an injury all round; for, to save himself, the planter must get all the work possible of the convict. It would prove much better policy, and humane, to hire the convicts at eight dollars and exact fewer hours of labor daily. It should not be lost sight of that the design of the legislature in instituting penitentiaries is as much with the view of reclaiming the vicious as to punish the criminal.

A reduction in the hire to not exceeding eight dollars per month is imperatively demanded. From Harlem we drove to “Satartia,” the princely estate of Col. Ellis; and found Mr. C. W. Riddick, who is both manager and sergeant, at his post. From him we learned that the
plantation embraced 4000 acres of which 1000 were in cane, 1500 cotton, and 700 corn. The yield last year was: 1,750,000 pounds of sugar, 100,000 bushels of corn, and 600 bales of cotton.

Sugarland
The magnificent principality of Col. E. H. Cunningham, who was one of the gamest of the game cocks who wore the gray, and chief of staff to Gen. Hood, contains 3000 acres in cultivation, of which 1600 is in tropical can, 700 in sorghum, 500 corn, 250 oats. The yield last season was 3,000,000 pounds of sugar, 3,300 barrels of molasses, 24,000 bushels corn, 20,000 bushels of oats. The sugar house, an immense building, 300 x 50 feet, was a scene of industrious activity as some 50 mechanics were at work making the changes necessary to introduce the cutters, batteries, evaporators, etc. for the making of sugar by the diffusion process. This change is effected at a cost of $50,000; the new machinery consisting of a diffusion battery of sixteen cells, 2 tons horse capacity each of “chips” prepared for diffusion. The battery is guaranteed to diffuse fully 300 tons of cane per day, minimum; also a large double “effect” for evaporation, guaranteed capacity 100,000 pounds of sugar per day; two vacuum pans, capacity 120,000 pounds of sugar per day. If the diffusion battery [sic] proves successful, of which there can be no doubt Col. Cunningham will discard his other mill and place in another battery of equal capacity and work the whole sugar crop from the one house, the cane being brought in on cars, there being five miles of permanent tract [track], 24 inch gauge, and two and a half miles of portable tract. He has 300 cars in use. This house, when completed will be the most perfect sugar house in the south, of the largest capacity, with every appurtenance for making the best of sugar. He will commence operations on the sorghum crop July 1st; and will work up two crops of this before the tropical cane is matured. The experiment has been tried, and pronounced a success on the plantation of ex-governor Warmouth, of La.; and at Ft. Scott, Kansas, where 112 lbs. of “first” sugar was made per ton, and 23 pounds of second. For want of portable railroad track last season, Col. Cunningham lost a thousand tons of cane, which froze in the field, the ground being too miry to haul with waggons [sic]. Said the Colonel: Say to your farmer friends that “diffusion” is going to prove a grand success, and of inestimable benefit to the agricultural class, as two crops annually of sorghum can be grown all south of Dallas; provided the “Star eyed goddess of free trade” as Henry Waterson calls the chief imp in the category of his vagary, does not recklessly shatter the sugar bowl. Mr. Wm. Thacher, near Sugarland has 175 acres in cane; he makes only molasses, but will increase his plant to go into sugar next season. Providence plantation is owned, and managed by Mrs. Bettie B. Davis, who has 100 acres in cane, 200 in corn, and 150 in cotton. She made last year 155 hogsheads of sugar, 4,000 bushels of corn, and 25 bales of cotton. Providence lies on the line of Ft. Bend and Brazoria counties. Mrs. Davis has shown what woman can do, as the place was encumbered with debt when she took hold a few years ago, the most of which she has paid off, and will enjoy clear sailing in the future, as she deserves. May success attend her efforts, and bounteous plenty be her store always. Mr. John Lang has 600 acres in cultivation; 75 in cane, 300 cotton, and 250 corn. He made last year 130 hogsheads of sugar, 275 barrels of syrup, 5000 bushels corn, and 180 bales of cotton.

Mr. James Tankersly has 500 acres in cultivation, 100 in cane, 200 in cotton, and 200 in corn. He made last season 225 hogsheads of sugar; 100 bales of cotton, and 7000 bushels of corn.

Mr. William Masterson has 500 acres in cultivation; 40 in cane, 250 in cotton, and 210 in corn. Made last year 86 hogshead[s] of sugar, 200 bales cotton, and 7000 bushels corn.
The Darrington, P. J. Willis & bro. Galveston, proprietors; John H. Craig, manager, C. H. Winstead, assistant, Nat Aycock, sergeant in charge of convicts; comprises 1700 acres in cultivation, of which 566 are in cane, 566 corn, 566 cotton. Made last year: 900,000 pounds of sugar, 450 barrels of molasses, 176 bales of cotton, 12,000 bushels corn, 3000 bushels sweet potatoes, and 30,000 pounds of pork. Mr. Aycock takes pride in showing the garden, of which he is “boss;” it contains ten acres, and a profusion of vegetables.

Willow Glen; B. B. Turner manager; 500 acres in cultivation; cane 150, cotton 100, corn 250. Made last year 222 hogsheads of sugar, 450 barrels of molasses, 50 bales of cotton, 8000 bushels corn.

China Grove, Mr. John Juliff manager, 500 acres in cultivation, of which 115 is in cane, 200 cotton, 200 corn. Made last year 100 hogsheads sugar, 150 barrels molasses, 140 bales cotton.

Retrieve, Ball, Hutching & co. proprietors; G. O. Jarvis manager, J. E. Campbell assistant manager, Mr. Westall sergeant in charge of convicts, 950 acres in cultivation, 400 in cane, 350 in corn, 180 in cotton. Made last season: 680,500 pounds sugar, 712 barrels molasses, 23 bales cotton, and 18,000 bu. corn. Eleven acres on Retrieve last year yielded 55 hogshead[s] of sugar; a record which it is believed has never been surpassed in the history of sugar making.

ARCOLA,
Mr. J.H.B. House proprietor and E. B. Mills manager, and sergeant in charge of convicts, lies in Fort Bend county, two miles south of Duke station on the Santa Fe railroad. Has 15000 acres in cultivation; of which 550 is in cane, 500 cotton, 450 corn. Made last year 900,000 pounds of sugar, 500 bbls. molasses, 56 bales of cotton, and 17,000 bushels of corn. Barnside, also the property of Mr. House, has 300 acres planted in cotton, and 200 in corn. Riverside, an appanage of Arcola, has 60 acres planted in cotton, and the remainder in Johnson Grass. The cotton crop was almost, a failure last season, as, owing to the drouth, a stand was not secured until the first of June. The worms also destroyed much; hence the light yield of this staple reported. Upon the richest soil in the world and with the most propitious seasons, the planters complain that they can make no money at either cane, or cotton. Where such a condition exists as to agriculture, the basis of all prosperity, there must be something wrong. What that is the OLD CAPITOL will not undertake to say. It is a careless, perhaps a reckless, system of political economy that allows vital industrial interests to languish; and the Statesman who will point out the remedy will win the veneration of his countrymen. Upon all these plantations we found the most genuine hospitality; and our drive through Sugarland will remain a pleasant reminiscence as long as memory remains true to the promptings of the soul.

—Old Capitol, June 30, 1888

Matagorda
Rich Lands, Hospitable People
Wreck, Ruins, and Hope Eternal

With the OLD CAP’s fidus Achates, Mr. J. H. Dance, ye pencil shover set out Monday, June 2nd, for Matagorda. The first night was spent with Captain J. Calvin McNeill, on the Banard [San Bernard], only four miles from Brazoria. Mr. McNeill is a representative young man of the plucky, enterprising “New South.” With his brother Mr. C. P. McNeill, he
commenced a few years ago with the “odds and ends” of an estate wreck by the storms of war, and through industry, good judgment, and indomitable will, the brothers have secured a competency; Captain McNeill having in addition to his Brazoria county property an extensive livestock ranch in Crosby county for which he was offered $80,000 a few years ago. Mr. C. P. McNeill is one of the largest and most prosperous cotton planters of the county, and resides some four miles lower down the Bernard. Captain J. C. McNeill is chief of the “Bernard Rifles,” a crack cavalry company composed of some of the best young men of the county. A large lawn in front of the captain’s residence affords them an excellent parade ground. We found the captain a genial, whole-souled man, as true to correct principle as the needle to the pole, and only excelled in hospitality by his most estimable lady. At the supper table we were confronted by some fifteen ruddy cheeked juveniles, ranging in years from one to twelve and were about in inquire if these were the “Bernard Rifles,” when Mrs. McNeill informed us that the happy little ones represented three families. Captain McNeill informed us that he would take stock in the Brazoria Caney & West Texas railroad enterprise to the amount of 500 acres of valuable land; and if others would encourage the commendable project in a similar liberal spirit, it would be rushed through to completion in a very brief while, and prove the salvation of the richest, and most neglected portion of Texas. Departing from the hospitable mansion of Captain McNeill, Lieutenant C. K. Reese smuggled a big watermelon into the buggy, which later on proved to be exactly the right melon in the right place. Passing the old Jordan place, we gathered luscious ripe figs from our seat in the vehicle, and mused upon the transitory nature of terrestrial affairs in the midst of this once princely plantation, now abandoned, and retrograding fast to a state of nature again. We found Col. Ed De Laney, and his clerk Mr. C. Rippe at the store of the former, and “swapped a few” with them as we discussed the merits of a watermelon, which the colonel said was worth three dollars, or more. Mr. De Laney runs a plantation in conjunction with his store, and was proud of his excellent crop. Linnville Bayou was crossed in the early afternoon, and we were splitting the mud of old Matagorda. Linnville derives its name from the following circumstance, so Mr. Dance, who is a living encyclopedia of old Texas traditions, informed us: Many years ago Capt. Duncan and others were engaged in surveying the virgin wild, when one of the party named Linnville suddenly died. He was buried on the bank of the turbid stream which perpetuates his name, and Mr. Dance says the cedar posts which marks the spot of his solitary mound were standing a few years ago, and may be yet.

We dined late of the afternoon with Mr. H. W. Bowie, a most hospitable gentleman, and prosperous planter. In fact we saw no better crops than those of Mr. Harris Bowie, Captain J. K. White, and Mr. P. M. Bowie. Mr. Phillip Bowie runs a store in connection with his plantation; and says the long, and grievously felt want in that section is a railroad. Passed the night with Hon. J. K. White who once represented this district acceptably in the legislature. Capt. White grew to manhood on the same stamping ground with the writer and Dr. E. S. Weisiger, on the beautiful, limpid Guadalupe, but went a soldiering at the first sound of the tocsin in the famous Terry rangers, and through the death and disabling of all his company officers at Shiloah was placed in command of the same; a post of hazzardous [sic] honor which he filled with fidelity unimpaired to the end. At “Gibson” Mr. B. E. Cannan, an excellent young man, has a store, and is prospering. Here, too, we met Dr. J. W. Benton, of the same family tree as “Old Bullion,” who informed us that he had exploded by practical test the barnacled idea that a white man could not cultivate Caney soil, as, with improved implements, he has the present year cultivated, alone, fifty acres of cotton; and it is luxuriant, and as clean of weeds as mi ladi’s boudoir. Dr. Benton also has an apple orchard, the trees of which are laden with an excellent quality of fruit. In
addition to the bucolics the doctor practices medicine over a large area, and has plenty of time to spare in observance of the social amenities. It may not prove uninteresting to some of our fair readers, and the OLD CAP. has not a few, to be informed that the doctor is still heart-whole and fancy free, and that this is leap year—that quadrennial Godsend to timid bachelors. Culver is a post-office and store near “Gibson,” adjacent to which a number of thrifty, industrious colored men have opened farms on the fertile black hogswallow prairie, the soil of which is four or five feet deep; and their crops will compare favorably with those on Caney. The yield on this prairie land is an average of one bale to the acre, and thirty bushels of corn. Many practical planters declare that the prairie farms enjoy not a few advantages over the river plantations, and are, on the whole, more desirable. This class of prairie soil extends to the bay, and we saw excellent corn and cotton growing right down to the coast line. These lands are now cheap, and offer greater inducements to immigrants than any section on the American continent. A railroad through here would speedily settle the country, and their industry, seconded by bountiful nature, would guarantee profitable earnings; and as the people are willing to donate lands sufficient upon which to raise money to build and equip a road, it seems strange that the iron horse is not now snorting his progress through the garden spot of Texas. But manifest destiny insures all this, and it will come with the opening of the mouth of the Brazos to commerce. Godspeed the day, and waft over prolific Matagorda the wave of propitious breezes! The only facility now possessed for the moving of crops on Caney is by wagons to Columbia, or to Capt. McNeill’s on the Bernard, where schooners receive the freight and bear it to Galveston. In Buckner’s Prairie reside Messrs. Ira W. and C. A. Spencer, who own considerable landed property in Matagorda, and also some valuable mining lands near Scranton, Pa. They are spending the present summer in the north. Here, too, resides Dr. C. H. Williams, who in addition to his large medical practice superintends the cultivation of a large plantation in corn and cotton. He also owns a plantation on the Brazoria side of the line. Dr. Williams is a live, public spirited man, and says he is ready to do his part to secure the railroad. Passed the old Shepherd place at noon, and in the beautiful grove where once the stately mansion stood herds of horned cattle were chewing the cud of contentment in the shade; Cape Jassamines, and myrtle, once the recipients of attention from fair hands now mouldering in the grave, struggled with noxious weeds for a precarious existence: Commentary no. 2 upon the nothingness of the worm which we call man:

Out, out are the lights, out all,
The play ends with the curtain’s sad fall,
And the actors all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling affirm
That the cast was “The Tragedy Man,”
And the hero the Conqueror Worm!

Col. J. B. Hawkins has an elegant residence located in the midst of a 30,000 acre pasture a few miles further on the Matagorda road. It is surrounded by a charming grove of forest trees planted by the colonel, who was absent from home, on his Caney plantation. But we found the latch string on the outside, and Mr. Frank Hawkins and his charming young wife, née Rugeley, ready to tender a kind hospitality. Col. Hawkins also has an apple orchard, now laden with fruit. Mr. Frank Hawkins has a steam yacht, on board of which he entertains his friends in excursions on Lake Austin. From the observatory above the mansion Matagorda, sixteen miles distant, was plainly visible. Mrs. Hawkins has a penchant for poultry, and some three or four hundred answer
her call for the distribution of feed. Mr. Hawkins represents the colored element as being perfectly quiet, orderly, and contented.

**MATAGORDA**

We pulled into the venerable burgh late of the afternoon, and contemplated its wearied, and somewhat dilapidated appearance with feelings akin to one who watches beside the death-bed of a very dear friend, and notes the steady decline of the invalid’s strength. From early boyhood Matagorda had been a familiar sound to our ears; and a visit in former times would have amply realized all the play of fancy as to wealth, refinement, and prosperity. But now—I felt like the awakened knight who threaded his way through the darkened banquet hall after the last of the guests had departed, and felt like exclaiming to Sheriff Wadsworth, who promptly arrested us on a-lighting:

Shrine of the Mighty, can it be,
That this is all remains of thee!
Yet in thy lineaments I trace
What time can strengthen, not efface.

Mr. Young C. Burkhart, the OLD CAP’s representative on that heath, took us to see the venerable Joseph Yeamans, who was born in 1810, and landed at Matagorda—then just as it came from the hands of the Creator—in 1829. He came in the Little Zoe, Captain Alden, with fifty other immigrants. Only two white men preceded them: John Burnham and Captain James Cummings. The Carancua Indians were then lords of the soil, and lived principally on the Peninsula, obtaining food by shooting fish and other game with bows and arrows. They were men of gigantic stature, and the length of each warrior’s bow corresponded with his own height. Among these original fifty Mr. Yeamans recalled the names of Benjamin and Elias Weightman, Asa Yeamans, Henry and Noah Griffith. The first merchant was H. Grasmayer. Elias Weightman owned the league on which the town was built. Previous to the 1854 storm, the era of Matagorda’s greatest prosperity, the principal business men were: Sam Brigham, Sam Powell, John Ward, Capt. John Duncan, Bob Williams, Col. J. H. Hawkins, Daniel Rawls, McCoy, Amos Rawls, Kingston, Capt. E. S. Rug[e]ly. Steamers used to come to Dog Island, one and a half miles from town. The Little Zoe drew four and a half feet of water, and sailed right up the river without difficulty. Now schooners drawing three feet are compelled to anchor a half mile out. The river is fast filling up the bay. On the bar at the mouth of the Colorado there is not exceeding fifteen inches of water. The bay is muddy, and the water fresh enough to drink. It is only a question of time when it will all be *terra firma* to the Peninsula. Judge Rainey says when he came to Matagorda in 1852 the town was a scene of bustle and business. Cotton was brought down the Colorado on barges and steamboats, and found a ready market in Matagorda. The planters all bought their supplies here, and many had elegant residences in town, the society of which was characterized by wealth, refinement and hospitality. The storm of 1854 was a severe blow to the city; but it would have sustained that, and the scarce less severe gale of 1875. It was the railroads opening up new channels of transportation and business that clipt the wings of the proud municipality in the moment of its highest flight; and perhaps railroads may restore its lost prosperity. *Quien sabe?* Stranger things have happened.

We drove from Matagorda to Mr. E. S. Rug[e]ly’s Friday, and thence to Mr. John Mathews’ store. This is Caney post office, and Mr. M. is the polite and efficient postmaster. This point will doubtless be a salient angle on the Brazoria, Caney & West Texas railroad line, and consequently a strategic business place of considerable importance. An extension of the line south and west, and perhaps north, will be imperatively demanded. Mr. Mathews is prospering in his business, and no man is more deserving the smiles of fortune than he. Spent the night with Judge Rainey, one of the most estimable men that it was ever our pleasure to meet. He served the people of Matagorda two terms as county judge, and so acceptably that his administration is looked back to as an example worthy of emulation. The judge last year saved bacon enough to last him three years, and this without feeding any corn, so abundant was the meat. At Mr. James Rainey’s we had the pleasure of meeting our much loved first teacher, Mrs. Hugh Stapp, née Miss Lizzie Rice, at whose knee we solved the intricate problem of “A.B.C.” That was a long time ago, but “Miss Lizzie” looked almost as young as when a pretty young school marm she wielded with dexterous aim the fatal slipper upon the corporeity of refractory urchins. Deal gently with her, O, Time! is the prayer of him who perhaps collided more frequently with the slipper than any one else. Called at the store of Mr. Frank Jones, and talked Brazos harbor improvement, and railroad for all they were worth, but failed to educate him up to the sticking point. Frank is almost as doubtful as was St. Thomas in regard to recognizing the risen Savior. But he’ll come round all right when pilots cry cut thirty feel of water on the Brazos bar, and that will not be long. Spent a very pleasant hour with Capt. E. S. Rugeley, whom his friends are mentioning in connection with the county and district judgships. Capt. Rugeley belongs to that grand old South so eloquently eulogised by Col. A. W. Terrell at the Capitol dedication, and his hosts of friends are not disposed to wait until after death to measure him;

Said a king of a prince laid low,
‘Taller he seems in death’;
And the words now are true as then,
For it’s after death that we measure men.
In Captain Rugeley’s case the man would honor the office, and he has nothing to fear from an ante mortem measurement.

In conclusion it may be said that Matagorda county comprises as rich a body of land, as any section of similar territorial extent in the world; and the only thing wanting is railroad communication with the outside world to induce immigration, and to move the crops; and as sufficient land will be readily subscribed to build and equip the road, the Brazoria, Caney, and West Texas railway may be regarded as a certainty of the near future.

—Old Capitol, July 14, 1888

The phrase “fidus Achates” (faithful Achates) refers to the faithful companion of Aeneas in Virgil’s Aeneid. “Old Bullion” was the nickname of Thomas Hart Benton, a U.S. senator from Missouri prior to the Civil War. The lines of poetry beginning “Out, out” are an approximate rendition of the last stanza of Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Conqueror Worm.” The lines beginning “Shrine of the Mighty” are two couplets from Lord Byron’s epic poem “The Giaour.” The last quote is an approximation of lines from “Our Heroic Dead” by James Barron Hope.

The Costumes

So far as it is able, the OLD CAP presents a list of the costumes worn at the ball the other evening:

The Bride: White rep and brocaded silk; diamond ornaments.
Miss Emilie Harris: Pink surah, white passementre [passementerie] trimming; opals.
Miss Christie Smith: Combination white satin and albatross; ruby ornaments.
Miss Buena Sweeny: Pink plush and moire silk en train.
Miss Zula Winstead: Black lace; diamonds.
Miss Ida Disney: Black silk; jet ornaments.
Miss Nellie Crews: Cream surah, and Henrietta cloth.
Miss Laura Brooks: Black lace, and old gold plush trimmings.
Miss Katie Minard: Black silk, with passementaire trimming.
Mrs. Mary Crews: Pink satin, black lace overdress.
Mrs. Jessie Seabourne: Cream cashmere; ruby velvet trimming.
Mrs. Lucy Underwood: Cream cashmere.
Mrs. Clint Duff: Black silk, silver braid ornaments.
Mrs. Nannie Ogburn: Tan colored drap d’Alma.
Miss Annie L. Weems: Cream cashmere and lace; natural flowers.

FROM BRAZORIA
Miss Mary Masterson: Pink surah; diamonds.
Miss Terese Bryan: Cream silk.
Miss Lou Sharp: Crimson polka dot cloth, and satin.
Miss Berta Weisinger: Pink silk, and white lace.
Mrs. Walter Millican: Cream lace and albatross.
Miss Bird Turner: Black lace, with pink trimming.
Mrs. Eloise Martin: Nile green albatross.
Miss Mary Cochran: Blue Albatross.
Strike, But Hear!

Columbia, Aug. 4, 1889

Col. M. S. Munson:

Dear Colonel,

I am informed that Mr. Angle has been industriously publishing a libel, or a series of libels against me, and caring for your good opinion, I beg to be allowed to submit the following unvarnished statement, which covers all my transactions with the persons of the Brazos River Channel & Dock Co. When I came to Brazoria county in October 1887, I was ignorant that any steps were being taken to improve the harbor at the mouth of the river, and did not know that there were two persons of the human race calling themselves W. M. D. Lee, and G. W. Angle. When the Brazos Bill was introduced into congress, I was requested by Mr. Lee, through Mess. Shapard and Stevens, to do what I could, looking to secure its passage, with the assurance that I should not be forgotten. Later, Mr. Angle called at my office and gave me a list of addresses of persons to whom he wished copies of the paper sent.

Very soon after the bill was passed, Mr. Lee wrote me as follows:

Leavensworth [sic], Kas. Sept. 1, ’88

Victor M. Rose, Esq.:

Dear Sir: Yours of August 1st rec’d sometime since, but as the bill was at that time awaiting the signature of the president, of course I had nothing to say, and as to that I have but very little now. We will not move toward commencing work until we get our land matters in shape, which may take some time; and then the bill in its present shape is not very flattering to us; it has many things in it objectionable, as it finally passed; and had but very little in it for us to rejoice over. We can simply take all chances, and if it is a success the government will take it and pay us its value. By value it is held they can take the works and condemn them, appraise them, and if we are satisfied, well and good; if not we will have to get permission by an act of congress, if we can, to sue the Government in the court of claims, to get our just dues. The bill, like nearly all contracts with the government, is all on one side like a jug handle; they have first fully guarded themselves, and leave us to do the same for ourselves. Of course if we succeed in getting the money to do the work and succeed in getting sufficient depth of water, our lands will be valuable; as well will all the lands in Brazoria and adjoining counties, but to reach this result, if successful, look at the amount of money we have to invest in the face of a predicted failure by the government engineers. But we have faith in [the] final result of the experiment, and willing to put in more money to demonstrate it. But looking to the immense advantage that will accrue to all the property holders in that country we feel they should share with us the risk or pledge to us a fair bounty for the success of the undertaking. It has been suggested to us that the people of that county would be willing to offer us a bounty to do this work, on a basis of guaranteed results. Of course we do not ask anything on any other basis. Our bill calls for 18 feet of water and on that basis it will cost nearly a million dollars. A tax on any amount of commerce to pay interest and repairs on the amount would be so oppressive that shipping could not patronize us. This is another thing that should be considered; and is another reason why we should have some aid in constructing the work. I give these to you as suggestions to think over. Mr. Ferguson is going to

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Houston in a few days, and will go to Brazoria, and Columbia, and I would like you to talk with him fully; also the people there interested in this matter. I would go down and attend to this matter myself with Mr. Ferguson; but I have been under a considerable pressure [in] all the hot weather, and am partially broken down, and am going to my ranch for a short time to recuperate. Mr. Ferguson is as fully interested as myself in this enterprise, and speaks for both of us as well as all others interested. I have written Mr. Angle to meet Mr. F. there also and hope he will be able to be present.

Yours very truly,

W.M.D. Lee

I showed this letter to a number of our leading citizens, all of whom, including Mr. T. B. Yale, expressed themselves as being decidedly opposed to granting Mr. Lee a bounty in lands. I wrote stating this to Mr. Lee. I also said that the people of Brazoria county were poor, and would not be more benefited by the purposed harbor improvement than people elsewhere who were better able to give. I further said to Mr. Lee that I thought his request not unreasonable; that I thought persons in Matagorda county would donate lands liberally upon a guarantee of deepwater and the construction of the B. C. & W. T. railway; and that I would undertake to do all on that line that was possible if he would pay me $500, which amount I estimated would not suffice for much of my actual expenses. But it appears Mr. Lee wanted something for nothing, including my services gratuitously rendered, as I heard nothing more of him. I suppose nine tenths of the people of this county who have called at the office of the OLD CAPITOL since the syndicate commenced work at the mouth of the river have expressed surprise that but one of them had subscribed to the paper, and that that one subscription was the only recognition ever accorded the paper by the syndicate. When Mr. Shelton came in as business manager of the paper we submitted Mr. Angle a proposition to remove the paper to Anglee provided the syndicate would put up a $5,000 plant. Mr. Angle received Mr. Shelton quite graciously, and expressed himself as altogether favorable to the proposition. He said the matter would have to be laid before Mr. Lee for final decision, and suggested that Mr. W. H. Crain, of Cuero, would prove the best medium through which to effect this, because of his influence with Mr. Lee. Mr. Angle cast a lingering glance into vacuity and said: “Mr. Crain was of great service to us in Washington, which we appreciate very highly; and Mr. Crain is now at Cuero paying off mortgages on his property!” This implied in the broadest manner venality on the part of Mr. Crain, which I should be slow to believe; and I give the remark simply to illustrate to what a degree Mr. Angle is afflicted by laxity of jaw. Soon after Mr. Shelton’s interview with Mr. Angle that person appeared in my office one morning; and in a general conversation which ensued, he and I only being present, he took occasion to say that he was a republican and didn’t care who was aware of the fact. He also suggested that the paper should be moved down to Quintana, and the name changed to something expressive of the spirit of the age. I said I was not clearing expenses here, and that I feared I would fare worse at Quintana. Mr. Angle replied with a peculiar grimace: “It would be necessary to run it at a loss for some time but you would be identified with the boom, and at the proper time, move up to the new city, when you would have fair sailing.”

I wrote Mr. Crain substantially what Mr. Angle said; and he readily agreed to lay the matter before Mr. Lee; and subsequently said he had done so; Mr. Lee’s reply being that “he was not in the newspaper business; had nothing to advertise; that at the proper time he would procure
a plant at the proposed (?) new town, and issue a first class morning daily, and own it himself; but Mr. Lee said he always had a bone to throw those who befriended him. As I did not consider myself a dog in need of a bone, I paid no attention to the faint promise. A paragraph in the paper soon after impinging somewhat upon the prerogatives of the sacred elephant at the mouth of the Brazos, brought a letter from my friend Mr. C. A. Leuschner, of Victoria, in which he said: “Why don’t you approach the syndicate? they will give you a $5,000 plant, etc.” What connection Mr. Crain had with this utterance, I know not; though the similarity of the amounts mentioned on this and a former occasion is certainly suggestive of some connection.

Later I became convinced of the fact, patent to the most obtuse, that the syndicate was discriminating against the property of the citizens of Brazoria county, which I exposed in a former editorial in so effective a manner as to cause a flurry in the dove-cote of the keepers of the sacred elephant. But just prior to this I addressed a note to Mr. Angle that the conduct of the syndicate would force me to take issue with it; that I should do so reluctantly; and I offered to sell the business which I have given two years’ of faithful labor to build up, for $1,500; and suggested a gentleman whom I thought would give that amount for it, who would be unobjectionable to the republican circle; and asked if he or the syndicate would indorse for him, or advance for him. This was an honorable tender, on the line of a legitimate business, and constituted more of a quid pro quo than Mr. Lee’s suggestion that I should drop everything of my own, and go to begging lands for him, at my own expense, and without the hope of fee or reward. I also stated in my note to Mr. Angle that if I remained here I would necessarily be of greater injury to him than $1,500 would represent; for I was determined if I remained to advocate the cause of the people of Brazoria county, be the enemy the sacred elephant or the devil! Mr. Angle deigned no reply to my note; but within a half hour after the arrival of the first steamboat from Quintana after my letter went down I was informed by my friend Mr. Jim Henry Dance that it was currently reported at Quintana that I had made an effort to blackmail Mr. Angle. The next morning I wrote and posted a letter to Mr. Angle, purely in a spirit of defiance, about the following tenor: “The OLD CAPITOL is still for ‘sail’,,” price $750; then I quoted his remark to Mr. Shelton about Mr. Crain paying off mortgages with the receipts of infamy, and credited the paragraph: “Reminiscences of G. W. Angle, of the Brazos Republican Caucus and Dock Company.” An idiot would have understood at a glance the spirit which inspired the effusion. Mr. Angle is not an idiot; but he is a libeler. I have not seen a copy of his published libel; for courtesy is not an attribute of the vulgar; but it will not be my fault if it does not cut some figure in a court-at-law at a no distant day. I learn also that he has been blowing quite extensively to the effect that I had made former efforts to blackmail not only him but Mr. W. H. Crain; the statement is infamously false; and I call upon Mr. Crain to affirm or deny the calumny. Mr. Angle will have a chance to prove it. I wish to say for the unprofessionals that the good will and patronage of a paper is its main adjunct in a property estimation. I refer to Rev. J. T. Browning to corroborate the statement if I have not recently been in correspondence with a gentleman at Austin who owns no plant and publishes his paper by contract, but who values it at $450; and this though it has been in existence only a few months. Mr. Angle grows merry over the fact that I stated in my letter that I did not like [to] retire broke, after two years’ of labor. Infamy lies not skin deep under the smile that breaks at another’s misfortune! Mr. Angle backed by a pack of alien adventurers has sought my ruin up on my native heath. But I stand pat on the issue, confident that the gallant gentlemen of Brazoria county will see that I am accorded justice. I ask no more. In my note of defiance to Mr. Angle I concluded with an objurgation upon the “Blue Bellies!” I repeat it. In conclusion I will say that no price could have bought me to act as a stool
pigeon for the Brazos Republican Caucus and Dock Co.; and that I had thought to retire from Brazoria, and have made a remunerative arrangement elsewhere; but if my friends wish me to remain, as they assure me they do, here I’ll stick! I address this letter to you because it was at your instance that I located in Brazoria county, and through you to the people of Brazoria county, whose good opinion I value, assuring you and them that I have not swerved from the path of honor, the libels of the character thug to the contrary notwithstanding.

I neglected to say in the proper place that Mr. Angle informed me in the same interview in which he announced that he was a republican and didn’t care who knew it, that both Judge John Hancock, of Austin, and Hon. Peter Smith, of Fort Worth, were anxious to take stock in the B.R.C.&D. Co.; but he didn’t care to have them in. Peter and John are good men; but they are white men. I congratulate them that they did not get in.

Victor M. Rose

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To Gee Whillikins Angle: The OLD CAP. is still for “sail” whenever you can raise the wind. This is the third effort to blackmail on this line; or is it the fourth? with the lamb-like Crain still to hear from. Stock down; only $350 now.

We learn that a lightweight of the sacred elephant crowd who called in at the OLD CAP’s office the other day had in his pocket a petition for Victor M. Rose to retire from the paper. The Captain was ashamed of his mission, we presume, as he did not show the petition. Why not petition Travis L. Smith to retire from his store? Evidently there is work in the land for the fool-killer yet.

—Old Capitol, August 3, 1889

**Articles in the Myrtle Springs Herald**

Ho! For Van Zandt County!
The Immigrant’s Paradise—Join Us and Prosper with the Prosperous

**The Area**
Is 840 square miles, or 537,600 square acres, being 28 by 30 miles in extent; and not exceeding one-eighth of this vast body of land is now in cultivation. The county is located on the line of the Texas & Pacific railroad, 47 miles east from Dallas. About one-third of its area is fine prairie land, and the other two-thirds is well timbered.

**The Climate**
Is delightful and remarkable for its salubrity. The county is situated between the 32d and 33d degrees of north latitude, and between the 18th and 19th degrees of longitude west from Washington. The severest winter weather rarely interferes with farm work; and, ordinarily, there are but two or three cold spells during the winter season. The thermometer seldom falls to ten degrees Fahrenheit heat. The famous Texas “norther” lasts generally from one to three days, and its effect is now believed to be beneficial—adding to the salubrity of the climate and making it more healthy. The summer season is more pleasant here than further North—the gulf breezes
modify the temperature during the day, rendering it inoppressive and making the nights, in fact, pleasant.

**Timber and Water**

Are both plentiful. The timber and prairie portions of the county are so situated as to make wood reasonably convenient to every household. On the prairies, ponds and tanks furnish water for stock, while in the timber it is furnished by springs and branches. Water for household purposes is easily obtained at little expense, from wells and cisterns. The principal timber is black and post oak, hickory, walnut, ash and elm, with undergrowth that indicates a fertile soil.

**Health**

With reference to a climate so salubrious, it is unnecessary to expatiate on the advantages of its sanitary influences. Being an interior county, the prairie generally high, and but a small portion of the timbered part of the county being low land, it is rendered remarkably healthy; and her mortuary reports would compare favorably with any other county in the State, of the same extent and population. Those parts of the county which are subject to malarial infection are small in extent, and being principally situated on the margin of the Sabine river, which forms the north boundary of the county, but little sickness ever prevails in the county from this cause. The county is entirely free from epidemics of every kind, and, upon the whole, remarkably healthy.

**Soil and Products**

The soil is mostly a dark, sandy loam, very productive, and well adapted to the growth of all kinds of grain. The soil, in its appearance and productive nature, very much resembles the soil of the prairies of Illinois. Every acre of arable land in the county will produce corn, cotton, wheat, rye, oats, tobacco, sorghum, potatoes, (Irish or sweet), apples, peaches, plums, pears, quinces, grapes and figs. Sugar and syrup from the cane is profitably made. In the timbered portions of the county, while vegetables do everywhere. No county in America is better adapted to grape-growing than this county, and they here yield more vintage than grapes grown in almost any other country known.

**Stock**

Stock raising is yet made profitable in this county. Horse, cattle and sheep do well on the prairie, both winter and summer, without feed from the stall. Inasmuch, however, as this county is better adapted to farming and grape-growing, and as stock ranges are better further west, we would advise no one to come to this county to raise stock. Come here to till the soil, for in it lies the prosperity of this country.

**Land**

There are many thousands of acres of good, arable, productive land in the county for sale, all of which is offered at very low prices, to induce immigrants to purchase and settle here. It is a mistaken idea of a great many persons who come to Texas, that a cheap and desirable home cannot be found only in the western portion of the State. Land can be bought as cheap in this county as in the west; society is much better here; it is much more convenient to market—being on the line of the Texas & Pacific railroad; education facilities are much better; the soil is just as productive, and the climate equally salubrious; in fact, immigrants here enjoy many advantages and comforts of which they are unavoidably deprived further west.

**Statistical**

- 765 acres peaches in the county, valued annually at $66,000
- 600 acres of apples, valued at $57,000
178 " plums  6,720
26 " pears  2,600
7,200 acres grape-vines  9,110
1,020 hives of bees, annual extract  3,000
20,000 bales of cotton, $40 per bale  800,000
9,764 horses and mules  478,200
28,662 head of cattle  229,296
64 jacks and jennets  6,000
4,265 head of sheep  7,463
1,434 head of goats  2,154
33,440 hogs  88,000

FINANCES
Permanent county school fund, $60,000, in cash and bonds. Total indebtedness, $8,000; which sum is due the permanent county school fund. Rate of taxation is 67½ cents on the $100. In the county there are 103 schoolhouses.

GRAND SALINE,
in the north east portion of Van Zandt, at which point is an inexhaustible mine of salt, was the first county seat. One plant in operation now puts out 250 bbls. of salt daily; and another recently put in operation will doubtless give an equally favorable return. Iron ore of excellent quality is found in great quantities in the southern portion of the county; also coal.

In the county are the following towns: Wills Point, population 1,500; Canton, 400; Grand Saline; Ben Wheeler, a beautiful new town, situated in the eastern portion of the county; Edom; Martin’s Mill; Edgewood; Walton; Stone Point; Wise; and last, though by no means least, Myrtle Springs, destined to be the prosperous business metropolis of Van Zandt county. Taking all things into consideration, there is not a more desirable county in Texas, nor one that offers more solid inducements to immigrants of moderate means than the old “Free State” of Van Zandt; which shrinks from no comparison, and points to her record with pride. THE HERALD spreads its fame abroad with pride, and we refer the coming immigrant or prospector to the real estate dealers whose business cards appear in these columns.

—Myrtle Springs Herald, August 27, 1891

Therapy of Mineral Waters

We are under obligations to our friend, Dr. E. G. Sewell, for the use of a copy of Prof. Roberts Bartholow’s work on Therapeutics, from which we deduce the following as being conformable to the waters of Myrtle Springs:

THERAPY OF CHALYBEATE WATERS

The use of these water are the same as the purely medicinal preparations of iron. They are indicated in chloris and anaemia, to supply to the blood the material in which it is deficient. For this purpose the milder waters, containing carbonate of iron and abundant carbonic acid, are most suitable. When passive haemorrhages—the haemorrhagic diathesis—require ferruginous waters, the alum and iron waters are more effective. Pelvic and nervous disorders, when dependent on anaemia, are either cured or decidedly ameliorated by chalybeate waters. The purgative iron
waters are useful in engorgement of the liver, piles, dyspepsia of anaemic subjects, in dropsy and albuminuria. Alum water is good in diarrhoea and strumous diseases. Neuralgia, St. Vitus’ dance, cerebral anaemia, and other nervous disorders due to an impoverished condition of the blood, are much improved by the use of the milder chalybeate waters.

At Myrtle Springs we have the mild chalybeate waters, consisting of free sulphuric acid, sulphate of magnesia, carbonate of iron, carbonic acid gas, carbonate of potassa, sulphurated hydrogen, chloride of sodium, alum, and other sulphates in less and greater quantity.”

THERAPY OF SULPHUR WATERS
As a rule, such waters are useful in liver disorders; they diminish abdominal plethora and congestion of the portal circulation. They are indicated in malarial affections of the liver and spleen. Rheumatism and gout, tuberculosis in its incipiency, chronic poisoning by metals, etc., are certainly benefited by the internal use, and by baths of sulphurous eaters. Affections of the skin, syphilitic diseases, chronic rheumatic affections, etc. are especially forms of disease remediable by these waters, used internally and in the form of baths.

—Myrtle Springs Herald, August 27, 1891

Plateau City of Texas: Prospects Galore—
Health, Happiness and Wealth—All at Myrtle Springs

Topographically the site of Myrtle Springs seems designed by the Supreme Architect with a view to its becoming a city, embracing, as it does, over three thousand acres of level plateau 1,000 feet more elevated than the surrounding country. It is situated on the dirt road leading from Wills Point to Canton, being distant from those towns respectively seven and five miles. Its water supply is inexhaustible, the source being a number of bold springs, the waters of which possess rare medicinal virtues; and to these gurgling Fountains of Youth do the “ailing” denizens of the vicinity go, instead of to the apothecary shop, for relief; and they are never disappointed, for beneficent nature assures healing with every draught, without money and without price.

So much is the foundation of the faith manifested by the gentlemen who are promoting the enterprise, and upon this basis they are justified in building hopes, whose fruition is destined, we believe, to be realized in the near future. The following is a list of industrial developments: An academy, or college, for which no point could offer more favorable considerations; Van Zandt county excelling in fruit culture, canning factories will constitute a very prominent feature of industrial life at Myrtle Springs, and this business will be inaugurated on a scale as extensive as the fruit yield the present season. A broom factory and castor oil mills are certainties; and the seed of these products are being planted by persons living adjacent to the town, with a view to disposing of the yield in the local market. A tannery will soon be put into operation, under conditions most favorable to success. The culture of strawberries, early fruit and vegetables for northern markets will speedily constitute Myrtle Springs as shipping point of first importance. A substantial brick sugar house and canning factory, 50x116 feet, is completed and in operation, turning out a most excellent quality of canned fruit. The same plant will evaporate apples, berries, etc., and make a high grade of syrup from either the tropical or sorghum cane. The capacity of the plant is one carload per day of 24 hours. The fruit crop of next season will demand the planting of other canning establishments here. There is no safer or more lucrative investment; as it is demonstrated that a canning factory will pay for itself and yield a handsome dividend the first season.
In the county a popular sentiment is favorable to the removal of the court house to Myrtle Springs; but the promoters of the enterprise will leave that matter entirely to the disposal of the people. They purpose building a town regardless of factitious auxiliaries, and to create a reliable home market; thus furnishing producers not only the advantages growing out of this, but facilities also for the shipment of produce to other markets. Van Zandt county has languished through forty years of stagnation, because of the want of a representative county town. But with Myrtle Springs a city of 10,000 or 15,000 population, and with facilities for handling country produce, as must inevitably be the case, the farmers of the entire county would possess a home market upon which they could at all times rely. This would save the present considerable wastage through want of a market, and stimulate production; thus contributing to the county’s wealth in the aggregate, and to the prosperity, beyond question, of the individual citizen. Quite a force is now engaged in the making of brick; and very soon a number of first class buildings for business purposes, including a $10,000 hotel, will be erected. Big inducements will soon be offered to secure railway connection with the systems of the state, as not less than $1,000,000 will be expended in inaugurating industrial enterprises, the outputs from which will demand railway transportation. As laid off, the city comprises an area of three quarters of a mile square, being centrally drained by a spring branch running almost north and south. Streets have been cut through the timber, none of which have a less width than 80 feet, and some 100 feet. The blocks have a frontage of 600 feet. The Farmers’ Alliance has been donating suitable ground for a park within the city limits, at which an annual encampment will be held. A magnificent city park, of an oblong form, and comprising fifteen acres, has been laid off. The groves in these parks embrace a variety of trees, among which may be mentioned various oaks, myrtle, mulberry, hickory, etc. Around the city park will be an eighty-foot carriage drive. The public square will embrace twelve acres. The Baptist church has been donated a permanent campground, and the Texas Land & Investment Co. will soon erect thereon a commodious tabernacle, in which to worship God.

The surplus water flowing from the voluminous springs makes a pretty lake near the cite [sic] of the new hotel, which will be beautified by the addition of suitable artificial garnishments. Of the springs a great deal could be said, though in the absence of an analysis of the water it is not possible to do the subject justice. Take ten or a dozen springs and wells in close proximity, and it is discovered that the waters of no two are precisely alike; ranging from freestone to intense mineral impregnation. There is evidently present salt, iron, copper, sulphur and magnesia. Voluminous testimonials as to the curative properties of the waters could be produced; and an analysis of the same will ere long be made and published. The city has control of about 4,000 acres, with the springs near the centre of the same; about three-fourths of which is owned by the company promoting the enterprise. The business lots as laid off are 25x115 feet; and residence lots 50x150 feet, with twenty-foot alleys. The company will aid the various churches in the erection of houses of worship. It would simply be impossible in this summary to enumerate the advantages offered by Myrtle Springs to those who will come and link their fortunes to the destiny of the young though confident city; but will in each issue pass many of these in review; hence if you would be posted in the fleet race of progress which Myrtle Springs proposes to make, subscribe to The Herald—only $1.00 per year—for glad tidings from the centre of business whiz, whose circumference marks the round of plenty and prosperity.

—Myrtle Springs Herald, August 27, 1891
An Excellent Farm

Last Sunday, a party consisting of J. W. Swinney, I. M. Bray and ye scribe, rode out to the farm of B. F. McCarty, two miles west of Myrtle. After feasting on melons and partaking of a hearty dinner, we rode over the farm, which is one of the best improved in this county, being enclosed by an A1 oak rail fence, thoroughly ditched and drained, and conveniently sub-divided by cross fences. Mr. McCarty has 347 acres, 160 fenced; 80 being in cotton, 40 in corn, 15 in oats, 1 in potatoes, 1 in garden, 1 in tobacco and strawberries, 10 in orchard, comprising pretty well all varieties of peaches, (they ripening from May to October,) plums (ripening from May to August 1st,) pears, apples—comprising 400 Ben Davis, 200 Shockley and 100 various. The remainder of his land abounds in unculled timber, suitable for the making of railroad ties or hard lumber; and furnishes besides excellent range for cattle, horses and hogs. He also has a luxuriant little vineyard of 30 or 40 vines. This place has yielded 43 bales of cotton, 1,400 bushels of corn and 700 of oats in one season. There are three sets of houses on the place, each with a well of good water and all necessary outhouses; also a tank which furnishes an abundance of water for stock. The Hye school is only a half mile distant, and the Box and Myrtle Springs school houses within easy reach. The whole tract lies remarkably level, and is not disfigured by “washouts.” The form of the field is a parallelogram, 1,200 yards long and 750 wide. The crop is above average the present season, though it has had no rain of consequence since early in June.

Mr. McCarty grows his own tobacco, and we saw as luxuriant plants of the nicotian weed growing in his patch as could well be; also a quantity going through the process of drying and taking on a beautiful golden color. He assures us that the tobacco crop never fails, and that the yield is as large, or larger, as the average in tobacco producing states. This suggests the desireableness of some one putting up a tobacco factory at Myrtle Springs, and encourage the production of the weed on the farms adjacent to town. The sumac is indigenous and abundant, and this is the only herb employed by the Indians in the preparation of their incomparable smoking tobacco. The effort, coupled with industry and intelligence, is only wanting to build up a lucrative business in the manufacture of tobacco here. Our farmers must in self defense diversify their crops. Cotton has brought their noses down to the grindstone, and it will keep them there; and the safest and most profitable change must be to cane, tobacco, the castor oil bean, broom corn and vegetables. The idea of a tobacco factory at this place should be given no rest until it is in execution. It will prove the germ of big things—big for the town, big for the manufacturer, and big for the grower.

Mr. McCarty is anxious to sell; not because of any dissatisfaction, but because he wishes to move to the Cherokee nation, of which people he is a branch. The Cherokees are the wealthiest people on earth, being possessed of $17,000 per capita. This fortune awaits him, and a like amount for each of his children, as soon as he enters into the nation. Mr. McCarty is a hard working man, honest and hospitable, and we hate to lose him, but will rejoice at his good fortune, being confident that fortune could not bestow her smiles upon a more worthy man.

—Myrtle Springs Herald, August 27, 1891
Benjamin Wheeler

During the alliance encampment here, a venerable gentleman, small in stature, with coal black sparkling eyes, was seen moving around among the multitude, and one and all seemed glad to shake Uncle Ben’s bony hand.

This gentleman was Benjamin Wheeler, who now resides near Bolton Switch, this county, and is over 80 years old; never walks with a stick and seems to be one of the boys. Uncle Ben is a full of early reminiscences as a peach is of juice; commencing in the good old days when he was cook on a Mississippi packet, and untaxed “copper distilled” retailed at a bit, he never drops a stitch down to the present time.

Uncle Ben carried the first United States mail into the territory now comprising Van Zandt county. His horseback route was from Tyler, via old Flora and Grand Saline, to the old town of Buffalo on the Trinity river. His figures on the routes he has carried, the number of miles he has traveled, and amusing incidents that occurred during his life in the mail service, if properly written up, would make a volume as eagerly sought after as Peck’s Bad Boy.

About the year 1876, he was carrying a route from Canton to Edom, and George Clough, a well to do farmer, lived on his route. Mr. Clough’s luscious fruit and tempting melons persuaded Uncle Ben that a postoffice should be established thereabout; so he induced his friend Clough to accept the honor of being called postmaster, and reserved to himself the honor of having the office christened Ben Wheeler, where now is growing up one of the most promising little towns in Van Zandt county.

Uncle Ben is also good authority on fighting chickens. He always keeps a few of the game stock in training, that he will pit against the world and back his judgment. He lives on a good farm with a splendid orchard of select fruit of the very best varieties, and during the coming seasons he will be with us often.

—Myrtle Springs Herald, August 27, 1891

Duel Island

Duel Island divides the current of the Brazos a few miles above Columbia, the old capital of the republic of Texas, and derives its name from a hostile meeting of John A. Wharton, “the keenest blade of San Jacinto,” and William T. Austin, away back in the early thirties. Austin, a “new comer” and a mere youth, though a stalwart one, made his home at the residence of Colonel Warren D. C. Hall, who felt no little disgruntled at the prominent position the Wharton brothers had assumed in Texan affairs, while he, a compatriot of Magee, Ross and Kemper, was comparatively ignored. A lively feud existed between W. H. Wharton and Stephen F. Austin, because of the rejection of the latter and acceptance of the former on the part of the heiress of Groce’s Retreat; and the people took sides accordingly. It was not a difficult task for Hall to win William T. Austin as a partisan of the Austin side, though he was not a relative of Stephen F. Hall arranged the program and used young Austin as a tool. The program, which was literally carried out, was that young Austin should attack John A. Wharton on the streets of San Felipe de Austin, and administer a pummeling. After which, Hall advised his protege to mount and fly to his plantation; while he would tarry behind to prevent pursuit, and come on at his leisure. Austin met Hall at the gate, anxious for news, and the latter greet him with:

“Austin, can you shoot?”

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“I couldn’t hit a barn door with a shotgun,” was his reply.
“Nevertheless, you have got to fight John A. Wharton, the crack shot of the country,” was the assuring response of Hall.

Sure enough, in a few days a friend of Wharton called to demand satisfaction of Austin, who designated Colonel Hall as his friend, and these worthies soon arranged for a meeting on the island; pending which, Hall instructed Austin in the use of the dueling pistol. The “rising aim” was Hall’s favorite, though the “descending” was mostly employed. Under Hall’s instruction it was not a great while ere Austin was proficient with the pistol. They met, Hall serving as Austin’s second. We cannot recall at this writing the name of the person who so served Wharton. At the first fire Wharton’s arm was broken.

The feud between Stephen F. Austin and W. H. Wharton originated as stated, and was intensified by a difference in regard to the policy for and against the secession of Texas from Mexico. Wharton advocated the immediate severance of all political bonds; and S. F. Austin adhering to the constitution of 1824. Both were suitors for the hand of Miss Sarah A. Groce, who owed her life from drowning in the Brazos to a prompt rescue at the hands of Wharton, who was young, knightly, and every inch a man; qualities which over balanced the tame methods of a land aggregator in the estimation of a romantic young lady.

General John A. Wharton, of confederate fame, was an only son of W. H. Wharton. He was killed in an unfortunate recontre with Colonel Baylor, in Houston, in 1865. He left a widow and an only daughter, both of whom sought voluntary exit from a stage when all that was dear to them had fled.

The Whartons of Texas are no more; the race is extinct. The name is emblazoned upon the page of Texan history. They were of a knightly race, and generous as brave. Mrs. W. H. Wharton, whose virtues equalled those of the mother of the Gracchi, lived to witness the extinction of the race, and to realize the hollow mockery of ambition; for death levels all distinctions. “O, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?”

—Myrtle Springs Herald, August 27, 1891

Henry Eustace McCulloch: A Biographical Sketch
[continued from last week]
Henry McCulloch, at the head of a detachment of his own men, and gallant old Mr. Thurmond, with a like number of Cameron’s company, pushing on to the town of Mier, and after learning the exact situation of affairs returned, just as Canalles, at the head of 500 cavalry was entering the town; and reported to Col. Fisher that Ampudia was also advancing upon the same point; and advised him to defeat the cavalry before the infantry and artillery under Ampudia arrived; which he failed to do, with the sad result already enumerated—McCulloch, with rare sagacity, reading in the too apparent lack of the necessary qualities for command which characterised the movements of the head of the Texian force, determined to extricate his command from the net which was being spun by the hands of Fate for their discomfiture, and struck out for home, through an uninhabited country, and without an ounce of bread and meat. A fat young mustang mare was shot and killed, which, after a fast of three days was voted luscious food by the men.

Henry McCulloch finally reached home, to learn that he was the father of a daughter three weeks old; and that his friends had placed him in nomination for the office of sheriff, to which position he was elected by a very handsome majority. But the times were “hard,” there being no money in
circulation, and at the end of his term he discovered that his services, at his own expense, had well nigh bankrupted him; and but for the timely assistance of his friend, Capt. Isaac N. Mitchell, who forced him to accept a loan of one thousand dollars, must have commenced the struggle of life anew. With this aid he purchased a stock of goods, and in a short time was enabled to return the capital, and continue his business operations;—removing his family and store, in November 1845 to the town of Seguin as a more healthy section; and remained in the mercantile business until the year 1849; in the interim serving through the Mexican war, as captain of a company of Rangers. Reporting for duty to Col. W. S. Harney, at San Antonio, he was instructed to establish a camp upon the head waters of the San Marcos, and guard that frontier from the excursions of the savages, and reached the designated post June 12, 1846. The company guarded an immense wagon train from San Antonio to Monclova, Mo., in charge of Capt. Newton, A.Q.M. of the regular army, loaded with clothing and specie for the use of the American army; and in his report to Gen. Wool, Capt. Newton said: “I was never with a company in the regular service which maintained better discipline; their conduct was both gentlemanly and soldierly; every duty was performed promptly and efficiently, and without the least trouble or annoyance to their captain, whom they seem to obey more through love than fear. As an officer he is strict, and as a man so kind that every man in the company seems to feel perfectly easy in his presence.” General Wool also complimented the captain upon the soldierly appearance of his company; and it was generally believed that he was by no means an admirer of “Citizen Soldiery,” because of their want of discipline. In the autumn of 1840 Col. P. Handsboro Bell was assigned by the governor to the command of all the Rangers on the Texas frontier; and a battalion, under Major Tom T. Smith, was organised of the companies of McCulloch, Grumbles, S. P. Ross, and Highsmith; which were stationed at proper points to guard the settlements from Indian depredations; that of McCulloch being posted in Hamilton’s Valley.

This service continued until December 1848, when the dragoons superseded the Rangers; during which period the company had re-enlisted four times; and Henry E. McCulloch as often chosen to the command by the free suffrages of his comrades. During the later year of service on the frontier Captain McCulloch had his family with him, quartered in a comfortable log house; and en route home, Mrs. McCulloch became quite sick in Austin; which influenced him to become the proprietor of the Swisher House, which inn he kept until the year 1850; closing out his business in Seguin. At the urgent request of Gen. Brook, U.S.A. commanding at San Antonio, he raised a company of Rangers in the year last named, for service on the lower Nueces, Aransas, and Mission rivers; the Indians having become so bold that many of the inhabitants were abandoning their homes.

Taking position on the Aransas river, about three miles above the Goliad and San Patricio road, he succeeded, after a number of skirmishes and close pursuits, in closing that section to the ingress of the savages, until immigration had rendered the citizens so numerous as to preclude any fear in the future from that quarter. The company was then—1851,—transferred to the Llano river, accompanied by Captain Joseph E. Johnston, of the topographical engineers, and established camp near the present locality of Junction city, on the North Fork of the Llano. He soon struck an Indian trail, and surprised a party of some 30 warriors and two squaws, both of whom fought with great earnestness, until captured and disarmed. A number of Comanches were killed, and the remainder dispersed. The squaws were released, having been given sufficient food to subsist upon until able to reach their own people.

The company was mustered out of the service by Capt. James Longstreet, at Fort Martin Scott, on November 4, 1857, which concluded H. E. McCulloch’s military services under the
U.S. government. In 1853 he became the candidate of the democratic party for a seat in the legislature, his competitor being Col. French Smith; and delivered his maiden stump speech to the “sovereigns” at Seguin, in reply to a “rattling good appeal of Col. Smith in behalf of the whig party; and as he left the stand amid the cheers of all; his opponent, congratulating him, said:

“Well, Mac, I knew you could fight like h—l; but had no idea you could make such a speech. But I’ll wallop you at the polls!” But the colonel reckoned without his host, as McCulloch was chosen to a seat in the legislature by a handsome majority. At the expiration of his term in the lower house, he was elected a member of the state senate; and served two consecutive sessions in that body; when Ben McCulloch resigning the marshalship for the eastern district, he received the appointment from President Buchanan, May 7, 1859. Being satisfied the state would secede, and wishing to have as little, or no funds of government in his possession as possible, in that event he opened the December term of the court for 1860 with but $5,000 on hand; and although the judge was informed of this, and the further fact that the requisitions of southern marshals were not being honored, the court was continued in session until the whole of the above amount was exhausted; and the marshal was compelled to advance the necessary means to the amount of $2,000, for the payment of jurors, witnesses, bailiffs’ and imperative charges.* The secession convention, on the 5th day of February 1861 appointed Ben McCulloch, Henry E. McCulloch, and John S. Ford, colonels of cavalry, charged with receiving the surrender of the U.S. forts in the state; and the McCulloch brothers repaired to their home near Seguin to make the necessary arrangements, and departed—Ben for San Antonio, and Henry for the line of posts on the northwest frontier—never to meet more upon earth. The latter hastened to his purposed field of operations; collected quite a volunteer force; and succeeded in reaching the neighborhood of Camp Colorado unobserved; when, as a traveler, he called at the quarters of the commandant, Captain E. Kirby Smith, and before making known his mission, engaged the officers of the post in conversation; during the course of which he learned that they were all southern men; and that while they would undoubtedly act with the south when they deemed the proper time had arrived, they felt a professional pride which would stipulate for honor to the flag, and the transfer of the troopers, with their arms and accoutrements to some place under authority of the Federal government. Finally he announced his mission, and after much hesitancy, Capt. Smith agreed to surrender the public property; men to march out with flying colors, transportation to be furnished them to Indianola, where he purposed taking ship for some northern port. Early the next morning the mail arrived, bringing intelligence of Gen. Twigg’s surrender at San Antonio; it also brought Captain Smith his commission as a Major. Having captured Ft. Chudum [?], and Camp Cook, complying with all the instructions of the convention, he returned to the state capital, where he found a colonel’s commission awaiting him, from the provisional president of the Confederate states, with authority to organise a Texas regiment of cavalry for that service, upon the western frontier of the state. The regiment was composed of the companies of: Captains Fry; W. A. Pitts; M. M. Boggess; Goveneur Nelson; P. Hill Ashby; W. G. Tobin; Buck Barry; T. C. Frost; ____ Webb; and ______ Davidson. Col. McCulloch received, as the commanding Confederate officer in Texas, transfer from the state of the arms and munitions of war lately surrendered; and caused an artillery company to be organised, and equipped; of which Wm. Edgar was appointed captain; as well as assimilating otherwise the chaotic elements of the two services into order, and a state of efficiency.

Note: After the conclusion of the war between the States General McCulloch, together with his sureties, was sued in the U.S. District court at Galveston, for a considerable sum alleged to have been due the government on account of his expenditures as marshal; and notwithstanding the fact that he introduced positive testimony showing that he
was entitled to receive, for funds advanced, and commissions for taking the census of 1860, some $2,500, judgment was rendered against him; and though he succeeded, by compromise, through the influence of republican friends in having the amount reduced, was compelled to make an unjust payment; which, by reason of his reduced pecuniary circumstances, was severely felt.

—Myrtle Springs Herald, November 19, 1891

Col. G. W. Fulton

Recently Col. G. W. Fulton and his wife, who is the daughter of Gov. Henry Smith, the first American executive of Texas, visited their old home in Brazoria county, it having been forty-six years since their departure. To the uninitiated into the inner circle of Texas history there is nothing remarkable in this mere announcement; but to the initiated it supplies no little reflected pabulum. Col. Fulton was the private secretary of Gov. Smith, who was pre-eminently the Franklin of Texas. He more than any man shaped the issues which led to independence. He won the political battle against Stephen F. Austin, and saved Texas; Milam confirming the success of the cause at Bexar just as Austin was throwing it away. Money talks! Austin left his descendants a world of land, which gave them influence; and this has been exerted with malign effect upon all who were not adherents of their progenitor [sic]. The history of Texas has been forced to conform to the propaganda having for its object the apotheosis of Austin as the father of Texas. He was a judicious parent to his own colonists; but his colony was but a fraction of Texas. They followed Austin’s lead in opposing independence; and the last letter written by Fannin reflected in severe terms upon the apathy of the colonists. Sam Houston and the “bright boy-chivalry of the states” took up the cause where Milam, weltering in his life-blood, laid it down, and bore it high to final triumph. Had Ramirez Cesuma reached Bexar before the capitulation of Cos, which event was invited by the disbandment of the Texan army by Austin, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and California would be today undeveloped Mexican provinces. Henry Smith, Ben Milam, and Sam Houston made the history of that period; and they did it in strenuous opposition to Austin, the falsely styled “Father of Texas.”

—Myrtle Springs Herald, November 19, 1891
Appendix

Published Works

Poetry

*Biding His Time!* Victoria [TX]: N.p., 1883. Bound with *Celeste Valcœur*.


*Demara, the Comanche Queen; and Other Rhymes*. New York: J. J. Little & Co., 1882.


*Stephen F. Austin in the Balances*. [Columbia, TX?]: N.p., [1890].

*While the Spell of Her Witchery Lingers, and Other Poems*. [Laredo, TX]: N.p., 1886.

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