

growing anxious when you came in. How is she?"

Dr. Larned came beside her where she was standing.

"Miss Helen," he said, very softly, "she is dying."

The quick tears came to Helen's eyes. She loved this poor child, as we love any being on whom we expend care and sympathy; and there was another feeling, almost of gratitude, that made Helen stoop down and kiss her forehead.

"But for her I should never have come here among the children," she said, simply.

Then there was heard a faint voice, like the voice of a spirit, saying,

"Is my Star Lady here?"

Helen, wondering, but remembering the strange words that she had spoken before, answered, "Yes, I am here."

"Open the window. I want once to see you, near up. Oh, I wish, I wish—" Then, as the mellow sunlight came into the room, she saw Dr. Larned, and suddenly she seemed to gather all her energies, and cried aloud, with a clear ringing tone, "It's him! it's him! oh, glory!" Her voice grew weak, but she went on. "I know you too. You are that good man. I ain't never spent the silver you give me; it's here round my neck; it's for you again." Her voice was failing. "I can't see; gi' me your hands. I guess I'm a-dying; and when I get up there, there ain't only one thing I'll ask—Bless him and my Star Lady, that's come together at last! Amen."

And so their strange unknown little friend died, holding their hands in hers: but her prayer lived after her, and was answered, for these two have been blessed with perfect love and faith, in sweet companionship.

GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

SLAVERY, during its long continuance, naturally made the Southern States very different from the Northern. The difference was not political merely; it was social, even individual. Things were looked at from another stand-point in the South. Customs and manners, not less than opinions, disagreed; were often at variance with those in the North. This dissimilarity was most striking, on account of their contiguity, in the Border States. Kentucky, peculiar enough, seemed more peculiar because it lay alongside of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The passage of the Ohio River well-nigh changed the form of civilization. To be on the north side of that stream was to see the republic at an acute angle; to be on the south side was to see it at an obtuse angle.

The record of Kentucky has always been singular, therefore interesting. Something of the feudal era has been associated with the eccentric commonwealth; and it is hard

to judge of its past without being in sympathy with its people.

One of the foremost figures of his time in that State was George Denison Prentice. Like so many men who have been prominent in the South and Southwest, he was a native of New England, having been born in Preston, Connecticut, December 18, 1802. He is said to have been remarkably precocious, having been able to read freely when but four years old, and to construe and translate Horace and Homer before he was fifteen. Then prepared to enter college, he was too poor to do so, and was forced to teach school—the usual occupation of New England youth—until he could get the means to pay for the completion of a classical course. He became a member of the Sophomore class of Brown University at eighteen, and was graduated three years later. He afterward studied law, and was admitted to the bar, though he never practiced, because he preferred literature to Coke or Blackstone. At the age of twenty-six he set up in Hartford the *New England Review*, a literary weekly, which at once attracted attention, from the strength and grace of its editorials. He had been on the *Review* only two years when he received a flattering and pressing invitation to go to Kentucky for the purpose of writing the life of Henry Clay. Being an ardent admirer of the then eminent statesman, he cordially accepted, resigning the charge of the weekly to John G. Whittier, and set out for Lexington, the home of Clay. The proposed biography was completed in nine or ten months, most of the materials being at hand, and met with a hearty reception from the entire Whig party, whose avowed leader the subject had been for years. Clay himself was particularly pleased with the manner in which Prentice had executed the work. Between the author and statesman sprang up a warm intimacy, a close friendship, which continued through life, Clay always ascribing to Prentice much of the fame he enjoyed.

The success of the biography induced its writer to undertake the publication of a daily newspaper (November 24, 1830) in the interest of the Whig party, and in support of the political claims of Henry Clay to any office he might want. The office he particularly wanted, as every body knew, was the Presidency.

First nominated for Chief Executive in 1822 by the Legislature of his State, supported by Ohio, Missouri, and Louisiana, the narrow escape he had had from a choice by the House of Representatives two years subsequent had filled him with an ambition that was never allayed. After John Quincy Adams's failure to secure re-election in 1828, Clay, who had held the first place in his cabinet, went out with him in the following March, and remained in private life for more than two years and a half. To bring him

forward again, and to repair the injury his reputation, however unjustly, had received from the cry of "bargain and corruption," was the object of the biography, and one of the chief motives in starting the paper in question. His friends were very anxious to return him to the national Senate, to which he had bidden farewell twenty years before. The Democrats, on the other hand, were extremely desirous to elect Colonel Richard M. Johnson, the reputed slayer of Tecumseh, and might have succeeded had it not been for the obstinate and gallant fight Prentice made on Clay's behalf in the *Louisville Journal*—the place and name he had selected for his newspaper enterprise. Johnson was defeated, to the chagrin of his own party, and to the delight of the admirers of the Whig leader. Clay personally thanked Prentice for the efficient service rendered, and in due time took his seat in the body—more august and venerable in those days than it is in these.

When the *Journal* was begun the principal Democratic organ in Kentucky was the *Louisville Advertiser*, under the control of Shadrach Penn, one of the ablest political writers and most skillful polemics in the Southwest. He was a formidable antagonist, having the advantage over the newcomer in years, experience, prestige. The Democrats thought it presumptuous, audacious in Prentice, a stranger and comparatively a mere youth, to attempt to cope with the hardy veteran, the hero of a hundred battles. They spoke of him derisively as a Yankee school-teacher, as an adventuresome clock peddler—every citizen of a Free State used to be so called the other side of Mason and Dixon's line—who had the impudence to come to Kentucky to pinch picayunes and preach Puritanism. He was also mentioned as an advocate of Connecticut Blue Laws, and a dealer in wooden nutmegs—an inherent article of common Southern faith having once been that every Northern man sustained those cerulean enactments, and gained a livelihood by disposing of the ligneous imitation of the kernel of the fruit of the *Myristica moschata*.

Whatever their prejudice, they soon found that Prentice was not to be despised. Penn quickly discovered in the New Englander a foeman worthy of his quill. Many and bitter were their contests, which were carried on for nearly ten years, albeit each of the adversaries privately retained for the other sincere personal respect. The editor of the *Journal* evinced his eminent fitness for his profession. He wrote not only nervous leaders, but telling squibs and pungent paragraphs, which, being something new in journalism, attracted great attention, and were widely copied. He is reputed to have been the originator in the American press of the short and pointed paragraphs now grown

so popular, by which an antagonist may be more readily overthrown than by the most elaborate editorial. Here are some specimens, culled at random:

"The *Eastern Argus* says that the administration goes on swimmingly. It has tumbled overboard, and must go swimmingly or not at all."

"An editor in Indiana threatens to handle us without gloves. We would certainly never think of handling him without at least three pairs, and thick ones at that."

"What would you do, madam, if you were a gentleman?" "Sir, what would you do if you were one?"

"We know some men who, when they are perplexed in argument, get out just as poor debtors sometimes get out of jail—they swear out."

"We have before us a copy of the famous Post-office circular soliciting contributions for the Postmaster-General's picture. On the whole, we are not surprised at his resorting to this expedient. Having expended the last farthing in his possession, what is he to do if he can not run his face?"

"The editor of the *Advertiser* says he was the first to apply to General Harrison the title of 'the Hero of Tippecanoe,' and that he applied it ironically. The title of 'the Lion-hearted' was first given to King Richard by his own harlequin, yet it was worn most proudly. Though given by a fool, it was borne by a hero."

"An exchange has this: 'The editor of the *Journal* said he had caught us; but he finds he has caught it.' Yes, we mistook your gender. We stand corrected."

"It has been thought strange that a dinner to which a man has not been invited is generally the one that sits the hardest upon his stomach."

Each issue of the *Journal* contained from a dozen to forty such paragraphs. Many of them were very bright, while others were labored, often commonplace. All of them, after a year or two, gained great currency as well as popularity, and contributed so much toward the circulation of the paper that it would have fallen off materially without them.

A large number of the paragraphs were deliberately prepared, the point being made first, and the circumstances to fit it invented afterward. Clever journalists are thoroughly acquainted with this process, but with the multitude it passes for spontaneity. He who can throw off smart paragraphs—and almost any adroit scribe can with a little practice—easily acquires the reputation of a wit. Forty years ago that kind of paragraphing was novel in this country, and its daily continuation spread Prentice's fame far and wide; placed him at the head of what the French would style *les diseurs des bons mots*.

Violent as had been the professional hostility, often reaching personality, between Penn and Prentice, they were completely reconciled by the mediation of a common friend just before the former's retirement from the *Advertiser*. On his departure for St. Louis the editor of the *Journal* paid a sincere and honest tribute to his worth and services, and after his death wrote a noble and touching obituary of the deceased.

For thirty-five years the *Louisville Journal* exercised an extraordinary influence, and was regarded as the ablest newspaper in the



GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

Southwest. If it had been published just as it was in any of the leading cities of the East, it would have gained nothing like the reputation that it generally enjoyed. Its power was, to a large extent, in consequence of the time of its establishment and its geographical position. When it was first issued none of the great New York morning dailies were in existence. The *Journal of Commerce* and the *Courier and Enquirer* were the leading newspapers, the present era of journalism, introduced by the *Herald* (1835) and the *Tribune* (1840), not then having dawned. Newspapers, indeed, in any strict sense, were unknown. The period was one of party

journalism, represented, outside of the metropolis, by such presses as the *Boston Courier*, *Baltimore Patriot*, *National Intelligencer*, and *Richmond Enquirer*. The last thing cared for or thought of in those days was news in the present acceptation. In its stead were political disquisitions, partisan attacks, long communications on government or political economy. There was no variety, no freshness, no sparkle. Every thing was protracted, solemn, tedious. Current intelligence was regarded as superfluous, humor as undignified.

The paragraphic style, the keen, sarcastic, witty thrusts so liberally scattered through

the Louisville *Journal*, were therefore most cordially welcomed. The public turned from the pompous essays of the *Courier and Enquirer* and *National Intelligencer* to be entertained, and to laugh at Prentice's biting brevities and acute retorts. While the *Journal* was altogether partisan, its editorials, even when long, were not heavy nor soporific. On the contrary, they were animated with personality, sharpened with bitterness. They were read with gusto; swallowed, so to speak, as a sort of intellectual cocktail, and thoroughly enjoyed from the fiery sting imparted to the palate.

The Whigs in those days were a political force. They embraced a large portion of the wealth and culture of the nation, including many of the principal Southern planters, whose interests and opinions were dominant and dictatorial. The *Journal* was a Whig organ, the special advocate of Henry Clay, the corypheus of the party. Nearly every prominent Whig, in whatever State he chanced to reside, subscribed to and read the paper, thus giving it a national influence and reputation. Its publication in Louisville, one of the largest Southern cities, and the metropolis of Kentucky, the strongest of all the Whig States in proportion to its population, added to its authority and ascendancy. In all that region it had no serious competitor. Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, had no dailies worth speaking of, except the *Gazette* in the second and the *Republican* in the third city, and these were at that time petrified. The dailies in Mobile and New Orleans were of the ancient order; so that the whole field of the Southwest was open to the *Journal*, and energetically was it filled.

Looking back at its issues to-day, they seem any thing but remarkable. They were not well printed, they had no departments, no special dispatches, no regular correspondence until long after its contemporaries in other centres had them. The *Journal*, in truth, was far better before the telegraph and general press facilities than after their attainment. As it had been undertaken to support Henry Clay and the Whig party, it appears to have lost strength as soon as Clay had ceased to be an available candidate for the Presidency, which was in 1848, and to have forfeited its prestige with the disruption of the Whigs, four years later. Prentice plainly belonged to a by-gone epoch of journalism—the epoch of politics and personality—and in this he was deservedly distinguished, one of the very first of his profession. To judge the *Journal* fairly, we should not compare it with the press of the present day, but with the press of the past, extending to the time (1848-49) of the general use of the telegraph. So judged, it will show to advantage. It was poetically just that the great Whig leader and the Whig

party should die in the same year, and not less just that the newspaper which had so zealously and nobly sustained them should, as respects its national influence, have died also. Unquestionably, with the final overthrow of the Whigs and the fall of their standard-bearer, Prentice, then fifty, felt the mainspring of his life weakened, much of his future frustrated. After that the *Journal* continued for sixteen years, and its editor a little longer; but, until the rebellion began, neither it nor he gathered any fresh laurels, and those that had been gathered slowly withered.

The *Journal* won very early a broad literary reputation, at least in the Southwest, on account of the occasional poetical effusions of its chief and the superabundant verses of its contributors. He may be said, in fact, to have been the founder of a rhythmic school—not at all original nor artistic—but still a school, inasmuch as it had any number of imitators. Young women of the Della Cruscan pattern poured forth their aspirations and their sentimental sorrows of measured commonplace in season and out of season. The tuneful contagion spread until every he or she who had lines printed in the columns of the *Journal* was held by the immature to be a poet. Most editors sternly repress the inky fancies of the host of would-be singers; but Prentice deliberately and vigorously encouraged them. He prefaced their ordinary verses with absurdly extravagant commendations; such as,

"This charming poetess, who has the beauty of Récamiar and the genius of De Staël, distills her divine soul in these exalted and exquisite strains."

"Who that reads these tender harp-notes of a melancholy and inspired heart but feels how God-like is the gift of poesy, and thanks Heaven that he has lived to hear its so wonderful expression?"

Nay, more; he indited lines to his feminine correspondents, in which he exhausted superlative and hyperbole, while they, as in duty bound, returned the high-flown flattery in kind, referring to him as a bard to whom Homer, Dante, and Shakspeare were as unlettered hinds. The paper was soaked with this prosodial spooneyism. It is wonderful how long it ran, and still more wonderful how the patience of the readers endured. One might think this another phase of the editor's humor; but it was not. He was completely sincere—indeed, enthusiastic toward every jingler foolish enough to intrust poor prose, every line beginning with a capital, to his revising care.

All men have their weaknesses. Poetry, or what he was kind enough to believe such, was one of Prentice's weaknesses. In his youth, and later in life, he had done some very creditable versification, and on that account had been thrust before his time into the Southern Valhalla of song. He is entitled, perhaps, to a third rank among American poets; but, pushed into loftier company,

the disharmony of his surroundings is unpleasantly apparent. He used to be greatly lauded for the incitement he had furnished to the woovers of the Muses. It is unfortunate that, with all their striving, not a single sister of the Nine was won. Prentice, from his amiability and overappreciation, is responsible for a vast deal of the quantitative fustian that still goes to the provincial press, and, missing its way to the waste-basket, gets to the composing-room.

As may be inferred, the *Journal* chief could not sustain himself in Kentucky, particularly in the past generation, without personal rencourees.

The South has been, and still is in modified degree, a little crazed on the subject of fighting. Touching the bellicose disposition of any Northerner it has been morbidly curious. One of the first questions asked about him when he had come to that section was, "Will he fight?" It was formerly hard for a Southerner to comprehend how a Yankee (meaning any native of a Free State) could be really brave and yet refuse a challenge. Some Northerners emigrating South have become desperate duelists, simply because their courage having been suspected, they felt obliged to go to the field both to prevent themselves from being misunderstood and for the sake of social recognition. It is characteristic of an American, owing to his constitutional cosmopolitanism, to adopt the habits of the country or section he expects to reside in. Therefore, when a Yankee took up his abode in a Slave State, he often found it beneficial to be belligerent, despite any conscientious scruples he might have to the contrary.

Prentice, going to Kentucky from New England, and taking charge of a political newspaper at a time when party feeling was at fever heat, could not have remained in Louisville had he been entirely pacific. Earnestly opposed to dueling save in extreme cases, he apprehended the community in which he was sufficiently well to know that he must show himself ready to fight when occasion required. They who imagined him to be a member of the Peace Society because he came from Connecticut were destined to disappointment. While temperamentally fearless, he did not seek quarrels—at least he said so—though how he could avoid them in a community which cultivated its irritability, and in which fighting had always been the fashion, it is difficult to conjecture. He was challenged by some political adversary whom he had worsted before he had been six months on the *Journal*. He replied then—and he ever maintained the same position—that he did not adhere to the code, and that he would not have recourse to it under any ordinary circumstances; but that he knew how to defend himself if any one saw fit to attack him.

His views on the subject are so clearly expressed in a correspondence which he had many years later (1854) with an aggrieved politician that it is here reproduced. He had gone to Arkansas to further by his presence some railway enterprise. While in Little Rock he printed in the *True Democrat* an article which a resident of that city construed as personally offensive to him. The sensitiveness and ingenuity of the Southerners in this regard was wont to surpass all average comprehension; and Prentice's scripture elicited these representative communications:

"To George D. Prentice, Esq.:

"SIR,—My attention has been directed to a publication in the *True Democrat*, over the signature of 'Arkansas,' and as upon inquiry of Mr. R. H. Johnson, the editor of that journal, I learn that you are the author of the publication in question, I hereby request the immediate withdrawal, over your own signature, of all the personalities directed in that article against me. This note will be handed you by my friend Major Thompson. Pending your reply to this communication, I have the honor to be, etc.,

"M. BUTT HEWSON."

"To M. Butt Hewson, Esq.:

"SIR,—You request me to withdraw what you call the personalities of my article in the *True Democrat* of yesterday. Sir, I have no knowledge whatever of you except from your published writings. In the article you speak of I had, and could have, no intention to apply to you any phraseology not predicated wholly and avowedly on such portions of your writings as I cited. It was not in my thought to pursue you outside of your publication, and assail your private character and conduct. If any of my language seems to you to bear a contrary construction, I disclaim such construction as unworthy myself and, so far as I know, unjust to you. I think this explanation, if any was needed, should be satisfactory to you; and it is all I have to give.

"Yours, etc., GEORGE D. PRENTICE."

"To George D. Prentice, Esq.:

"SIR,—Your note of this date has been handed me by my friend Major Thompson. In reply, I take leave to remark that, as my letter requested a simple withdrawal of the personalities of your publication, I must take leave to add that nothing in the case will meet my wishes short of a plain, direct, unconditional withdrawal of the same. My friend Major T. will hand you this communication. I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient servant, M. BUTT HEWSON."

"To M. Butt Hewson, Esq.:

"SIR,—Your note dated yesterday was handed me this morning. I have no other reply to make to it than that which I made to your first. I can not properly say to you that I retract the personalities of my article in the *True Democrat*, for I do not think it contains any. I have distinctly disclaimed any such construction of the language of that article as would imply any imputation upon your personal character or conduct, and I do not recognize any right or reason on your part to ask or expect more of me. This I deem quite as much due to myself as to you.

"Presuming that your notes are written to me with a view to a duel, I may as well say here that I have not the least thought of accepting a challenge from you. I consider my strictures upon your writings entirely legitimate, and, at any rate, the disclaimer that I have made ought to satisfy you.

"I came here from a distant State because many believed I could do something to promote a great and important enterprise; and as I have reason to think that my labors are not altogether in vain, I do not intend to let myself be diverted from them. There are some persons, and perhaps many, to whom my life is valu-

able; and however little or much value I may attach to it on my own account, I do not see fit at present to put it up voluntarily against yours.

"You may, for aught I know, be a man of reputable standing, and I disclaim any refusal to meet you on the ground of your not being a gentleman; but you are not of the order of men whom I should choose to fight, if I fought at all. If you were to kill me, you would kill a man who is the support and stay of his family, and who is extensively regarded as one of the stays and supports of his party, and as the possessor of some influence in the affairs of the country; but I presume that it is of no great consequence to any, except your immediate personal friends, whether you die or live.

"I am no believer in the dueling code. I would not call a man to the field unless he had done me such a deadly wrong that I desired to kill him; and I would not obey his call to the field unless I had done him so mortal an injury as to entitle him, in my opinion, to demand an opportunity of taking my life. I have not the least desire to kill you or to harm a hair of your head, and I am not conscious of having done anything to entitle you to kill me. I do not want your blood upon my hands, and I do not want my own upon any body's. I might yield much to the demands of a strong public sentiment; but there is no public sentiment that either requires me to meet you or would justify me in doing so.

"I look upon the miserable code that is said to require two men to go out and shoot at each other for what one of them may consider a violation of etiquette or punctilio in the use of language with a scorn equal to that which is getting to be felt by the whole civilized world of mankind. I am not afraid to express such views in the enlightened capital of Arkansas or any where else. I am not so cowardly as to stand in dread of any imputation on my courage. I have always had courage enough to defend my honor and myself, and I presume I always shall have.

"Your most, etc.,

GEORGE D. PRENTICE."

The *Journal* editor, as usual, had the last epistolary shot; common (the Southerners say mutual) friends interfered, and the matter, to employ the technical phrase, was amicably settled.

During his journalistic career Prentice had at least half a dozen personal combats, in some of which he had very narrow escapes, and in two or three he was slightly wounded. He was a good marksman, and, what is more, entirely cool and intrepid in the presence of danger; so that he had the advantage over excitable, not to say somewhat timorous, men. A willingness, almost an alacrity, to fight when put upon spared him many conflicts; and he often declared if he had not shown a decided disposition to resent insults and to stand by his own words, that he would have had to wear a false nose to gratify his enemies' inclination to pull it. There are men whom it is safe to assault. Prentice was not one of these, and he did not wish to have it so understood.

He was not in the least considerate of the feelings or sensibilities of those persons he had reason to dislike. His opponents did not forbear him, nor did he forbear them. He gave as good as he received, usually a little better. His mode of treating what is named in the South the private quarrels of gentlemen may be judged by this (his) account of an affray in Lexington (July, 1835) among several members of his craft:

"Mr. Trotter, without provocation, attempted to shoot Mr. Clark in the street: the parties exchanged shots twice without effect. Mr. O'Hara, a friend of Mr. Trotter, made an attack upon Mr. Bryant, the associate of Mr. Clark; Mr. Bryant gave Mr. O'Hara an effectual cudgeling, and then laid his cane over the head and shoulders of Mr. Trotter till the latter cried for quarter. There the matter ended, Mr. Clark retiring to reload his pistols, Mr. Bryant to procure a new cane, and Messrs. Trotter and O'Hara to get their heads mended."

Trotter (George James), then the editor of the *Kentucky Gazette*, retorted in his columns upon Prentice in a virulent article, closing with something like these words: "The infamy of George D. Prentice is notorious. He is shunned by all honorable men. The mark of Cain is on his brow."

Prentice's sole rejoinder in the *Journal* was:

"Mr. George James Trotter says that the mark of Cain is on our brow. We don't know about that; but we do know that the mark of cane is on his back."

Of course this made Trotter a theme for laughter, and, burning with rage, he went to Louisville with the deliberate intent to shoot Prentice on sight. Discovering the chief of the *Journal* on his way to the office, he pulled his pistol without notification, and fired upon Prentice, only a few feet distant, wounding him on the breast. Prentice, quick as thought, leaped at Trotter, caught him in his arms, took away his weapon, threw him powerless to the ground, and drew a bowie-knife.

Meanwhile a crowd that had gathered cried out, "Kill the scoundrel! Kill him on the spot!"

Prentice simply said, "I can not take the life of a disarmed and helpless man;" and releasing his hold, put up his knife, and walked away amidst enthusiastic cheers evoked by his magnanimity.

There always were one or two, sometimes three, newspapers in Louisville opposed to the *Journal*. Hardly any of them had long life or assured success, and the result was that they hated Prentice with a feminine intensity. The rival editors were unremittingly at war, generally with their pens, sometimes with their pistols.

William E. Hughes, of the *Democrat*, now gathered to the shades, having wasted all the ink he could afford in a bitter controversy, waited upon his antagonist, and sent up his card.

"Tell Mr. Hughes," said Prentice, "that I will meet him in front of the office as soon as I load my pistols."

In two minutes he was in the street: the journalists exchanged four shots without effect. The police, by some unaccountable accident, interfered, and hostilities were at an end—until the next time.

Colonel R. T. Durrett, the editor of the *Courier* in 1858, now president of the Public Library of Kentucky, had printed, in five or six successive issues, a paragraph intimating

that the conductor of the *Journal* had fallen into the river from the gang-plank of a steamboat while copiously intoxicated.

Though not at all remarkable that any Louisvillian should be temulent—for in those days Bourbon was drunk with the fullest and fieriest freedom—Prentice took exception to the publication, and informed Durrett that if the thing were repeated he should hold him personally responsible.

A threat, even implied, is, to a man of spirit, not pleasant to rest under, and the offensive paragraph again appeared.

The editor of the *Journal* called promptly upon Durrett. The latter was told to defend himself, and the two simultaneously produced revolvers. Two barrels were discharged on each side, and two wounds, not serious, were received by the combatants, which adjusted the trouble, temporarily, to the gratification of the parties immediately concerned.

The adopted Kentuckian always held himself in readiness for encounters. He had good reason to do so, since, during the heat of a political campaign, he never issued a copy of his paper which did not contain, according to the prevalent testiness of that region, provocation sufficient for a dozen affrays.

One afternoon a Frankfort journalist went into his sanctum, and as he had had a controversy with the resident of the capital, he rose from his desk, pistol in hand, saying, "You see I am prepared for you, Sir!"

The Frankforter, who was a good-natured, sensible disputant, laughingly replied, "My pistol is a pocket-pistol;" and, producing the same, invited Prentice to take a drink. The invitation was accepted, and tradition has it that the imbibition was often repeated before midnight.

Previous to the war an adage in New Orleans was that it required three men in that city to start a newspaper—one to die of the yellow fever, another to be killed in a duel, and the third to sell out the effects.

In Louisville during the same period each journal would seem to have needed at least two editors—one to write, the other to fight; but the double office was usually filled by the same person. In Prentice's case it assuredly was. He both prepared and carried leaded matter, and no printer was more familiar with shooting-sticks, or knew better how to use them.

His belligerent experiences have been greatly amplified, furnishing the topic of many jests. It used to be said, when a stranger visited Prentice in his sanctum, that he was told to take a seat—that the editor was in the street amusing himself with a little shooting match, but that he would be back in a few minutes to attend to regular business.

Another story was that he invariably

spent three hours in the morning in answering hostile correspondence before sending any copy to the composing-room. Still another idle tale was that, when there was a knock at his door, he answered it with "Come in!" while looking down the barrels of a shot-gun.

The truth is, Prentice was altogether devoid of the smallest apprehension in regard to potential "difficulties," as they are termed down there. He had none of the extreme nervousness generally evinced by fighting men. He was always self-possessed, very quiet, rather preoccupied than otherwise, apt to give any one unacquainted with him the impression of a phlegmatic temperament.

He was of medium height, large-limbed, stooping a little in the latter part of his life; neat though careless in dress; looking more like a rustic shop-keeper than a poet, wit, or urban journalist. His face was plain—homely would not be too strong an adjective—his features somewhat heavy; his eyes small and hazel, very expressive when lighted up by conversation. His head was finely shaped, his brow being broad, noble, intellectual—noticeably at variance with the lower part of his visage. In the office he was usually taciturn, seeming morose at times, though not really so. When spoken to, he always replied with noticeable courtesy; and if he began to talk on any topic he felt an interest in, his entire appearance and demeanor changed. He was irregularly industrious. Few men worked harder when he did work, and few avoided labor more eagerly when labor was not to his mind. He frequently wrote in a single day four or five, even six, columns of the *Journal*; and then he would not write another line for a week. Generally, however, he had performing periods extending from one to three months; after which he would eschew manuscript completely until the toilsome fit returned.

Over twenty-five years preceding his death (that took place January 21, 1870) he had been afflicted with scrivener's cramp. It first attacked him in his right hand; and when he had learned to write with his left, that too suffering similarly, he was obliged ever afterward to depend upon amanuenses. His composition, though ordinarily rapid, was sometimes slow. His style was fluent, and mainly correct, but often verbose and exuberant, from the native tendency of the West and South to tumid rhetoric, prone to be mistaken there for elegance and eloquence.

Prentice, notwithstanding his tumultuous career, his violent controversies, and bitter quarrels, was generous and forgiving, if not amiable. Shamefully and persistently slandered—he admitted that he had faults enough to render malignant invention superfluous—he was ever ready to meet his

enemies half-way in reconciliation, and he rarely remembered injuries where there was any disposition toward atonement.

The noted Mike Walsh and himself had had fierce newspaper bouts, but had never seen each other until they met one day in Washington.

Walsh, eying him, approached and said, "You are George D. Prentice, I believe."

The Louisville editor responding in the affirmative, the *Subterranean* scribe continued, "You've skinned me like an eel, Prentice; but you did it so well that I don't particularly object to it. You're a man of genius and a good fellow, and I want to say that I admire and like you."

The Manhattan agrarian offered his hand, and the biographer of Clay cordially shook it, with the remark, "I think we'll have to toss up, Walsh, to determine which of us is the eel."

One Thomas J. Pew had outrageously abused Prentice both orally and in print, without the smallest justification. Being a believer in the inspiration of the wine of Kentucky (Bourbon), he quaffed it until it put him in the gutter. One day he entered the *Journal* office, and wanted to borrow a dollar of the editor. The unfortunate fellow was foul, ragged, repulsive; but the object of his slanders handed him twenty-five dollars, and besought him to reform.

The rebellion aroused all that was patriotic and noble in the old Whig war-horse. The first gun fired on Sumter rendered him a more ardent and unflinching Unionist than ever. Subscribers withdrew in large numbers. Many of his life-long friends were on the other side; his interests all seemed to point in the same direction. He was entreated, warned, threatened. His two sons, his only children, entered the Southern army. Nevertheless, Prentice's fidelity to the republic could not be shaken, and he fought a heroic fight. To his editorial exertions more than to any other one cause was attributed the non-secession of Kentucky. Though better perhaps for the contest that she should have gone out, his credit for trying to keep her in should be none the less.

When the news of the first battle of Manassas reached Louisville, the excitement was at white heat. The Stars and Stripes had long been floating over the *Journal* office, and at that particular time a carpenter was on the roof of the building to repair the flag-staff. This gave rise to the rumor that somebody was up there to pull down the flag.

The editor, his eyes flashing fire, thundered out, "Go up at once, and throw the scoundrel into the street. If it isn't done in five minutes, by Jove I'll do it myself!"

The order was quickly obeyed, so far as to insure the rapid descent of the guileless mechanic, and his ignominious propulsion down several flights of stairs.

His treatment of angry Confederates is shown by the following correspondence:

"UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, May 17, 1861.

"GEORGE D. PRENTICE,—Stop my paper. I can't afford to read Abolition journals in these times. The atmosphere of Old Virginia will not admit of such filthy sheets as yours has grown to be.

"GEORGE LAKE."

"LOUISVILLE, May 24, 1861.

"GEORGE LAKE,—I think it a great pity that a young man should go to a university to graduate a traitor and a blackguard, and so ignorant as to spell 'Abolition' with two *b's*.

GEORGE D. PRENTICE."

The close of the war saw Prentice broken in health and spirits. The terrible struggle had buoyed him up, had touched his mind with the ancient fire. His life work was done, and he knew it. Soon after, the *Journal*, effectually an extinction, was consolidated with the *Courier*, and he retained with it a merely nominal connection. His wife, too, died; and he had already lost a son in battle. His dearest friends had slipped away; he had survived his generation; Louisville, Kentucky, the South, had, in more than one sense, undergone a revolution. There was little left to fear, and, worse still, nothing left to hope. Bending beneath the tempests of many years, rent by the force of a thousand contests, it is not strange he walked to the grave with trembling limbs but undaunted soul, murmuring at the last, "I am glad to go!"

A CRY FROM THE SHORE.

COME DOWN, ye graybeard mariners,
Unto the wasting shore!
The morning winds are up—the gods
Bid me to dream no more.
Come, tell me whither I must sail,
What peril there may be,
Before I take my life in hand
And venture out to sea!

We may not tell thee where to sail,
Nor what the dangers are;
Each sailor soundeth for himself,
Each hath a separate star:
Each sailor soundeth for himself,
And on the awful sea
What we have learned is ours alone;
We may not tell it thee.

Come back, O ghostly mariners,
Ye who have gone before!
I dread the dark, impetuous tides;
I dread the farther shore.
Tell me the secret of the waves;
Say what my fate shall be—
Quick! for the mighty winds are up,
And will not wait for me.

Hail and farewell, O voyager!
Thyself must read the waves;
What we have learned of sun and storm
Lies with us in our graves:
What we have learned of sun and storm
Is ours alone to know.
The winds are blowing out to sea,
Take up thy life and go!