

THE HOMESTEAD BILL.

The following is a correct copy of the Homestead bill as passed by both houses of Congress, and signed by the President:

AN ACT to Secure Homesteads to Actual Settlers on the Public Domain, and to Provide a Bounty for Soldiers in lieu of Grants of the Public Lands.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled: That any person who is the head of a family, or who has arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and is a citizen of the United States, or who shall have filed his declaration of intention to become such, as required by the naturalization laws of the United States, and who has never borne arms against the United States Government, or given aid and comfort to its enemies, shall, from and after the first of January, 1863, be entitled to enter one quarter section, or a less quantity, of unappropriated public lands, upon which said person may have filed a pre-emption claim, or which may, at the time the application is made, be subject to pre-emption at \$1 25, or less, per acre; or eighty acres or less of unappropriated lands, at \$2 50 per acre, to be located in a body, in conformity to the legal subdivisions of the public lands, and after the same shall have been surveyed: Provided, That any person owning and residing on land may, under the provisions of this act, enter other land contiguous to his or her said land, which shall not, with the land so already owned and occupied, exceed in the aggregate 160 acres.

SEC. 2. And be it further enacted, That the person applying for the benefit of this act shall, upon application to the Register of the Land-Office in which he or she is about to make such entry, make affidavit before the said Register or Receiver that he or she is the head of a family, or is twenty-one years or more of age, or shall have performed service in the army of the United States, and that he has never borne arms against the Government of the United States, or given aid and comfort to its enemies and that such application is made for his or her exclusive use and benefit, and that said entry is made for the purpose of actual settlement and cultivation, and not either directly or indirectly for the use or benefit of any other person or persons whomsoever; and upon filing the said affidavit with the Register or Receiver, and on payment of \$10, he or she shall thereupon be permitted to enter the quantity of land specified: Provided, however, That no certificate shall be given or patent issued therefor until the expiration of five years from the date of such entry; and if, at the expiration of such time, or at any time within two years thereafter, the person making such entry—or if he be dead, his widow; or in case of her death, his heirs or devisee; or in case of a widow making such entry, her heirs or devisee, in case of her death—shall shall prove by two credible witnesses that he, she, or they have resided upon or cultivated the same for the term of five years immediately succeeding the time of filing the affidavit aforesaid, and shall make affidavit that no part of said land has been alienated, and that he has borne true allegiance to the Government of the United States; then, in such case, he, she, or they, if at that time a citizen of the United States, shall be entitled to a patent, as in other cases provided for by law: And provided, further, That in the case of death of both father and mother, leaving an infant child, or children, under twenty-one years of age, the right and fee shall enure to the benefit of said infant child or children; and the executor, administrator, or guardian may, at any time within two years after the death of the surviving parent and in accordance with the laws of the State in which such children for the time being have their domicile, sell said land for the benefit of said infants, but for no other purpose; and the purchaser shall acquire the absolute title by the purchase, and be entitled to a patent from the United States, on payment of the office fees and sum of money herein specified.

SEC. 3. And be it further enacted, That the Register of the Land-Office shall note all such applications on the tract books and plats of his office, and keep a register of all such entries, and make return thereof to the General Land-Office, together with the proof upon which they have been founded.

SEC. 4. And be it further enacted, That no lands acquired under the provisions of this act shall in any event become liable to the satisfaction of any debt or debts contracted prior to the issuing of the patent therefor.

SEC. 5. And be it further enacted, That if, at any time after the filing of the affidavit, as required in the section of this act, and before the expiration of the five years aforesaid, it shall be proven, after due notice to the settler, to the satisfaction of the register of the land office, that the person having filed such affidavit shall have actually changed his or her residence, or abandoned the said land, shall have ceased to occupy said land for more than six months at any time, then and in that event the land so entered shall revert to the Government.

SEC. 6. And be it further enacted, That no individual shall be permitted to acquire title to more than one quarter section under the provisions of this act; and that the Commissioner of the General Land Office is hereby required to prepare and issue such rules and regulations, consistent with this act, as shall be necessary and proper to carry its provisions

into effect; and that the registers and receivers of the several land offices shall be entitled to receive the same compensation for any lands entered under the provisions of this act that they are now entitled to receive when the same quality of land is entered with money, one-half to be paid by the person making the application at the time of so doing, and the other half on the issue of the certificate by the person to whom it may be issued; but this shall not be construed to enlarge the maximum of compensation now prescribed by law for any register or receiver: Provided, That nothing contained in this act shall be so construed as to impair or interfere in any manner whatever with existing pre-emption rights: And provided, further, That all persons who may have filed their applications for a pre-emption right prior to the passage of this act shall be entitled to all privileges of this act: Provided, further, That no person who has served, or may hereafter serve, for a period of not less than 14 days in the army or navy of the United States, either regular or volunteer, under the laws thereof, during the existence of an actual war, domestic or foreign, shall be deprived of the benefits of this act on account of not having attained the age of 21 years.

SEC. 7. And be it further enacted, That the fifth section of the act entitled "An act in addition to an act more effectually to provide for the punishment of certain crimes against the United States, and for other purposes," approved the 3d of March, in the year 1857, shall extend to all oaths, affirmations and affidavits, required or authorized by this act.

SEC. 8. And be it further enacted, That nothing in this act shall be so construed as to prevent any person who has availed himself or herself of the benefit of the first section of this act from paying the minimum price, or the price to which the same may have graduated, for the quantity of land so entered at any time before the expiration of the five years, and obtaining a patent therefor from the Government, as in other cases provided by law, on making proof of settlement and cultivation as provided by existing laws granting pre-emption rights.

THE DEMOCRATIC "MONK."

AN ORIGINAL STORY.

In one of the old States, about the beginning of the nineteenth century, lived an old editor who had spent most of his young days in political adventure, but had now retired with his family to a quiet little town, where he anticipated being free from political tumult; but in this progressive age, it soon became the site of two political papers—a whig and a democrat. The whig party was then predominant in the town; but the Democrat, which was edited by Mr. Foxly, who was of a nervous temperament—but withal a clever writer,—was in the habit of giving the whigs some hard hits.

The old editor, Mr. Racy, had been a whig in his day, but now did not take sides with either party, particularly. Yet, being very fond of intellectual warfare, which he had encouraged in his youth, he did not pass by any chance to have a little amusement in that line, at which he would laugh heartily: in fact, he loved fun in any shape—story-telling, for instance, for which he had a great tact.

One happy Christmas, he resolved to give a dinner to some of the prominent men of the town, and, in order to have a little mental amusement, some of the two parties were invited; Mr. Foxly, of the Democrat, and Mr. Darnale, of the whig sheet, were among the number.

M. Foxly paid his addresses to Miss Racy, and was not a very unfrequent visitor at the old editor's mansion—a tavern and bar room; and Miss Racy had given him a beautifully worked muslin handkerchief which he highly prized; and he felt encouraged thereby.

Christmas came, and the appointed hour, and Mr. Foxly was attired for the occasion; he stopped at the office to put all things rights, and hire the "devil" to do the business, if any should occur. On he went in high anticipation of making an impression on the dinner, if not on the mind of the daughter; but he missed the handkerchief all at once, and back he went. When Mr. Foxly had turned his back, the devil took his place, and thought he felt some of the inspirations and with pen in hand he would try his ability at "editorial," and, at the same time, he picked up the handkerchief and applied it to his face; the color of the fated handkerchief can be guessed—all besmeared with ink. It was put back in its place, and the pen was taken up; at this moment the editor entered and gathered the "kerchief and left instantly, not dreaming that that handkerchief contained his fate.

All were seated round the board, and the bending of elbows showed that all were busy in devouring the good things that Mr. Racy had provided for them; and Mr. Foxly could see at a glance who and what the company consisted of—whigs generally,—but his good breeding overcome political differences, and nothing in the way of politics was introduced into his conversation. All appeared happy, and now and then a hearty laugh came up by way of variety—probably some of Mr. Racy's rich bits.

The dinner was nigh over, and Mr. Racy thought it time to introduce a rich story, which he had reserved to bring on, or introduce the war which he hoped would be the result; it was something to the effect that the democrats, at some time, had been done up and sold wondrously cheap, or something like that. Foxly saw it was intended for him,

and he was in mental agony trying to decide whether it was more manly to let the old man know that he was a democrat or not to notice it, or treat it with silent contempt. With the help of the warm viands, his mental excitement had caused him to sweat pretty freely, and the fated handkerchief was brought out with a flourish, giving its perfumes to the air, and applied to his forehead, nose, eyes, chin and mouth. Had the old fellow himself made his appearance at that moment a greater sensation could not have been produced. First was heard a chuckle, a titter, then a little louder, and still louder, and Mr. Foxly joined in the laugh, but in noticing that all eyes were turned to him, he inquired very calmly, through a mouthful of turkey, what was the matter. At this, old Racy regularly broke out, followed by the rest of the company.

Here we must leave this scene, and attend to one going on in the bar, which was adjoining the dining room. The hands of the whig paper were collected here to spend Christmas, when the bill-poster entered, and asked permission to stick up a bill, which was granted—all eyes were turned to the bill:

WANTED,
AT THE
DEMOCRAT OFFICE,
FOUR OR FIVE
GOOD COMPOSITORS,
APPLY SOON.

The bill was conspicuous, and all eyes were turned toward it, wondering what the Democrat was up to. They were informed that the Democrat was about to be enlarged.

The bill-sticker had no sooner turned his back to the door, than up jumps one of the compositors, knife in hand, evidently having an "idea" in his head, and cut out of the word democrat the OC, making it read:

WANTED,
AT THE
DEMOCRAT OFFICE,
FOUR OR FIVE
GOOD COMPOSITORS,
APPLY SOON.

The result was a roar of laughter; they all felt that it was a dig into the democrats.

We must now return to the dining room. By this time our friends had somewhat relaxed, their supply of wind having been exhausted, and Mr. Darnale, the Whig editor, took this moment to pitch into him a trifle, by way of retaliation for some old grievance, now that he was down and among enemies, politically, so he commenced:

"What is the matter, you say? Why, nothing, only you have come out in your democratic colors; you have been 'taking ink,' and you have made a sad 'monk' of it, (in printer's phraseology,) and it would be somewhat analogous to say that you were a monk."

"I understand you, sir," replied Mr. Foxly, in a firm tone; "you have taken this opportunity to glut your revenge on me; I comprehend, sir. If you're not a wondrous big ape, I mistake. I take you to be a base coward; and if you wish to have it proved to the contrary, you will follow me into the bar."

At this, he made for the door of the bar, opening which, he plunged into the room, exclaiming at the same time, "pisols for two," here he stopped short, seeing the hands of the Whig seated around the room, "staring" at him, with almost a terror-stricken gaze. The "modesty" was almost shocked with the sight of such an object, accompanied with such an exclamation. But when they discovered how matters stood, the outburst was simultaneous—like the discharge of a park of artillery.

At this instant, his eye caught the bill; this capped the climax; it was too much for frail nature to bear—to be drawn into the enemy's "works," fairly besieged without the least show for resistance—his passion cooled down; he made for the street door; dashed into the street, and on he went towards the Democrat office, legs and arms doing their utmost, "astonishing the natives" as he went. The "street scene" may be imagined; the tableau in the dining-room and bar can also be imagined—old Racy swinging his arms and hollering fairly, followed by the whole orchestra of voices—bass, tenor, alto—all were beautifully represented. It was said that, when Mr. Foxly arrived at the office, the devil, who was engaged at the desk still, was summarily dealt with—the *dead* was taken for the *will*, not the *will* for the *dead*; and he was seen to make his exit from the office, shortly after Mr. Foxly entered, in an exceedingly sprightly manner.

The "poor" devil never dreamed that that careless wipe of his should have wiped his then favorite party out of existence in the town.

It is said that the democrats never, after that affair, thrived in the place; and their political organ was removed to a more congenial clime.

Note.—The word "monk" in printers' phraseology means a blotch of ink. The word "rat" means—a printer who works below the standard rates of wages. One of the meanest names that can be applied to printers.

W. M. C.

A FORTUNATE KISS.

The following pretty little story is narrated by Frederica Bremer, who vouches for its truthfulness:

In the University of Upsala, in Sweden, lived a young student, a noble youth, with great love for studies, but without the means of pursuing them. He was poor, without connections. Still he studied, living in great poverty, but keeping a cheerful heart, and trying to look at the future, which looked so grim to him. His good humor and excellent qualities made him beloved by his young comrades. One day he was standing on the square with some of them, prattling away an hour of leisure, when the attention of the young men became arrested by a young and elegant lady, who by the side of an elder one, was slowly walking over the place. It was the daughter of the Governor of Upsala, living in the city, and the lady was governess. She was generally known for her goodness and gentleness of character, and looked at with admiration by all the students. As the young men stood gazing at her as she passed on like a graceful vision, one of them suddenly exclaimed:

"Well, it would be worth something to have a kiss from such a mouth!"

The poor student, the hero of our story, who looked on that pure angelic face, exclaimed, as if by inspiration—

"Well, I think I could have it!"

"What!" cried his friends, in a chorus, "are you crazy? Do you know her?"

"Not at all!" he answered, "but I think she would kiss me now if I asked her."

"What, in this place—before all our eyes?"

"Freely?"

"Freely."

"Well, if she will give you a kiss in that manner, I will give you a thousand dollars!" exclaimed one of the party.

"And I"—"and I," exclaimed three or four others; for it so happened that several rich young men were in the group, and the bets ran high on so improbable an event. The challenge was made and received in less time than we take to tell it.

Our hero (my authority tells not whether he was handsome or plain; I have my peculiar reasons for believing that he was rather plain, but singularly good-looking at the same time,) immediately walked up to the young lady, and said:

"Mine fraulein, my fortune is now in your hands."

She looked at him with astonishment, but arrested her steps. He proceeded to state his name and condition, his aspirations, and related simply and truly what had just now passed between him and his comrades.

The young lady listened attentively, and at his ceasing to speak, she said, blushing, but with great sweetness:

"If by so little a thing so much good can be effected, it would be foolish for me to refuse your request;" and publicly, in the open square, she kissed him.

Next day the student was sent for by the Governor. He wanted to see the man who dared to seek a kiss from his daughter in that way, and whom she consented to kiss.

He received him with a scrutinizing bow, but, after an hour's conversation, was so pleased with him, that he ordered him to dine at his table during his studies at Upsala.

Our young friend pursued his studies in a manner which soon made him regarded as the most promising student in the University.

Three years were now passed since the day of the first kiss, when the young man was allowed to give a second kiss to the daughter of the Governor.

He became, later, one of the greatest scholars in Sweden, and as much respected for his acquirements as for his character. His works will endure, while time lasts, among the works of science; and from this happy union sprang a family well known in Sweden even at the present time, and whose wealth and high position in society are regarded as trifles in comparison with its goodness and love.

HOW HEALTH BRIGHTENS THINGS.—God has so knit the mind and body together that they act and re-act upon each other. Who has not felt that the state of health gives a coloring to everything that happens to him? One man whose health is depressed, sees his own fireside, that used to burn so cheerily, only colored with gloom and sadness. Another, of a bright and joyous mind, in the full vigor of health, will go forth, and the very desert to that man's eye, will rejoice and the very wilderness to his view will blossom as the rose, and the saddest strains in nature will sound to him the most joyous and brilliant. A sufferer goes out and looks on nature and its roses all become thorns, its myrtles all look like briars, and the sweetest minstrelsy of the grove and forest sounds to him like a wild wailing minor running through all the sound of nature.

LEFT TO HIS FATE.—A prisoner was up on two frivolous charges, as the lawyer designated them, viz.: forging a note of hand and stealing a horse. On running his eye over the jury, the lawyer didn't like their looks, so he prepared an affidavit for continuance, setting forth the absence in Alabama of a principal witness. He said it in a whisper to the prisoner, who, shaking his head, said: "Squire, I can't swear to that or dokymint."

"Why?"

"Kase lit haint true."

The lawyer exploded loud enough to be heard throughout the room. "What! forge a note and steal a horse, and can't swear to a lie! I leave such a fool to his fate."