

a community called ...

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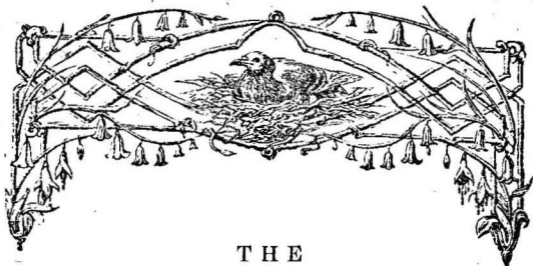
New Series.]

[No. 194.]

SORROWS
OF
A SALOON-KEEPER.

BY
PETROLEUM V. NASBY.

NEW YORK:
PHILLIPS & HUNT.
CINCINNATI:
CRANSTON & STOWE.
1887.



THE
SORROWS OF A SALOON-KEEPER.

BY PETROLEUM V. NASBY.*

LAST nite we wuz all sitting comfortable in Bascum's. It wuz a delightful evening we wuz a spending. The nite wuz cold and chill, and the wind wuz whistlin' through the dark, but the cheelinis uv the weather outside only made it better for us. The stove wuz full uv wood and red-hot on top, diffusin' heat, which is life, and Bascum, yield-

* Mr. D. R. Locke (Petroleum V. Nasby) permits us to publish this from an article in the *Toledo Blade*.

ing to the seductive infloences of comfort that wuz in the place, hed hot water on the stove, and Mrs. Bascum mixed with her fair hands the hot punches, which ever and anon we ordered.

“What a happy life yoors is, Bascum!” sed Kernal M’Pelter.

“Happy!” remarkt Issaker Gavitt, “I shoold say so. Nuthin’ to do but sell liker at a profit of 200 per cent., and every customer yoo git ded shoor for life.”

“Gentlemen,” sed Bascum, onbending, for he was drinking hot whiskey too, “there is advantages in running a wet grocery, but it has its drorbax. It is troo, that there is 200 per cent. profit, or would be ef you get paid for it. A ingenious youth comes to my bar, which hez a small farm, and gets to takin his sustenance. That wood be all rite for me ef he cood only take his sustenance and take care of his farm at the same time. But he don’t, and whenever the necessity uv taking sustenance begins to be regler, just when he mite be uv the most yoose to me, I hev

notist ther wuz alluz a fallin' off in his corn-crop. Corn wont grow onless you plant it, hoe and tend it; and a man which becomes a regler customer uv mine don't plant, hoe, and tend to advantage.

“Then, not heveng corn to sell, he can't pay for liker, and ez he must have it he goes tick, and finally mortgages his place. Troo, I alluz git the place, but it would do better for me ef he cood keep on working it, spend-ing the proceeds at the bar. There is very few men which ken do this.

“And then deth is another drorbax to my biznis. Ef a man cood only drink regler and live to be seventy it wood be wuth while. But they don't do it. They are cut off by the crooel hand of deth jest when they begin to be yoosful to me. This one goes uv liver disease, tother one uv kidney trouble, rhoomatism sets in and knocks one uv 'em off his pins, softenin' uv the brane kills another—”

Joe Bigler, who jist dropped in, doubted the last disease. “No man wich had a brane to soften wood tech the stuff,” said he.

“And then,” continyood Bascum, “ther is a chronic diarrer, and ef one uv ’em gets hurt he never gits over it, and then bronkeetis comes in on ’em, and dyspepsy,—wat good is a man for work wich hez dyspepsy, and there are so many diseases that hits the man which takes hizzen reglerly, that they die altogether too early. Them ez holds on can’t work after a certain time, and them as don’t have the constooshin to hold on perish like the lilies of the valley, jist when they git regler enuff to be profitable.

“And then other trubbles interferes with me. When a noo man gits too full he quarrels and comes to an end from injoodishusnis. I have been in this room twenty-five years, and I hev seen mor’n a dozen uv my best customers, some of ’em wuth two dollars a day to me, stretched out on the floor with bullet holes or knife wounds into ’em. It was a hard blow when Bill Rutledge wuz killed rite where Deerskin is sittin. He spent on an average uv \$4 a day with me, and he was snuffed out in a minit. And then they hung

Sam Kittridge, wat shot him, and ther wuz another uv about the same. Both on 'em, had they lived, wood hev bin my meat for years, for they wuz both strong men and cood have endoored a pile uv it.

“Ther are other trubbles. It is not pleasant to hev men inflamed with liker beatin each other over the heds with bottles and tumblers, for it destroys glassware, and furnitoor is apt to be broken. I have offen wished I hed a kind of whiskey wich didn't make maniacs uv them wich drink it, but I never saw any of that kind. I have often seen a dozen rollin on the floor tu wunst, and when they come to draw pistols and shooting permiskus, it aint pleasant nor profitable. I hev hed pistol balls after going thro' a man smash bottles in the bar, and how are you going to tell whose pistol did the damage?

“Besides these drorbax, comes sich ez yoo. Wat yoose are you to me? It's 'Bascum, a little old rye strate,' and after my good liker is gone, comes the everlastin remark, 'Jist put it down.' That's the disgusting part uv

it. Ef you cood work and ern suthin, and pay cash, ther wood be suthin to the biznis, but you don't.

"To make the s'loon biznis wat it ought to be, I want a noo race of men. I want a set uv customers with glas-lined stumicks backt up with fire brick. I want a lot uv men with heds so constructed that they kin go to bed drunk and wake up in the morn- ing and go about their work. I want a set uv customers with stumicks and heds so constructed that liker wont kill 'em just ez soon ez it becomes a necessity to 'em. However, I manage to get on. There aint no rose without a thorn."