

OLD JUDGE COLE.

Rowan's Highest Judicial Officer
Wearily Awaiting His
Fate.

A Discovery of Both Pluck and
Pathos In the Old Man's
Actions.

A BADLY BROKEN BUCKEYE.

[Special Correspondence of The Times.]

LEXINGTON, KY., March 16.—A fellow who moves around in Frankfort while the Legislature is in session will, if he uses his eyes, see a great deal which affords food for thought to a philosopher. The merry, the sentimental and the sad will revolve around him, and in the course of a few hours, he can see fine representative specimens of each phase of human life. And so he can indulge any mood he may happen to fall into.

One of the features of this legislative session has been Judge Cole, of Rowan county fame, and his presence has been such a feature as was not lacking in the element of pathos. When the investigation of Rowan county matters was first begun, with such noise and parade of stage thunder, people thought, naturally, that Judge Cole was a very bad man. He had sat as Circuit Judge in Rowan county and no body belonging to one of the factions there, could by any process of law be convicted. Therefore it was agreed that Judge Cole stood in with the worst element of the people, and kept one eye open when he was on the bench to see that the scales of justice didn't hang level. He was convicted of, too, as something of a cross between the devil and Dick Dirken with the audacity of the one and the crafty villany of the other.

No one was surprised, therefore, when he hastened to face the music as soon as the first roll of thunder sounded from the big bass drum in the orchestra, and the first flash of lightning flickered from behind the scenes. But those who did not know him were very much surprised when they saw what manner of man he was, and even yet people turn to gaze wonderingly after his passing form when he is pointed out to them. No more mild a mannered man was ever charged with carrying Winchester or monkeying with the Tollivers.

Judge Cole is rather below the medium height for a Kentuckian, and entirely too

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shape nor bearing has he the semblance of a desperado. About five feet eight in height, he will weigh nearly 200, without an ounce of fat about him. Sturdy, strong, compact in build, there is nothing in glance or movement about him that seems aggressive. On the contrary his dark eyes are gentleness itself, and his countenance that of a modest man who wishes to retire within himself and be undisturbed. Scrupulously neat in person, dressed in black broadcloth, and wearing a silk hat, the Judge of the Rowan Circuit Court looks like a well-to-do Baptist preacher from a country diocese where the mutton was juicy and the sisters were very solicitous about the dear pastor's welfare.

From the time of his first coming to Frankfort he has been there waiting the pleasure of the committee. What evidence there has been against him I do not know. I had made up my mind on Rowan county matters long ago, and don't suppose the evidence produced would have changed my opinion, so I did not listen to the details. But from those who heard it I learn that there was little or nothing tending to lay at his door any malfeasance or misfeasance. But whether guilty or innocent, the man's attitude has been such as to strengthen his case without apparent effort on his part. He is called away from his judicial circuit to answer a charge, very grave in that it affects the purity of the bench as well as his own integrity. He can not afford to retire from the field while such armed accusations stalk abroad in search of him. Until the investigation is disposed of finally he must remain in Frankfort to face whatever phase of it may come with Protean art to terrify him. He must live till the accusations die.

The late Judge Tolliver did not impress me as a lamb of the fold who would be easily shorn with a dull pair of shears. Nor can I be brought to conceive of Taylor Young and his son Allie as a couple of cherubim, who would delight to sit on the library of a Sunday-school, and with folded wings and eyes turned heavenward, warble "Come to Jesus" for the children. There have been atrocities in Rowan county, culminating in the murder of the Logan boys, which make even the stones cry out against those who have defiled them with human blood. And even the terrible retribution which Boone Logan visited upon the transgressors seems small and insignificant beside their crimes.

But it may be that public sentiment is too sweeping in its condemnation. Certainly, the attitude of Judge Cole has not been that of a guilty man. Like the boy who "stood on the burning deck whence all but he had fled," he has stayed throughout the investigation, at his own expense, when everybody else interested in it, either actually or presumably, has gone back to his virtuous surroundings. There is both pluck and pathos in his action, and, if he had considered the subject from a purely practical standpoint, he could not have done anything more apt to help his cause. He has become, as I said before, a fixture in Frankfort, and people who come there ask who he is, just as they would inquire the way to the Governor's mansion, or the bar-room where they dished out whisky with blueblazes for its flavoring. And not a man looks at him without sympathy, for the marks of his long and weary waiting are upon him. Some of the heart-sickness of hope deferred gives a sad expression to the man's face, and the suspense of long waiting, while his fate hangs in the balance, shows in heavy lines upon his otherwise amiable countenance.

Day by day you see Judge Cole about the hotels, or pacing the streets in moody silence. Other people, who are on the rack there, seem to have their moments of relaxation, but he seems to have none. Others there are who are waiting, waiting, for what will never come, and though there be unto them heartsickness, at times, and gloomy thoughts, and, mayhap, some fretfulness; yet do they make glad the winter of their discontent in many ways. Is not the Third House in session every night? Do not the Boodlers and Kanoodlers make welcome every comer? Are not the money devils abroad in the land; and who shall fear the Greeks, though they come bearing gifts, if he hath nothing for them to capture?

But Judge Cole knows none of these things. He doesn't even know how to get a good square meal at the hotel by tickling the waiter's palm. He eats what is set before him, and asks no question; he ducks his head like an old drake when it thunders, ready to take what the heavens send him; he ingratiate himself with nobody, lobbies with nobody, hits back at nobody, but sits, like Patience on a monument, smiling in a very wan way at grief.

I have gone out of my way to hear this man talk. I have sought to draw him out upon the subject of his troubles. But I have not found in him any animosity to anybody, or any disposition to retaliate on his enemies. He is modest, shy, retiring, and a thorough believer in his own innocence of any wrongdoing. He sits wearily about the hotels, never drinking, never smoking, never jesting, rarely speaking unless spoken to, with his whole mind concentrated upon the charges made against him. He has lost the breezy tone of his life amid the hills, and is a jaded, tired man. Something should be done with him. If he has been proven to be corrupt or partial, it should be so reported. If he is clear of stain or blame, the committee should say so. It is wrong to keep the man from his duties, and make him merely a melancholy incident of the legislative session. Give the mountain man a chance.

FALCON.

Buckner and the Senatorship.

[Muklenbergh Echo.]

We are in receipt of a letter from Bowling Green which asks us what we think of Gov.