

**KING SHAM, AND OTHER  
ATROCITIES IN VERSE;  
INCLUDING A HUMOROUS  
HISTORY  
OF THE PIKE'S PEAK EXCITEMENT**

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King Sham, and Other Atrocities in Verse; Including a Humorous History of the Pike's Peak  
Excitement by Lawrence N. Greenleaf

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**LAWRENCE N. GREENLEAF**

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BY  
LAWRENCE N. GREENLEAF.



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PREFACE.



MANY of the pieces in this collection were first made public under the *nom de plume* of "Peter Pun-  
ever."

Though the fact of their having "gone the rounds" and "stood the press" might argue their popularity, not till an author is fairly "under cover" are the critics in "full cry!" Readers, on the contrary, are expected to be "full of laugh"—a state of hilarity, according to the old adage, so highly conducive to corpulency, that it must necessarily involve questions of considerable weight. The division of literature into "Solid Reading" and "Reading for the Solid," may yet be rendered imperative.

Leaving all such speculations, however, to those philosophically inclined, with a firm conviction that prefaces, generally speaking, are unnecessary inflictions, and that one who, in this enlightened age, knowingly,

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willfully, and maliciously commits "poetry," can have no reasonable excuse to offer, I subside with the following (the idea having originated with Foote, it appeals the more directly to the understanding):—

I've taken off all sorts of folks, 'tis right  
That I should take myself off—so, good-night.



## CONTENTS.

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THE ICE-BREAKER . . . . .	7
KING SHAM; A HIT AT THE TIMES . . . . .	9
THE SEVENTH SON OF A SEVENTH SON . . . . .	31
RESPONSE TO A TOAST . . . . .	35
OYSTERS, FRIED IN CRUMBS . . . . .	36
ON YOUTHFUL LINGUISTS . . . . .	37
VERSES AND REVERSES . . . . .	38
NED BROWN; OR, THE BITER BIT . . . . .	41
THE OFFICE SEEKER . . . . .	45
THE SPREADING RUMOR . . . . .	47
BACHELOR BABBITT . . . . .	48
SOLD! . . . . .	50
A LOGICAL CONCLUSION . . . . .	51
SCANDAL AND TEA . . . . .	51
PIKE'S PEAKERS OF '59 . . . . .	52
THE TURKEY WAR . . . . .	64
SHOVELS AND PICKS; OR, THE MODEL SUPERINTENDENT	70
A QUERY . . . . .	75
THE CHEESE BOX . . . . .	76
THE IN-SPIRED AUTHOR . . . . .	77
DECIDEDLY SHEEPISH! . . . . .	78
YOUTH—DIVESTED OF SENTIMENT . . . . .	79
EPIGRAM ON GORMANDIZER . . . . .	80

JESTING AND DIGESTING . . . . .	81
ON THE DEFENSIVE . . . . .	82
VERY CHAGRINING! . . . . .	83
IN FOR FUN . . . . .	84
ON THE PROSPECT OF A DRAFT IN NEW YORK CITY	85
ON HAND! . . . . .	87
THE MYSTERY SOLVED . . . . .	90
A DUBIOUS COMMAND . . . . .	92
QUIPS, QUIRES, AND QUIBBLES . . . . .	93
THE SKELETON IN AN AMOUR . . . . .	96
PRICES CURRENT . . . . .	100

#### SERIOUS AND OCCASIONAL PIECES.

SHADES AND GLEAMS . . . . .	105
COLUMBUS . . . . .	107
REMEMBRANCE . . . . .	120
THE SOFT ANSWER . . . . .	121
THE TAUNT . . . . .	122
O YOU MAY SING OF THE ROSE WINE . . . . .	123
THE WAR . . . . .	124
THE PROPHET OF OUR DREAMS . . . . .	125
POEM FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY . . . . .	127
POEM FOR ST. JOHN'S DAY . . . . .	131
NOTES . . . . .	140

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CALIFORNIA

THE ICE-BREAKER.

OFF in the still and gloomy hour of night,  
When not a star or planet greets the sight,  
When all seems drear — before us in the dark  
The little fire-fly sheds its starry spark.  
So, I, now that the shining lights of song  
Withdraw awhile their presence from the throng,  
Would seize the moment to invoke the Nine,  
And with the lightest verses strive to shine!  
Good counsel gives my Muse for times like these —  
Instead of "Please to write," says, "Write to please."  
Ah! what will please? I often gravely ask,  
And then with trembling hand begin my task.  
If you are curious, listen to my cue;  
You sue for fun, 'tis fun that I pursue.  
For I contend, a line in mirthful strain  
Is worth a score of sonnets to Matilda Jane.  
And he whose pen doth make the laugh go round,  
May not be great or with the laurel crowned,  
Yet 'mong his friends, who pile the praise on thick,  
Pass for a "lion" or a "perfect brick!"  
Perhaps a word, a thought, awakes my Muse,  
I grasp my pen and penetration use;  
Description fails; alas! that power I lack, —  
Pegasus rears and throws me from his back.  
Don't laugh, my friends, that I received a fall,  
*Poetic lays* are much esteemed by all.