



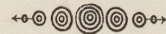
POLK MILLER, (Virginia.)

# Polk Miller's Dialect Recital,

An Evening of Story and Song on

## "Old Times Down South,"

Delineating the Old Plantation Negro.



Mr. Horace J. Smith, Sole Manager,

Box 217, Richmond, Va. Feb. 28th, 1896.

Mr. A. A. Thompson,

Raleigh, N. C.

My dear Sir:-

Yours of the 27th received. I herewith enclose Washington letter and leave that matter entirely to you, but would state in regard to this particular town that if we would be influenced by the sentiment of the Episcopal Fraternity, I am quite sure that all the dates would be postponed until after Lent. However, this is an utter impossibility and I think the route had better stand as it is in every respect, with the exception of Burlington, Greensboro and Wilson. Mrs. C. L. Payne is mentioned as one who would manage the Washington date, and you had better notify her at once. I have not written to any of the names sent in, as I desire to get the list complete before I write, as in my first letter I shall say everything that is necessary for me to say and will send their printed supplies. The time is now so short that it will be impossible for me to have special printing done on circulars, posters, etc., that is, name of hall, date, price of admission, place where tickets can be secured, list of patronesses. That will now have to be done in each town and as I send the supplies to the different towns, I will give them instructions as to how this is to be done. Mr. Miller's

A MOST UNIQUE ENTERTAINMENT, BRISTLING WITH AMUSING ANECDOTES, QUIANT SKETCHES, PATHETIC ILLUSTRATIONS, AND OLD-TIME PLANTATION MELODIES (ACCOMPANIED BY THE BANJO) THE WHOLE COMBINING TO PRODUCE A MOST CHARMING AND DELIGHTFUL EVENING'S ENJOYMENT. THE ENTERTAINMENT IS IN NO SENSE A LECTURE, BUT IS "AN EVENING OF STORY AND SONG." IF YOU WOULD ENJOY A HEARTY LAUGH, MR. MILLER CAN FURNISH THE INCENTIVE.

## Personal Commendations of Mr. Miller's Recital.

Henry Watterson, Ed. Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal, says:

"Polk Miller, you have the best one-man show in America."

Chauncey M. Depew, Esq., writes:

"I take pleasure in certifying to the ability of Mr. Polk Miller and the excellence of his recitals."

Thomas Nelson Page, "Mars Chan" Etc.

"Polk Miller is a great success, for he knows the negro, can tell a negro story and give the true negro dialect better than any man living."

Howard Saxby, Cincinnati, Ohio.

"What I like in Polk Miller is, that though he is not my wife, I can stand his lectures twice."

Hon. C. U. McElroy, Bowling Green, Ky.

"What James Whitcomb Riley is to the Hoosier dialect, Polk Miller is to the Negro dialect; both perfect in their line."

Rev. J. William Jones, Chaplain Univ. of Va.

"Polk Miller and his banjo reproduce the negro of the happy days before the war, and his entertainments give the highest pleasure and satisfaction to all who hear him. I do not hesitate to say that it is inimitably done."

Ex-Governor Fitzhugh Lee.

"I know Polk Miller well. When he is sketching the 'foe de war' negro, if you did not know he was Polk Miller you would think he was a darkey of olden time, and if you did not know he was an old-time darkey you would think he was Polk Miller."

Prof. J. U. Lloyd, Cincinnati, Ohio.

"Polk Miller is a wonder. I have heard him several times and could listen to him every night of the year. He is never tiring, for he is always original and sparkling. He is undoubtedly the platform success of the nineteenth century."

Mark Twain.

Mark Twain, in his introduction of Mr. Miller at the Madison Square Garden Concert Hall, in New York City, said: "Mr. Miller is thoroughly competent to entertain you with his sketches of the old-time negro, and I not only commend him to your intelligent notice, but personally endorse him. The stories I have heard him tell are the best I have ever heard."

Joel Chandler Harris, "Uncle Remus," Etc.

"Polk Miller is the humorist the country has been looking for. I know of no one who can more aptly depict the real negro character or more faithfully render the true negro dialect. *There is a live 'nigger' hidden somewhere in Polk Miller's Banjo* and you look for him to jump out and go to dancing when Miller strikes a string."

The Governor of Virginia says:

Mr. Polk Miller is one of the best delineators of the negro character that I have ever seen. An evening with him is an *absolute pleasure*. First, his quaint imitations of the old-time darkey bring side-splitting *laughter*, and then, almost in the same breath, he moves his audience to *tears*. *He is a genius* in his line, and what renders his entertainments more delightful is the fact that his anecdotes are *pure*, and replete with humor."

CHAS. T. O'FERRALL.

Bill Nye says:

"Polk Miller does not advertise goods he cannot deliver. He says he will describe and illustrate the Old Virginia Plantation Negro, and I am free to say that he does it. After hearing the negro dialect given by a *Canadian*, and the folk song and dialect of the negro given in *Cork and Cockney* at St. James Hall, London, I am glad to hear Mr. Miller correct this misconception with the *real thing*."

The Governor of Florida says:

"It affords me pleasure to commend Mr. Miller, of Richmond, Virginia, as a refined and cultured gentleman. His name is a household word in his native State of Virginia, whose people always welcome him, not only as a citizen of the best Southern type, but as the best living delineator of the old-time negro character. His 'recitals' are entertaining in the highest degree, and no one will regret hearing him. Mr. Miller is a successful business man in Richmond, as well as a genius in his line. In all respects he is worthy of the highest esteem and confidence."

W. D. BLOXHAM.

## Prominent Points Visited.

NEW YORK,	N. Y.
BROOKLYN,	N. Y.
PHILADELPHIA,	Pa.
PITTSBURG,	Pa.
BALTIMORE,	Md.
WILMINGTON,	DEL.
WASHINGTON,	D. C.
RICHMOND,	Va.
NORFOLK,	Va.
LYNCHBURG,	Va.
RALEIGH,	N. C.
WILMINGTON,	N. C.
COLUMBIA,	S. C.
CHARLESTON,	S. C.
ATLANTA,	Ga.
SAVANNAH,	Ga.
MONTGOMERY,	Ala.
SELMA,	Ala.
NASHVILLE,	Tenn.
LOUISVILLE,	Ky.
CHARLESTON,	W. Va.
ST. LOUIS,	Mo.
JACKSON,	Miss.
NEW ORLEANS,	La.
HOUSTON,	Tex.
CINCINNATI,	Ohio.

## SOME OF OUR AUSPICES.

UNIVERSITY CLUB,	N. Y. City.
SOUTHERN SOCIETY,	N. Y. City.
ALDINE CLUB,	N. Y. City.
TEACHERS' ASSEMBLIES,	Virginia,
	North Carolina.
ST. NICHOLAS SOCIETY,	N. Y. City.
NEW CENTURY CLUB,	Wilmington, Del.
HAMILTON CLUB,	Brooklyn, N. Y.
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA,	Charlottesville, Va.
TRINITY COLLEGE COURSE,	Durham, N. C.
CHAUTAQUA ASSEMBLIES,	New York, Pennsylvania,
	Maryland,
	Kentucky, Tennessee,
	Georgia,
	Alabama.
AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL	ASSOCIATION,
	Asheville, N. C., '94.
DAVIDSON COLLEGE,	Davidson, N. C.

## Repotorial Remarks.

Richmond (Va.) Times.

"The new genius of the South"

Charleston (S. C.) Sun.

"As an artist in his line he has no equal."

Atlanta (Ga.) Constitution.

"Mr. Miller *knows* the negro."

Nashville (Tenn.) American.

"Mr. Miller is a genius as an entertainer."

Charleston (W. Va.) Evening Mail.

"Mr. Miller has no equal as a negro dialect delineator."

Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser.

"His entertainment is entirely out of the usual run."

Augusta (Ga.) Chronicle.

"Polk Miller is all that he is said to be"

Washington (D. C.) Post.

"Polk Miller kept his audience in a constant exercise of its risibles."

New York Tribune.

"Polk Miller kept his audience convulsed with laughter for a full hour."

Cincinnati (O.) Commercial Gazette.

"It was a well-pleased audience that left the Auditorium at 10:30 last night."

Richmond (Va.) Dispatch.

"A better delineator of the true negro dialect and character than this charming Virginia gentleman never graced the stage."

Houston (Tex.) Post.

Mr. Miller doesn't *lecture*, he just talks, plays the banjo to perfection, and sings Negro songs in a way that beats a negro himself."

Wilmington (N. C.) Star.

"A Virginia gentleman of the old school, a versatile writer, and last night proved him without a doubt a success in his chosen avocation."

Bowling Green (Ky.) Park City Times.

"His entertainment was entirely new here. \* \* \* The audience was convulsed with laughter at the ludicrous situations pictured."

Louisville (Ky.) Courier Journal.

"The best commentary that can be made on his novel entertainment is to say that nobody should neglect to attend his recital this afternoon."

New Orleans (La.) Times-Democrat.

"The listener found it only necessary to close his eyes and imagine that he was enjoying the peculiar prattle of an old-time darkey."

Wilmington (Del.) Morning News.

"Mr. Miller's imitations of the old-time darkey are *inimitable*, and it is useless to undertake to describe it. His work on the banjo and plantation melodies were highly enjoyed."

Selma (Ala.) Journal.

"The gentleman had scarcely spoken ten minutes before his audience felt as if they were seated around the hearthstone of their own home, and that the speaker was one of their own home circle."

New York World.

"The St. Nicholas Society last evening celebrated the Dutch Eastertide festival, the Paas, with a dinner at the Waldorf. The President, Chauncey M. Depew, presiding, \* \* \* Polk Miller, of Richmond, entertained the Society with a recital on "The Old Virginia Plantation Negro."

Brooklyn (N. Y.) Life.

"Mr. Miller appeared on Thursday evening at the Hamilton Club, under the auspices of the Art and Literature Committee, and the members were charmed both by his personality and wit."

Baltimore (Md.) Sun.

"Mr. Miller is an excellent mimic, and his dialect stories of negro life in Virginia before the war were enjoyed by a large audience. Besides his stories, Mr. Miller sang a number of plantation melodies to his own accompaniment on a banjo."

Philadelphia (Pa.) Ledger.

"Polk Miller, of Virginia, an entertainer who has a happy, colloquial way with him that proves none the less effective because it is so unassuming, put himself thoroughly *en rapport* with the goodly audience at the New Century drawing room last evening. He gave a 'dialect recital,' which proved an agreeable departure from the ordinary run of platform performances."

New Orleans (La.) Daily Picayune.

"Mr. Polk Miller, of Virginia, was the show at Odd Fellows' Hall last night. His lecture, or concert, whichever his hearers may choose to call it, is one of the *most unique of all* that have ever been heard in this city. \* \* \* The people seemed unwilling to let Mr. Miller stop."

St. Louis (Mo.) Republic.

"The evening of story and song for the benefit of the Methodist Orphans' Home, given at the Germania Theatre last night, was one of the greatest—it might be said with truth—'howling successes' St. Louis has had for a long time, if the shouts of laughter that greeted Mr. Polk Miller's inimitable Negro imitations were any criterion."

## CHAUTAQUA NOTES.

New York Chautauqua.

"An immense audience filled the Amphitheatre with shouts of laughter at Polk Miller's pictures of negro life and manners in the old times before the war last night. Mr. Miller's songs and imitations of typical negro characters were evidently true to life. Mr. Miller's stories were entertaining, and seemed to amuse the people greatly."

Alabama Chautauqua.

"Mr. Miller is one of the finest men in his line known to the South. He can fairly make a banjo talk, and as for imitating the Negro of olden time, he cannot be surpassed. It is needless to say he will have a packed house to-night."

Kentucky Chautauqua.

"Mr. Polk Miller delighted the audience with plantation stories, dialect recitations, and Negro songs. His banjo playing was a rare treat, and the great audience went wild with enthusiasm. Nobody ever saw a more delighted crowd than the smiling one of last evening. It elicited much applause when Dr. Davidson announced that Mr. Miller would appear again to-day."

\*A.A.T.#2.\*

reason for not coming to Burlington, Greensboro and Wilson are good ones and when he sees you at Raleigh on the 9th, he will explain fully the situation, which would be impossible for me to do in a letter. I merely suggested the names of these other towns to put in the place of the towns which are cut out. Of course the matter is entirely in the hands of the Committee to make the route and all arrangements, and all the information I require is as I have stated two or three times, the names of parties who are to be in control of the management of local affairs, advertising, etc., in each particular town that Mr. Miller will visit. As far as that is concerned, I can ship to Raleigh the entire bulk of printing necessary for all the dates and you can send it out from there if you desire, but I thought if I were in touch with each town there would be a great many things that I could do that would help towards the success of the entertainments. I verily believe, that it would pay for some active man to travel over Mr. Miller's prospective route and personally meet the Committees and stir them up into active work, and see that all the arrangements were as thorough as possible. I believe the extra expense would be fully justified and would pay for itself three times over, but I leave this entirely in your hands and will concur in any arrangements you may make. As Gov. Carr said, I think that Mr. Miller's R. R. fares, hotel bills, hall rents, local printing and advertising, can in the majority of places be secured at a much reduced rate and sometimes free, and in this event I am convinced in order to make this tour financially successful, that it will pay for some one to make the trip above proposed. If such a trip were planned, it would be well to write ahead to each town and have the Committees assembled ready to meet the representative, so that there will be no delays and the territory may be speedily covered. The towns now on the list for which I have no names are as follows:

\*A.A.T.#3.\*

Raleigh,  
Hickory,  
Statesville,  
Charlotte,

&

Wilmington,  
Newbern,  
Henderson,  
Wake Forest.

Washington as I said before is uncertain, and will depend on whether Mrs. C. L. Payne will take charge of the matter. If you want me to ship all of the printing to Raleigh and then send it out from there to the different towns, please notify me at once. It may be that express charges might be saved by this means as the matter could go from here by freight, and free express transportation might be secured by you in Raleigh, whereas I could not secure that item here.

Assuring you that I am anxious to co-operate in every respect and also that until I have a complete list of the names of people who will manage these entertainments in every town, I cannot do so, and trusting that at the earliest time such information will be given, I am,

Yours truly,

H. F. Smith.