

# THE FRENCH OBSERVER.

B. F. SLOAN, Editor.

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B. F. SLOAN, EDITOR.  
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995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

## Select Poetry.

**THE BRIDE.**  
[From the Louisville Democrat.]  
She stood before the altar screen,  
Beneath the grey-arched temple pile,  
And o'er her head the crystal spheres  
Of morning's richest sunny smile,  
Zohed in the golden flood of light,  
To earth she seemed not to belong;  
Or if to earth, her form was bright  
As seraphs loved when earth was young.  
Yet she was pale—and sooth a tear  
Was trembling in her lucid eye,  
As though some thought to memory dear,  
Was rising with a fating sigh,  
And thoughts most dear they were that rose,  
For her love was recalled on one,  
Yet never can the heart's leaves close  
On kindness past, or memory's shroud.  
For she had left the home of years,  
The nesting-place of infant days;  
And she had left her foot where tears  
Too often met sweet woman's weep,  
And she had laid a fond warm kiss  
As ever beat, at love's bright shrine,  
With murmured vows, "I'll die to part,  
Devotely, thine, only thine."  
The chain of gold around her loins,  
The clasped jewels on her hand,  
Were gathered where hot tears were weeping,  
From toil, at wealth's untamed command;  
Then came, can these most emblem be,  
To show the wealth that they unfold;  
For hand and heart, where love is left,  
Can stand on jewels, gems and gold.  
In joyous hour, or sorrow's strife,  
In cloistered solitude, she will stand,  
Aged in the pulch of life,  
To scatter blessings from her hand,  
Then say not woman's love is light,  
Her constancy of love in pride;  
For never was she first to slight  
The vows of love which called her—bride.

## Choice Miscellany.

### THE FIRST QUARREL.

A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

I am one of the many from Heaven's seat  
Fit to take away the individual interests of life, that per-  
chance they might become universal. Sometimes I  
could almost liken myself to a mirror, which receives on  
its silent, solitary breast the fleeting images that pass it  
by, and so takes them, for the time being, as compani-  
ons to its own void heart, while it makes of them pic-  
tures to be reflected abroad. These passing interests  
I create for myself continually. They seem, too, to meet  
me voluntarily on every side, not merely in society, but  
in chance encounters along the waysides of life. I rarely  
journey five miles away from my home without dis-  
covering, or if you will, manufacturing, some pleasant  
and useful passage in human life, which makes me feel  
one with my fellow-creatures, as though the world  
stretched out lovingly its hand to the solitary one,  
called her "Sister!"  
The other day I took my way homeward. Reader, I  
may as well tell the truth, that I am a little old maid,  
living in London, and working hard that I may live old;  
also that, in order to add a small might to my slender  
modicum of health, I had abided for a brief space at  
that paradise of Cockneys—Southend. A very respecta-  
ble man, with his lively green laces extending clear  
to the shore of what is all but a sea; his pleasant  
cliffs feathered with rich underwood, and the tide sil-  
ent kisses at high-water, making the whole neighbor-  
hood as pretty a compound of sea-side and rural scenery  
"fairer far" (the London steambath, Druid, please re-  
member) than I had ever seen in my life. I had  
just returned from thence, I felt a slight pain at my  
heart. One suffers many such on quitting earth's pleas-  
ant nooks. "I ought to have got used to 'good by' by  
this time," thought I to myself, half patiently, half  
sadly, and began to divert my attention by nothing  
the various groups of deck. I always do so on prin-  
ciple, and it is hard if I do not find some "bit"  
of human nature to study, or some form of outward  
beauty in man, woman, or child to fall in love with.  
Traveling alone (as I ever do travel)—what should I fear  
with my quiet face and my forty years? I had plenty of  
opportunity to look around, and soon fell on two persons,  
meet subjects to awaken interest.  
They were a young couple who sat opposite to me, so  
close that I could hear every word above a whisper. But  
whispering when seemed pleasant, at least for a  
time, I should have taken them for lovers, save for a  
certain air of cheerful reserve which lovers never have,  
and an occasional and unobtrusive "my dear,"  
talking from both their lips. At last, keeping a watch  
over the girl's left hand, I saw it unglued, and thereon  
the wedding ring! It rested with a sort of new im-  
portance, as though the hand were unused to its weight.  
Unconsciously she played and fidgeted with its shining  
circle, and then recoiled clear with a smile and  
blush. It was quite clear her new pet was a bridegroom  
and bride. Here, then, was a page in human life open  
before me; I tried to read it line by line, ransoming every  
I could not read. Full opportunity I had; for they took  
no notice of me: they saw nothing in the world but their  
own two selves. Happy blindness! I believe much in  
physiognomy, so I amused myself with deciphering  
theirs. The girl's face was strikingly pretty. There  
was a high brow, showing little talent, but much sense;  
the candid, loving, and yet half wicked dark eyes; the  
straight nose and short curled upper lip; but there the  
face ceased, as faces sometimes do, from beauty into  
positive ugliness. The lower lip was full—pouting—  
and showing that it could look both sulky and sensual; and  
the chin retreated—in, fact, positively ran away! I said  
to myself, "If the upper half of the character matches  
the under half of the face, the young husband there will  
find a few more difficulties with his wife than he has mar-  
ried to the 'lassie' to 'wood.' So I turned to his counte-  
nance and speculated thereon. It was decidedly hand-  
some—Greek in its outline; in expression so sweet, as to  
be almost feeble; at least so I thought at first when he  
was smiling, as he ever did when he looked at her. But  
in a few minutes of silence I saw the 'mouth settle into  
firm horizontal lines, indicating that with its gentleness  
was united that resolute will and clear decision without  
which no man can be the worthy head of a household—  
respected, loved and obeyed. For in all households one  
must rule; and was to that family wherein its proper  
head is a dethroned and contemned slave!  
Sometimes, when I noticed the pretty, willful ways and  
somewhat half-silly remarks of the bride, I felt that this  
young, thoughtless creature might yet have cause to  
thank Heaven that she had married a man who knew  
how to rule as well as to cherish her.  
Until now, I had not speculated on their station or  
calling; it was enough for me that they belonged to the  
wide family of humanity. But as my musings wandered  
into their future life, I took this also into consid-  
eration. Both had a certain grace and ease in their  
speech, though the wife's tone, I distinguished  
ed the voice that which infers most classes of Lon-  
doners. But the husband looked and spoke like a gen-  
tleman. I felt sure he was such, even though he might  
stand behind a counter. A third individual broke their

## Very quiet they seemed: all the exuberant happiness

which at first had found vent in almost childish frolic  
was passed away. The girl no longer laughed and  
jested with her young husband, but she drew close to his  
side, her head bending towards his shoulder, as though,  
but for the presence of the stranger, it would find drop  
there, heavy with its weight of pensive and love. Yet  
as I watched the restless look in her eyes, and the faint  
shadow that still lingered on the young man's face, I  
thought how much had been perilled, and how much—my  
ten times happier—would both have felt had the first  
quarrel never been!  
In the confusion of departure I lost my young friends,  
as I thought, forever; but on penetrating the mysterious  
depths of an omnibus, I heard a pleasant voice address-  
ing me—"So you are again our fellow-passenger to—"  
But I will not say where, lest the young couple should  
"speak" for me, and demand why I dared to "put them  
in print." And yet they would scarce be worth did they  
know the many chords they touched, and the warm in-  
terests they awakened, in a poor, withered heart which  
has few.  
It was the dreariest of wet nights in London—Heaven  
knows how dreary that is—but they did not seem to feel  
it at all. They were quite happy—quite gay. I wonder-  
ed whether for them was prepared the deepest bliss of  
earth—the first "communing home;" and I felt almost sure  
of it when the husband called out to the conductor, "Set  
us down at—"; naming a quiet, unobtrusive, new  
built square. He said it with the half-conscious impor-  
tance of one who gives a new address, thinking the world  
must notice what is of so much interest to himself; and  
then the young people looked at one another, and smiled.  
I said to the wife—drawing the bow at venture—"What  
a miserable night!—Is it not pleasant coming home?"  
She looked first at her husband, and then turned to me  
her whole face beaming and glowing with happiness,  
"Oh, it is—it is!"  
They bade me good-night, and disappeared.

## A WEDDING EXCURSION.

FROM THE GREAT WEST.

The evening the ceremony was performed which made  
Tim and Rachel a unit, and the company had "dinner"  
with Rachel, both announcing the desperate resolution  
of starting the next morning on a grand tour of observa-  
tion.  
"He had always bin in him," he said, "and never  
saw nothing, and now he was going straight to G—, and  
afore he come back he would see a steamboat, if there  
was such a thing any how."  
The village of G—, was about fifty miles distant, lying  
on the Ohio River, and a journey there from Tim's  
residence in those days, was deemed a great undertak-  
ing. Some of them thought Tim had taken leave of his  
senses, or certainly he was not in earnest, but he assured  
them he was, and the next morning, tacking up "old  
gray," and putting in a supply of pork and beans for the  
journey, Tim and the new Mrs. Higgins started on their  
bridal tour. The second day the hopeful pair, without  
accident arrived at G—. Just as they were entering  
the town it so happened that the steamboat Pennsylvania  
was rounding in, to make landing. Tim caught  
sight of her smoke pipes, and in an ecstasy of wonder  
and delight cried out:  
"There she comes now, by hokey! Look at her! Rachel!  
Je-rusalem! just as Squire Stokely said—smoke like a  
burnin' feller. Her's coming in to shore, at! Jimmie,  
what a creek! fuder comes than from our house to Shad-  
low's mill! ain't it Rachel? See, they're a-rying up the  
varmint with a halter. Wonder if it's sleeky and pulls.  
Here's a port, let's tie gray, and go down to the critter."  
"Thunder! what's that? how it aunts! You better  
keep away from it, Tim," said Rachel; "it mought swal-  
low you down like winkin."  
"I a'n't afeared," said Tim; "folks are coming off on't  
now. She's good natured I reckon, only spirited."  
By this time "gray" was made fast, and Tim and Rachel  
were moving cautiously in the direction of the boat.  
"No talking, Rachel, I'm going on to her."  
The plank was out, and Tim, followed along by Rachel,  
boldly walked up, and soon stood alone side the engine.  
"See how she aunts, they must have put her through!"  
said Tim. "I say, old boss," said Tim, addressing the  
engineer, "move her jints a little, I want to see how she  
travels."  
"She'll move directly," replied the man of steam,  
"better keep out of her way."  
Tim and Rachel now wended their way to the main  
deck, and so completely were they absorbed with what  
they saw, that they did not observe the preparations mak-  
ing for her departure. At the last tap of the bell, Tim  
thought there must be a meetin' somewhere, but had no  
idea, it was anything which concerned him. At length  
as Tim afterwards expressed it "he began to breathe  
hard, and the water began to smash," and Tim for the  
first time observed they were in the midst of the river.  
"Hello here, old boss!" screamed Tim; "I say, cap'n,  
what you 'bout when you gets in?"  
They were now under full headway, and Tim saw  
the town and old gray disappearing like magic.  
"Thunder, why don't you hold her in?" roared Tim,  
"she's running away. What 'il, do! Oh Lord, Tim,  
the critter—can't she be bro't in?"  
A wag who comprehended poor Tim's predicament  
observed:  
"You are in for it now, my friend, we don't stop till we  
get to Orleans."  
"I told you to keep away from the 'wasted varmint,'"  
screamed Rachel; "now what will become of us?"  
Tim was in despair. At this moment the steamer's  
whistle uttered one of its sharpest notes, and Tim's hair  
stood on end.  
"She's loose, squealing and kicking!" shrieked Tim.  
"Oh Lord, Rachel, we are lost," and the absence of the  
knowledge of any prayer, he tried to repeat a part of  
the blessing he had heard Deacon Suively ask at the table.  
By this time the captain had learned of poor Tim's  
misfortune, and kindly ordered the boat to land, and Tim  
and Rachel once more stood on terra firma. Footing it  
back with all dispatch, they found old gray still fast to  
the post, and not many minutes elapsed before his head  
was turned homeward, with Tim and Rachel, who were per-  
fectly satisfied with what they had seen of the world in  
general, and their experience in steamboating in particu-  
lar.  
A RECIPE.—Whenever you get a black eye by a fall  
on the ice, or from running against the bed post, or from  
running away from a powerful fist, apply a cloth wrung  
out of very warm water and renew it until the pain ceases.  
The moisture and heat refreshes the blood and sends  
it back to the proper channels. Use warm or hot, but  
never cold water to the bruise. A doctor would charge  
a guinea for this advice, we give it gratis.  
A GOOD COW.—The best cow in the United States,  
probably, in one owned near Geneva, N. York, which  
through the month of June, 1849 gave forty-two quarts  
of milk per day; and for five days, she gave forty-five  
quarts per day. The cow is half Durham of the native  
breed.  
The Cherokee Indians, it is said, design to apply  
for admission into the Union in a few years, and with  
that view, they are exceedingly anxious to compete with  
the whites in all kinds of improvement.

## MARHOMT: HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER.

BY WASHINGTON IRVING.  
Mahomet, according to accounts handed down by  
tradition from his contemporaries, was of the middle stature,  
square built and sinewy, with large hands and feet.  
In his youth he was uncommonly strong and vigorous;  
in the latter part of his life he inclined to corpulency.  
His head was capacious, well shaped and well set on a  
neck which rose like a pillar from his ample chest—  
His forehead was high, broad at the temples, and crossed  
by veins extending down to the eyebrows, which  
swelled whenever he was angry or excited. He had an  
oval face, marked and expressive features, an aquiline  
nose, black eyes, arched eyebrows which nearly met, a  
mouth large and flexible, indicative of eloquence, very  
white teeth, somewhat parted and irregular; black hair  
which waved without a curl on his shoulders, and a long  
and very full beard.  
His deportment, in general, was calm and equable;  
he sometimes indulged in pleasantry, but more com-  
monly was grave and dignified, though he is said to have  
possessed a smile of captivating sweetness. His com-  
plexion was more ruddy than is usual with Arabs, and in  
his excited and enthusiastic moments there was a  
glow and radiance in his countenance, which his disci-  
ples imputed to the supernatural light of prophecy.  
His intellectual qualities were undoubtedly of an ex-  
traordinary kind. He had a quick apprehension, a re-  
tentive memory, a vivid imagination, and an inventive  
genius. Owing but little to education, he had quickened  
and informed his mind by close observation, and stored  
it with a great variety of knowledge concerning the sys-  
tems of religion current in his day, or handed down by  
tradition from antiquity. His ordinary discourse was  
grave and sententious, abounding with those aphorisms  
and apophthegms so popular among the Arabs; at times he  
was excited and eloquent, and his eloquence was aided  
by a voice musical and sonorous.  
He was sober and abstemious in his diet, and a rigor-  
ous observer of fasts. He indulged in no magnificence  
of apparel, the ostentation of a petty mind; neither was  
his simplicity in dress affected, but the result of a real  
disregard to distinction from so trivial a source. His  
garments were sometimes of wool; sometimes of the  
striped cotton of Yemen, and were often patched. He  
wore a turban, for he said turbans were worn by the  
angels; and in arranging it he let one end hang down be-  
tween his shoulders, which he said was the way they  
wore it. He forbade the wearing of clothes entirely of  
silk; but permitted a mixture of thread and silk. He  
forbade also red clothes and the use of gold rings. He  
wore a seal ring of silver, the engraved part under his  
finger close to the palm of his hand, bearing the inscrip-  
tion, "Mahomet, the messenger of God." He was scrup-  
ulous as to personal cleanliness, and observed frequent  
ablutions. In some respects he was a voluptuary—"There  
are two things in this world," would he say, "which delight  
me, women and perfumes. These two things rejoice my  
eyes, and render me more fervent in devotion." From his  
extreme cleanliness, and the use of perfumes and of  
sweet-scented oil for his hair, probably arose that sweet-  
ness and fragrance of person, which his disciples consid-  
ered innate and miraculous. His passion for the  
when in the presence of a beautiful female, he was  
continually smoothing his brow and adjusting his hair,  
as if anxious to appear to advantage.  
The number of his wives is uncertain. Abulfeda, who  
writes with more caution than other of the Arabian his-  
torians, limits it to fifteen, though some make it as  
many as twenty-five. At the time of his death he had  
nine, each in her separate dwelling, and all in the vicinity  
of the mosque at Medina. The plea alleged for his indul-  
gence in a greater number of wives than he permitted to  
his followers, was a desire to bring a race of prophets for  
his people. If such indeed were his desire, it was dis-  
appointed. Of all his children, Fatima, the wife of Ali,  
alone survived him, and she died within a short time  
after his death. Of her descendants, none excepting her  
eldest son Hassan ever sat on the throne of the Calif.  
In his private dealings he was just. He treated friends  
and strangers, the rich and poor, the powerful and the  
weak, with equity, and was beloved by the common  
people for the affability with which he received them,  
and listened to their complaints.  
He was naturally irritable, but had brought his tem-  
per under great control, so that even in the self-indulgent  
intercourse of domestic life he was kind and tolerant—"I  
served him from the time I was eight years old,"  
said his servant Anna, "and he never scolded me for any  
thing, though things were spoiled by me."  
The question now occurs, why he has been unprincipled  
impator that he has been represented? Were all his  
visions and revelations deliberate falsehoods, and was his  
whole system a tissue of deceit? In considering this  
question, we must bear in mind that he is not chargeable  
with any extravagances which exist in his name.  
Many of the various and revelations handed down as  
having been given by him are apocryphal. The miracles  
ascribed to him are all fabrications of Moslem zealots—  
He expressly and repeatedly disclaimed all miracles  
excepting the Koran; which, considering its incomparable  
merit, and the way in which it had come down to him  
from heaven, he pronounced the greatest of miracles—  
And here we must indulge a few observations on this  
famous document. While zealous Moslems and some  
of the most learned doctors of the faith draw proofs  
of its divine origin from the inimitable excellence of its  
style and composition, and the avowed illiteracy of Ma-  
homet; less devout critics have pronounced it a chaos  
of beauties and defects; without method or arrangement;  
full of obscurities, incoherencies, repetitions, false ver-  
sions of scriptural stories, and direct contradictions.  
The truth is, that the Koran, as it now exists, is not the  
same Koran delivered by Mahomet to his disciples, but  
has undergone many corruptions and interpolations—  
The revelations contained in it were given at various  
times, in various places, and before various persons;  
sometimes they were taken down by his secretaries or  
disciples on parchment, on palm-leaves, or the shoulder-  
blades of sheep, and thrown together in a chest, of which  
one of his wives had charge; sometimes they were merely  
treasured up in the memories of those who heard them.  
No care appears to have been taken to systematize and  
arrange them during his life; and at his death they re-  
mained in scattered fragments, many of them at the mer-  
cy of fallacious memories. It was not until several years  
after his death, that Abu Bekr undertook to have them  
gathered together and transcribed. Zaid bin Thabet,  
who had been one of the secretaries of Mahomet, was  
employed for the purpose. He professed to know many  
parts of the Koran by heart, having written them down  
at the dictation of the prophet; other parts he collect-  
ed from the recollection of his hearers, and many parts he  
took as reported to him by various disciples who pro-  
fessed to have heard them uttered by the prophet himself.  
The heterogeneous fragments thus collected were thrown  
together without selection, without chronological order,  
and without system of any kind. The volume thus  
formed during the Caliphate of Abu Bekr, was trans-  
cribed by different hands, and many professed copies  
put in circulation and dispersed throughout the Moslem  
cities. So many errors, interpolations, and contradictory  
readings, soon crept into these copies, that Othman, the  
third Calif, called in the various manuscripts, and re-

## ing what he pronounced the genuine Koran, caused

all the others to be destroyed.  
If we are far from considering Mahomet the gross and  
impious impostor that some have represented him, also  
are we indisposed to give him credit for that vast forecast,  
and for that deeply concerted scheme of universal con-  
quest which have been ascribed to him. He was, un-  
doubtedly, a man of great genius and a suggestive imagi-  
nation, but it appears to us that he was, in a great de-  
gree, the creature of impulse and excitement, and very  
much at the mercy of circumstances. His schemes grew  
out of his fortunes, and not his fortunes out of his schemes.  
He was forty years of age before he first branched his  
doctrines. He suffered year after year to stand away  
before the announcement of his mission, and from being a  
wealthy merchant he had sunk to be