THE ERIE OBSERVER.

A. P. DURLIN & CO., Proprietors. FORWARD. $1 50 A YEAR, in Advance.

VOLUME 22. SATURDAY MORNING, AUGUST 23, 1851. NUMBER 15.

Erie Weekly Observer.

A. P. DURLIN & CO. PROPRIETORS

B. F. SLOAN, Editor.

OFFICE, CORNER STATE ST. AND PUBLIC SQUARE, ERIE.

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Resident Dentist: Office and dwelling in the Beebe Block, on the East side of the Public Square, Erie. Teeth inserted on Gold Plate, from one to an entire set. Carious teeth filled with pure Gold, and restored to health and usefulness. Teeth cleansed with instruments and Dentifrice so as to leave them of a pellucid clearness. All work warranted.

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Select Poetry.

THE TREASURE-SEEKER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

Sick at heart and lank in purse,
I dragged my snake-like days along;
Want is Man's reproach and curse,
And Gold is Bliss—thus ran my song.
So to end my woes and pains,
A treasure-crock I went to roll up;
Struck the sharp steel in my veins,
And signed the bond that gave my soul up.

Magic circles then I drew,
And flaming hieroglyphics there;
Herbs and bones together threw,
And spake the incantation prayer.
Storms were blackening Midnight's face,
But I fulfilled each godless duty;
Standing by the marked out place,
I sank my spade to dig the booty.

Twelve o'clock! Lo, from afar,
Advancing swiftly through the darkling
Midnight mist, I marked a star
Most luminously rare and sparkling.
Wonder overpowered my soul:
Then brightlier flashed the heavenly flood,
And, in his hand a glittering bowl,
A beauteous boy before me stood.

Mildly gleamed his eyes of light;
With richest wreaths his brows were crowned;
Haloed by the liquid bright,
He stepped within the circle's bound.
Friendlily he bade me taste;
And then I thought, *This child so fair,*
Light-begirt and mildness-graced,
Hath surely scarce a demon's air!

"Drink at Life's up-gushing wells!
Thus dost thou learn the nuller Science,
Scorn those paltry spectre-spells,
And bid thy nightmare cares defiance.
Spend no more thy spirits here;
But, noon-day tasks and evening pleasures,
Week-days' labor, Sundays' cheer,
Be these thy charms to conjure treasures!"

Choice Miscellany.

THE FATAL CONCEALMENT.

AN EXCITING NARRATIVE.

Some years after I commenced practice—but the precise date I shall, for obvious reasons, avoid mentioning—I had a friend at whose house I was a pretty constant visitor. He had a wife who was a magnet that drew me there. She was beautiful, but I shall not describe her. She was more than beautiful—she was fascinating—captivating. Her presence was to me like the intoxication of opium. I was only happy when under its influence; and yet after every indulgence in the fatal pleasure, I sank into the deepest despondency. In my own justification I must say, that I never, in word or look, betrayed *my feelings; though I had some reason to suspect that* they were reciprocated; for, while in my company, she was always gay, brilliant, and witty; yet as I learned from others, at times she was sad and melancholy.

Powerful, most powerful was the temptation to make an unreserved disclosure of my heart, but I resisted it. That I had the firmness so to do, has been for years my only consolation.

One morning I sat alone in my chamber. My clerk was absent. A gentle knock was just audible at the outer door. I shouted "Come in," in no very amiable humor, for I was indulging in a delicious reverie upon the subject of the lady of my heart, and the presence of an ordinary mortal was hateful. The door opened, and Mrs. —— entered. I do not exactly know what I did; but it seemed to be a long time before I had the power to rise and welcome her, while she stood there with a timid blush upon her face and that glorious smile upon her lips, which made me feel that it would be too great a happiness to die for her.

"I don't wonder that you are surprised to see me here," she began, with a provoking little laugh, "but is your astonishment really too great to allow you to say, 'how do you do?'"

The spell was broken. I started up and took her hand. *I fear I pressed it more warmly,* and held it longer than was absolutely necessary.

"Perhaps your surprise will be increased," she continued, "when I inform you that I have come upon business?"

I muttered something about not being so ambitious as to hope that she would visit me from any other motive.

She took no notice of what I said, but I perceived that her face turned deadly pale, and that her hand trembled as she placed before me a bundle of papers.

"You will see by these," she said, in a low, hurried voice, "that some property was left to me by my uncle and my grandfather, but so strictly settled, that even I can touch nothing but the interest. Now, my husband is in want of a large sum at this moment, and I wish you to examine the affair well, and see whether by any twisting of the law, I can place a part of my capital at his disposal. Unintentionally, I have done him a great wrong," she added, in a tone so low that no ears less jealously alive than mine could have caught the meaning; "and poor as this reparation is, it is all I can make, and I must do it if possible."

I pretended to study the papers before me, but the lights danced and mingled; and if, by a great effort, I forced my eyes to distinguish a word, it conveyed not the slightest meaning to my whirling brain. Every drop of blood in my body seemed imbued with a separate consciousness, and to be tingling and rushing to the side next to *her,* whose presence within a short distance of me was *the only thing of which I felt thoroughly ashamed.*

It may well be believed that I was in no condition to give a professional opinion; but I got over this difficulty by telling her that I must have time to study the case, and *promising to let her know the result.*

"You are a tiresome creature," she said, with a little coquettish air. "I really expected that for once in your life, and for a friend too, you might have got rid of the law's delays, and given me your opinion in half an hour; so far at least as to tell me whether there is a probability of my being able to do what I desire. But I see you are just like the rest of the lawyers—time! time! time! I suppose now, you will keep about it till I am dead; and then it will all go to my husband in the course of the law."

"It may not require more than half an hour to ascertain so much, when I can direct my thoughts to it for that space of time," I replied, and I knew the words rattled like shot out of my mouth. "But would you be so unreasonable as to require an artist to draw a straight line while he was under a fit of the delirium tremens?"

"You are an incomprehensible person," she replied, rather coldly; "so I shall leave you to your legal and lawful studies. But if you are going to have an attack of the delirium tremens, perhaps I had better send in a doctor, shall I?"

"Well, I don't anticipate an attack this morning," I answered with a forced laugh; "so I will not give you the trouble. The fact is, I had been violently agitated a short time since, and my mind has not recovered its equilibrium."

We talked for a few minutes longer—she, quizzing me in her light, playful manner—and I, delighted to be so eased, standing stupid and dumb, scarcely able to say a word, though very anxious to prolong the delightful moments by keeping up the war of *badinage.* At length she went to the door, and I was about to escort her down stairs, when we heard some one speaking below. "Good God!" she exclaimed, clinging wildly to my arm, "that is my husband's voice! If he finds me here I am ruined."

"Don't be alarmed," I replied, endeavoring to reassure her; "you came here upon business, and such business, too! He could only love you the more for it."

"You don't know about this so well as I do," she said, shuddering convulsively. "He is jealous, exceedingly, of you, and, oh! *I fear not without some cause. Hide* me somewhere, for mercy's sake!"

I do not know how it happened, but my arm was around her, and I half-carried her across the room to a large *book-closet.*

"Can you stay here?" I asked hastily. "I will leave the door ajar for air."

"No, shut it—lock it—take away the key, or I shall not feel safe. There is plenty of air!" and she sprang into the recess.

For one moment her eyes met mine, and I thought they beamed with deep impassioned love! The next I had locked the door upon my treasure, thrown the papers she had brought into a drawer, and was apparently busy, pen in hand, when *my friend* entered. He commenced in a roundabout way to question me upon certain points of the law, respecting marriage settlements, &c., and, after a tedious amount of circumlocution, he gave me to understand that all this regarded a desired transfer of some property of his wife's into his hands. He had come in fact upon the same errand as that generous creature. He also had a copy of her relative's wills, and these I was compelled to examine closely, for he was desperately pertinacious, and would not be put off. I was angry at the thought of what his poor wife must be suffering, pent *up in that narrow prison, and I felt that I could have* kicked her husband out of doors for keeping her there. At last he made a move as if to go. I started up and stood ready to bow him out.

"So," *said he, tying up his papers with provoking* deliberation, "nothing but my wife's death, you say, can put me in possession of this money. I want it very much, but nobody will suspect me of desiring her death for the sake of having it a little sooner."

He laughed at his own poor jest, and I made a sort of hyena chorus to it that sounded strange and hysterical even to my own ears. He went at last, but stopped again on the stairs, and detained me there talking for full five minutes longer. *I felt by sympathy all the pangs of suffocation.* My throat seemed burning—my forehead bursting. Great God! will he never be gone. Will he stand here, gossiping about the weather and the generalities of the law, while his lovely wife, who came to sacrifice her individual interests for his sake, dies a terrible lingering death? He is gone! I rush back to my room. A step behind me makes me turn round. It is my clerk—curses on him! I ground my teeth in unavailing rage. I could have stabbed him—shot him—beaten out his brains—hurled him headlong down the stairs. But any violence would compromise her. In a few minutes my brain was clear again.

"Watson," I cried, "Mr. —— has just left. He is gone up Fleet street, I think; run after him, and request him to leave those papers with me. Say to him I would *like to examine them more at leisure. Run, run* quickly, and you will overtake him!"

Watson disappeared. I turned the key of the outer door, and sprang toward the closet. As I unlocked it, I remembered the look she had given me as I shut it; and I wondered, with a beating heart, whether the same expression would greet my enraptured gaze when I opened it. There she stood, with her eyes calmly fixed on mine.

"You are safe, dearest," I murmured.

She did not rebuke me for calling her so; and emboldened by her silence, I took her hand to lead her from her narrow prison. She moved forward, and fell into my arms a corpse!

I cannot recall what followed. I only know that I tried every means for her restoration to life; but, alas! without success. Of one thing I was firmly convinced—she had not died from suffocation.

I had once seen the body of a man who was killed by the falling in of the mouth of a pit. I recollect his purple and swollen face, and his lax, warm limbs. *She* was pale, rigid, cold. The tumult of her own emotions must *have killed her the moment the door* was closed upon her. By some means I kept my secret from the knowledge of Watson and everybody else. All that night I was trying to recover her. Then I formed the project of shutting her up in the closet—locking up the chambers, and going abroad for twenty years. Next I thought of setting fire to the place, burning all my books and papers, making a funeral pile of them, and thus ruining myself to preserve the secret. But that thought, too, was dismissed. It might cause loss of life and property to many innocent people, and would be but a bungling proceeding after all; as, if the fire was discovered early, policemen, firemen, mob, all would break in, and finding her body there, all would be lost—for it was more to save her reputation than my life, that I was striving and plotting.

In the meantime, I was a prey to the most painful anxiety. I was sure by that time she must have been missed and sought for. Perhaps she had been seen to enter my chamber. Every step that I heard I feared might be that of the policeman. In the morning, a stranger called on business. This of course was nothing extraordinary; but, when he had gone, I felt that he was a detective officer, and had come as a spy. I thrust a few clothes into my carpet bag, intending to escape to France. I caught up a box of matches, to set the place on fire. I grasped *a razor and looked eagerly on its keen edge as the surest* and swiftest way of ending my misery. But then all these would leave her to the jests of the world, and my own sufferings were nothing in comparison. At this *distance of time* I can look back *impartially* and *coolly* upon that dreadful day; and I can solemnly declare that I would rather have been hung for murdering her, than have allowed a breath to sully her fair fame!

I had just laid down the *razor,* when a *hurried step* crossed the ante-room. It was her husband's.

Now I thought all was lost! She has been seen to enter here, and he has come to claim her.

"My dear ——," he began, in a nervous, unsettled way, "you remember the business that I came about yesterday?"

"Perfectly."

"And do you remember the words I used, as I was going? I mean in answer to what you said about my not being able to touch this money till after the death of my wife?"

"Yes, I remember them distinctly."

"My wife has disappeared since yesterday morning," he continued, turning even paler than before; "and if anything should have happened, you know, and you should repeat those expressions, they might be laid hold of, and I don't know what might be the consequences. I might be suspected of having murdered her."

Poor fellow! If I had not known the truth, I should have suspected it myself, from his excessive terror and anxiety. He wiped the perspiration from his face and sank into a chair. The sight of a person more frightened than myself reassured me. I was calmer than I had been since the preceding night.

"*Where did she go? How was she dressed?*" I inquired, anxious to know all I could on the subject.

"I don't know. She told me she was going out shopping and visiting; but no one saw her leave the house, and none of the servants knew exactly how she was dressed. When I went home to dinner, the first thing I heard was that she had not returned."

"What have you done? Have you sent to the Police and to the hospitals?"

"Yes, and to every friend and tradesman where she was at all likely to call."

"You may depend upon it," I replied very impressively, "that I will not repeat what you said yesterday.—*You are right in supposing that it might tell against you* very much if she should be found dead under suspicious circumstances."

He talked a little longer, and then went to renew the *search for his wife. How I preserved my self-possession* during this interview, I do not know; so far from being really calm I could have gnawed the flesh from off my bones in my agony.

That night, when the doors were fastened, and I was alone—except for the company of the dead—I shut myself up in that closet for two hours, to ascertain whether she had died from want of air, for I distrusted my own knowledge of the appearance of suffocated persons.—The place was well supplied with air from several large crevices. My first idea was correct—She had died from some other cause.

When I emerged from the closet, the night was intensely dark: it was raining in *torrents,* and the *thunder* and wind roared a terrific chorus. I passed by the sullen booming of the river, then at high tide, and already swollen by the rain. I sat there in the dark upon the *floor,* holding the cold stiff hand of the dead within my own. I thought dreamingly how oft it had welcomed me with its soft pressure, while the sweet eyes had beamed brightly into mine, and the full, pouting lips had wreathed into dimples of delight. Now that hand that used to be so plump, so full of warmth and life, was rigid and cold!—those eyes were glazed and ghastly!—those lips were clammy and hard! Tears came to my relief. I wept as grown men seldom do, and with that heart-easing gush came a new idea of escape for her and me.—I was ready to believe at that moment that her spirit rested upon mine, and inspired the thought—for it burst upon me suddenly with the conviction that if executed at the instant, it would be crowned with success. How could I otherwise have had the temerity to snatch her up in my arms, carry her down stairs, at the risk of being encountered by some one of the other inhabitants of the house, bear her through the courts, and by a way that I knew, into the garden!

The river was running strong and deep against the wall. I pressed one kiss upon her cold forehead, and threw her into the stream. Gladly, gladly would I have gone with her, and held her to my heart till death; but the impulse was still on me, and, without delay I hastened back. No one saw me, and the beating rain had effaced *my footprints.*

A few days after I saw by the papers that her body had been found far down the river. The medical evidence after a *post mortem* examination, was that she died from the rupture of the heart, and that death took place before immersion in the water. So they conjectured that she had been standing by the river when the fatal attack seized her, and had fallen in unperceived; and they returned a verdict of accidental death, and she was buried in a pretty country church yard near where they found her.

Two years later her husband married again. He is stout and ruddy, and laughs as heartily as ever.

I shall die a bachelor. I am lean and pale and bowed and grey-haired, and the sound of my own laugh is strange to me.

Negro Raffle.

From the Louisville Journal.

In my tour through the Southern States, I have met with many amusing incidents, but do not remember anything that created so great an excitement for the time being as a "negro raffle," in the town of ——, in the State of Mississippi. Mr. ——, the owner of the boy, having a note to pay that day, and not having the wherewith to do it, was compelled to do what he gladly would not have done. The boy to be raffled was a smart, intelligent lad of about 18 years of age. He went by the name of Bill. There were 80 chances with "three dice," at $10 per chance. I was present when the affair came off. There remained one chance which I took and gave to Bill upon the condition that he would throw the dice himself, and "shake like ozen." Bill rolled his eyes in an astonished and astonishing manner, and after a hearty wha! wha! wha! in which he displayed two frightful rows of ivory, opening a mouth "like the break of day, from east to west," and with a low bow, said, "I'll try, massa." As may be supposed, the scene became highly exciting.

The raffling commenced. Bill looked on unconcerned at anything but the idea of leaving his old master. When the chances were all raffled off but the last, Bill took the box; previous to his throwing, however, he was offered $100 for his chance, the highest throw yet made being 46, which stood "a tie" between two individuals; but Bill was no "*compromise man,*" he refused the offer, saying "de whole hog or noffin," and made his first throw, which was 13, his second throw was 16; Bill stopped, scratched his head, threw again, and up came 18. It was declared off that "Bill was high and free," and such a shout I never heard in my life. Bill hardly knew what to do with himself. In a moment, however, he asked the whole party to drink, and no man in ——, 'tis said, ever refused an invitation of the kind except one, and he died soon after; so says *tradition.*

Bill's success induced him to try another speculation of the "same sort," believing that he could do, as much as he had before done; he proposed to set himself up again in a "raffle," and as he had won before, he thought it would be no more than fair that he should put the price at $600 this time. The chances were soon taken, *Bill reserving but one chance to himself.* He pocketed $500 and the sport again commenced. Bill's original owner and himself were the two highest again, and in throwing off, Bill lost. It proved a very fortunate speculation for Bill and his master both. The master had made $800 clear, and Bill had cleared $500, and remained with his kind master. They started for home together, the master declaring that no money could induce him to part with Bill again, unless he was willing to leave, but promised him that if he would be as faithful to him as he had always been, until he was 21, he should have his freedom. They were both well contented, and every one present was satisfied that he had got his money's worth.

Young America.

"Father," exclaimed the hopeful son and heir of a gentleman of our acquaintance, on Friday last, while the latter was congratulating the youth upon his smartness in his scholastic studies—the youngster having attained eight years of age—"Father, I'm an American, aint I?"

"Yes, my boy, you are," responded the delighted parent.

"Well, father, you aint, are you".

"Not by birth, my son.

"Well, then," exclaimed Young America, in a thoughtful manner, "when I grow to be a man, I will be able *to lick two like you*—won't I?"

Energy.—Energy is omnipotent. The clouds that surround the homeless boy of to-day are dispersed, and he *is invited to a palace. It is the work of energy.* The child who is a beggar one moment, in a few years to come may stand forth in the admiration of angels. Who has not seen the life giving power of energy? It makes the wilderness bloom like the rose; navigates our rivers; whitens the ocean; levels mountains; paves with iron a highway from State to State; and sends through with the speed of lightning, intelligence from one extremity of the land to the other. Without energy what is man?

THE FATAL JOKE.

BY HELEN C. GAGE.

I was once present where a small party of young persons were warmly discussing the subject of practical joking. After a long and interesting debate, the question seemed about to be decided in its favor, when a gentleman, whose singular and melancholy and dejected air at once attracted our attention, related the following story:

In my younger days I was remarkable for my fondness of practical joking, even to such a degree that I never allowed a good opportunity to pass unimproved.

My orphan cousin, Robert, to whom I was fondly attached, was of a different nature from this. He was sober, sedate, and graceful almost to a fault, very thoughtful and very bashful. This stupidity, as I called it, was often a check upon my natural gayety, and it was seldom that I could induce him to join my boyish sports, though he sometimes did, merely to gratify me. Poor Robert! The green turf of his native valley, on whose bosom the fairest flowers that New England could boast of, have blossomed and withered, and passed away to eternity, leaving behind them a lasting impress of their loveliness, now covers his mouldering ashes. Yes, Robert is dead, and I am the cause of his untimely end, the circumstances of which will serve to convince you of the folly of "practical joking."

It was late one evening in early September, that Robert and myself retired to our room to talk over the exciting scenes of the day, for it was the night after the election, and a fine holiday it had been to us. I had just returned from a visit to some friends in the city, and had, of course brought with me many curious things which Robert had never seen nor heard of. Among them was a mask, the use of which I explained to my unsophisticated cousin, who laughed, and wondered why the people could wish to look horribly enough to wear one.

I was in my gayest mood, just ready for an adventure, and seeing that he was disposed to make fun of my mask, I proposed an experiment.

"What?" exclaimed my cousin, "you do not intend to wear it to bed, do you?"

"Far from it," I replied, "it is you who should wear the mask, not I, I am quite ugly enough without it."

"A very just remark, indeed," he observed, gravely.

I had never seen him in better humor, and I thought it best to unfold my plans at once. At our next door lived a wealthy gentleman, with whose daughter my bashful cousin was already smitten. That very night, as we passed by, on our return from the village, he had called and bade her good night, and received in return one of the sweetest smiles from the happiest eyes and most charming lips I ever beheld. I was his bosom friend, and to me he always entrusted his secrets, (alas! how little have I deserved such confidence,) yet, he always blushed when I spoke of Julia.

Some evil spirit, I know not what else it could have been, prompted me when I proposed to have a little sport at her expense. My plans were those: He was to dress himself in a suit of clothes to correspond with the mask, which, by the way, was the most frightful-looking thing I ever saw, repair to the dwelling of his friend, and call *her to the door by rapping.* I was to stand near to witness the result and participate in the joke.

He blushed, hung his head, and, of course, refused. I had expected this, but flattered myself that I could easily persuade him to the contrary. It was, however, a harder task than I had anticipated, for his unwillingness seemed greater than ever. The reason I readily understood.

I poohed and pshawed, and finally threatened to expose to all the boys his cowardly disposition, as I pleased to term it, and tender feelings to Julia, which, as yet, none of them had discovered. This last argument proved more successful than the other, for he well knew that I never suffered the idlest threat to remain unfulfilled; and the fear of being laughed at, besides betraying that which he most wished to conceal, conquered, and he yielded, though reluctantly, his consent. I even exulted over my triumph, though I have often since wished my lips had been struck dumb before I had uttered those words that sealed the after fate of two pure beings. But in my thoughtlessness I rushed heedlessly on in whatever I undertook, regardless of the consequences. My wild, reckless spirit had never been tamed.

Finding that there was but one alternative, and that, to submit cheerfully to my whim, he suffered himself to be arrayed as my fancy suggested, with good *grace, and even* laughed quite heartily as I added garment after garment in order to make him look as frightful as possible; yet, after all, I could see that his mind was ill at ease, and half condemned myself for being the cause of his unhappiness.

When at length all was arranged to my satisfaction, I placed the horrid mask over his face and led him to the mirror. He started back and involuntarily placed his hand to his head, as if to take it away, but my interference prevented. He even pleaded that the penalty I had threatened to inflict in case he refused to go might be spared him. But I was inexorable; I was anxious to see the result, and the delay caused by his unwillingness vexed me.

A renewal of my threats of exposure succeeded in removing all obstacles, and we immediately set about our adventure. Cautiously as thieves we crept through the yard, and each took his station, Robert at the door, and I at the window nearest him.

The curtain was partly drawn aside, so that I could *easily distinguish every object in the room.* As I had anticipated, she was alone. The domestic had retired, and I knew her old father too well to believe that he was anywhere but in the arms of Somnus; for he was one of those sensible persons whose maxim is, "Early to bed and early to rise."

Julia—and I shall never forget how lovely she was—sat beside a small table in the centre of the room, apparently deeply absorbed in a book. Her fair hand supported her head, and her hair fell gracefully down her neck in beautiful natural ringlets. She was a delicate wild-flower that had budded and blossomed under the shelter of a father's roof; and the sunshine of gladness and the dews of affection had ever lighted and cheered her way.

At length I gave the signal, and a loud rap was given. She paused for a moment, listened attentively, and then, laying down her book, arose and approached the door. As she opened it, the mask stepped boldly in, according to my directions. How shall I describe the scene that followed? Even now I shudder to think of it. Instantly all earthly hue had fled from *her* face, and with a piercing shriek she staggered back a few paces and fell heavily to the floor. Quicker than lightning, I sprang through the doorway and knelt at her side. I *grasped her wrist; its pulsation had ceased!* I placed my hand upon her heart; that was also still! She was dead!

I can recall but little else that took place that night. The domestics who slept in an adjoining room, had been awakened by that terrible shriek, and came rushing to learn the cause of the uproar. I could not have spoken, even had explanation been necessary. I was overwhelmed with grief and self condemnation. I could only point to the lifeless form of poor Julia, and to the mask which Robert had torn from his face and dashed to the floor. He stood gazing at me with a cold, vacant stare, that I but too well understood. More I cannot remember.

Ten days passed, and I woke from a raving delirium. My first inquiry was for Robert. They led him to my bedside; but oh, what a change! I stretched out my clasped hands, in an agony of grief and remorse, to implore his forgiveness. He neither moved nor spoke; but *the same unmeaning stare* drove home to my heart the fearful conviction. Alas! he was a hopeless idiot!

Fifteen years have elapsed since that never-to-be forgotten era in my life. I never have, I never can forgive *myself for* having been the cause of so much misery, though I have sought and hoped for forgiveness from on high. I never can look upon a mask without a shudder, or hear its use denounced without alluding to my experience. And you, my young friends, when you are tempted to play tricks upon others, I am sure will stop to consider that what seems so innocent and harmless, may perhaps, in the end prove a "fatal joke."

Obeying Orders.

The "eldest inhabitants" perfectly remember the Widow Trotter, who used, many years ago, to occupy a small wooden house away down in Hanover street, in somewhat close proximity to Salutation alley. Well, this widow was blessed with a son, who, like Goldsmith, and many other men distinguished in after life, was the dance of his class. Numerous were the floggings which his stupidity brought upon him, and the road to knowledge was to him truly a "vale of tears."

One day he came home as usual with red eyes and hands.

"O, you blockhead!" screamed his mother—she was a bit of a virago, Mrs. Trotter was—"you've been gittin' another lickin,' I suppose."

"O, yes," replied young Mr. Trotter; "that's one of the regular exercises—lickin' me. 'Arter I've licked Trotter," says the master, 'I hear the 'rithmetic class.' But, mother, to change the subject, as the criminal said when he found the Judge was getting personal, is there enny arrant I can do for you?"

"Yes," grumbled the widow; "only you're so eternal slow about anything you undertake—go and get a pitcher of water, and be four years about it, will ye?"

Bob Trotter took the pitcher, and wended his way in the direction of the street pump; but he hadn't got far, when he encountered his friend Joe Buffer, the mate of a vessel, issuing from his house, and dragging a heavy sea-chest along with him.

"Come, Bob," said Joe, "bear a hand, and help me carry this chest down to Long Wharf."

"Well, so I would," said Bob, "only you see that my mother sent me after a pitcher of water."

"What do you care for your mother—she don't care for you. Come along."

"Well," said Bob, "first let me hide the pitcher where I can find it again."

With these words he stored away his earthenware under a flight of stone steps, and accompanied his friend aboard the ship. The pilot was urging the captain to cast off and take advantage of the wind and tide, but the captain was awiting the arrival of a boy who had shipped the day before, and wishing no good to his eyes for the delay he occasioned.

At last he turned to Bob and said—

"*What do you say,* youngster, *to shipping with me?* I'll treat you well, and give you ten dollars a month!"

"Should like to go," said, Bob, hesitatingly, "but my mother——"

"Hang your mother," said the captain. "She'll be glad to get rid of you. Come, will you go?"

"I hain't got no clothes."

"Here's a chest full. The other chap was just your size, and they will fit you to a T."

"I'll go."

"Cast off that line there!" shouted the captain, and the ship fell off with the tide, and was soon standing down the bay with a fair wind, and every stitch of the canvass set. She was bound for the North-West via Canton, and back again, which was then called the double voyage, and usually occupied about four years.

In the meanwhile, the non-appearance of Bob seriously alarmed his mother. A night passed, and the town crier was called into requisition for a week, when she gave him up, had a note read for her in the meeting, and went into mourning.

Just four years after the occurrence, the ship got back to port, and Bob and his friends were paid off. The wages of the widow's son amounted to just four hundred and eighty dollars, and he found, on squaring his accounts with the captain, that his advances had amounted to the odd tens, and four hundred dollars clear were the fruits of his four years cruise.

As he walked in the direction of his mother's house, in company with Joe, he scanned with a curious eye, the houses, the shops, the people that he passed. Nothing appeared changed; the same signs indicated an unchanging hospitality on the part of the same landlords; the same lamp posts were standing at the same corners—it seemed as if he had been gone only a day. With the old sights and sounds Bob's old feelings revived, and he almost dreaded to see, debouching from some alley, a detachment of boys, sent by his ancient enemy, the schoolmaster, to know why he had been playing truant, and to carry him back to receive the customary walloping.

When he was quite near home, he said,

"Joe, I wonder if anybody's found that old pitcher!"

He stooped down, thrust his arm under the stone steps, and withdrew the identical piece of earthenware he had deposited there just four years ago. Having rinsed and filled it at the pump, he walked *into his mother's house,* and found her seated in her accustomed arm chair. She looked at him for a minute, recognized him, screamed, and exclaimed:

"Why, Bob! where have you been? What have you been doing?"

"Gettin' that pitcher of water," answered Bob, setting it on the table! "I always obey orders—you told me to be four years about it; and I was."

Irish Emigration.—A late number of the Limerick (Ireland) Examiner, contains a most favorable report of the state of the crops in that country, and in the same number of the paper which thus heralds the advent of abundance, it is announced that the people are flying the country as though another famine were looming in the perspective:

"Turn where you will, nothing is talked of but United States, American letters, checks, steamboats and ship fares, and preparations for departure to another and more favored land. As for the penal laws and such other matters, the discussion of these is confined to the comparatively small section of the people who are yet calculating on their ability to maintain their position at home. But as regards the great mass of our countryman—the working *population—their* minds are entirely engrossed with the one idea, and that is, the speediest manner in which they can contrive to remove themselves and families from that inevitable ruin that appears to be impending over this hapless land. Nothing can stop or stay this migrating propensity, no reasoning or persuasion, however cogent or plausible, can for a moment change their determination to join their friends in the far west. There is scarcely a family among the humble class of farmers and cottagers that has not one or more representatives in America, and these are costantly sending home remittances to enable the rest of the family to emigrate. The people are flying away in large numbers, and on the roads in remote districts you will often meet long and melancholy cavalcades of these poor people turning their backs on the land of their birth.—In fact, the poor man who has no friend to send him a remittance, and no means of paying his pass