THE ERIE OBSERVER.

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Erie Weekly Observer.

A. P. DURLIN & CO., PROPRIETORS.

B. F. SLOAN, Editor.

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

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Erie, April 6, 1852.

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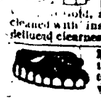

H. CHAPIN, RESIDENT DENTIST—Office on the south side of the Diamond five doors east of the Erie Bank. Prices reasonable, and all work warranted Erie June 19 1852. 6

Poetry and Miscellany.

HARVEST HYMN.

God of the rolling year! to thee
Our songs shall rise—whose bounty pours
In many a goodly gift, with free
And liberal hand our autumn stores;
No firstlings of our flock we slay,
No soaring clouds of incense rise—
But on the hallowed shrine we lay,
Our grateful hearts in sacrifice.

Born on thy breath, the lap of Spring
Was heaped with many a blooming flower;
And smiling Summer joined to bring
The sunshine and the gentle shower;
And Autumn's rich luxuriance now,
The ripening seed—the bursting shell,
And golden sheaf, and laden bough,
The fullness of thy bounty tell.

No menial throng, in princely dome,
Here wait a titled lord's behest,
But many a fair and peaceful home
Hath won the peaceful dove a guest;
No groves of palm our fields adorn—
No myrtle shades or orange bowers—
But rustling meads of golden corn,
And fields of waving grain are ours.

Safe in thy care the landscape o'er
Our flocks and herds securely stray;
No tyrant master claims our store—
No ruthless robber reads away.
No fierce volcano's withering shower—
No fell simoon with poisonous breath—
Nor burning suns, with baleful power,
Awake the fiery plagues of death

And here shall rise our song to thee,
Where lengthened vales and pastures lie,
And streams go singing wild and free,
Beneath a blue and smiling sky,
Where ne'er was reared a mortal throne,
Where crowned oppressor never trod;
Here—at the throne of Heaven alone,
Shall man, in reverance, bow to God.

(From Sartain's *Union Magazine.*)

The Cobweb on the Wall.

BY FAN FEATHERBIE.

CHAPTER I.

Died, suddenly, at Challan Ridge, in——— on the fifteenth, Margaret Challan, aged sixty eight years.'

So the pale, stern face, and tall, spare figure of her who bore the name of Margaret Challan had vanished from earth forever. To my mind this thought came laden with no sorrow, no mournful thrill. Once, when on a visit to my Aunt Hill's I had met Mrs. Challan, and her gloomy face, and sombre dress; as she sat by the bright fireside, cast over me a sort of nameless dread. To me she seemed as a gaunt, weird shape, which stealing in from the world of sorrow, flung its chill shadow upon the brightness of that fair home. Margaret Challan was the only aunt of my Uncle Hill: she had been kind to him in his boyhood, and her nephew remembered this with grateful affection. Upon his death-bed. Stephen Hill besought his widow and only child to treat with kindly regard the cold, stern woman who had so greatly befriended him. Amy Hill spoke of her with a shudder.

"No, Ellen," she said to me one evening, "I can never love Aunt Challan; pity her I do, for I know that she has battled with fearful sorrows; but I always feel when *she* is here, as though there stood something dark and dreary between me and life's sunshine. I experience a sweet relief when the old carriage from Challan Ridge rolls homeward—do you blame me for this Ellen?"

"Blame you, Amy! ah, no; I should wonder much did you feel otherwise; to me your Aunt is very chilling; but you speak of her sorrows—have they been peculiar?"

"I cannot tell you, Ellen; for about this mother always evades my questions. Once I was speaking of Aunt Challan, and I said there were two lines in her face, not *alone* of grief and despair, but of a fierce, terrible *remorse*. Mother, starting from her chair, said, quickly, 'Child, child, how strangely you talk!' and left the room *before I could speak*; but there were tears in her eyes, and I knew I had brought something painful to her mind.' Then we two young girls, hovering by the fire in Amy's little room, talked wonderingly of Margaret Challan, to us a strange, dread woman.

As I sat in the low window-seat, with the paper crumpled in my hand, the memory of this conversation turned vividly to me. Now, Margaret Challan was dead—her heart, with its great burden of hidden grief, pulsated no longer; then, as I mused, I began to wonder what would become of Challan Ridge; *into* whose hands the desolate, yet noble old country seat would pass. I was not long in doubt.

"It was unconditionally bequeathed to us. Challan Ridge is ours, dear Ellen, and we will shortly leave our present home for it. You must go with us there, and you and I will do our best to brighten that gloomy old house." So ended a letter from my fair young cousin, Amy Hill; and it had been read twice ere I decided to comply with her request.

"Challan Ridge shall be sad no longer," said Amy, and straightway it seemed to me that the old grey house, with its narrow pointed windows and quaint little portions, grew bright, even cheerful, beneath the magic of her presence. As a ray of light, Amy danced across the dark halls up the wide stair-case, and her laugh, "like the smothered laugh of a fairy, so clear and sweet," rang joyously through Challan Ridge. A sunny change came over the old place, and I knew that to my aunt and her lovely young daughter it would become a happy home.

Amy and I followed Ruth Grey, the old housekeeper at Challan Ridge, from room to room until, almost wearied, we were turning to join Aunt Hill in the bright little sitting-room, when Ruth checked us. "Maybe, young ladies, you would like to see the parlor mistress always sat in," she said, pausing at a door, and we eagerly assenting, she turned the key.

It was a small room; the furniture had once been rich, but was now time worn, and the carpet had faded to a dingy hue; but not on these did Amy's eyes or mine rest. High over the mantel hung a large picture, and upon this we both gazed. A bower covered with dark creeping vines, a young and beautiful girl who, standing in the entrance, looked timidly, yet earnestly forth, whilst far above in the heavens, a clear silvery moon threw a fair light upon the tall trees and thick shrubbery. Such was the picture.—The face of the white robed figure was one of exquisite loveliness, the dark eyes gleamed with a joyous light, and the delicately curved lip seemed almost trembling with a smile

"Tell me, Ruth," said Amy turning to the old housekeeper, "is this but a fancy picture, or *did*—"

"Did that lovely lady once live? you were going to ask, Miss Amy. Ah, yes: but it is many a long day since death shut up her sweet, bright eyes."

"And what was her name?" I asked, noting as I spoke, that down Ruth Grey's wrinkled cheek a tear had found its way."

"Hope Maybrith."

"*Hope* Maybrith," repeated Amy, musingly, "I never heard the name before. Why, Ruth, who was she?"

"She was an orphan, and only child; her mother and my mistress were full cousins, and when she was left poor and lone in the world, Challan Ridge became her home; but, young ladies," added the old woman, as though wishing to change the subject, "you have not seen Master Richard's picture yet;" and she moved towards it.

With a high, white brow, from which the rich brown hair was carelessly swept, dark blue eyes, and features clearly cut. Richard Challan's fine face looked down upon us from its massive frame.

"You see he was very handsome," said Ruth and then sighed. "It will soon be twenty years since Master Richard died, and Mistress never smiled from that day to her death."

"I think he was Aunt Challan's only child," said my cousin.

"Yes, Miss Amy, and she had planned great things for him; but they were not to be;" then murmuring about her "young master; and sweet Miss Hope," which her sobs rendered nearly indistinct, Ruth Grey covered her face with her check apron, and turned towards the window.

There was but one other portrait in the room, and it was that of Margaret Challan; she had sat for it but a year before her son's death, and there were scarce any marks of age upon her face. A widow's cap partly covered Mrs. Challan's dark hair, and her mourning dress fell gracefully round her queenly figure; upon her brow was no furrow of heavy grief, no trace of fearful sorrow, yet Amy and I looked upon this picture with a shudder. Compressing the thin lips, and expanding the haughty *nostrils, were the lines of an iron will, a stern, terrible* temper; we saw it in the cold hazel eye—its shadow deepened the pale cheek.

"Oh, Ellen," half whispered Amy, "if Aunt Challan could at this moment stand beside her picture, what a tale would the two faces tell—the one gleaming with the fierce determination of a proud spirit; the other darkened with the punishment that spirit had meted out for itself—*remorse*."

"And they were happy here beneath *her* roof," resumed Amy, *glancing at the portraits of Richard* Challan and Hope Maybrith, "at least, they look joyous; how strange, Ellen! We must get Ruth Grey some day to tell us their history. She knows it, I do not doubt;" and Amy walked slowly towards the old woman at the window.

Again I looked at the pictured faces—two so full of beauty, hope, and youth; the third so cold and inexorable, and I wondered if her icy heart had not sometimes cast its chilling spell over those fair young beings. As *the autumn sun threw his rays full upon Margaret* Challan's high brow and finely chiselled features, it seemed to invest them with a kind of chill, proud beauty, and I felt that *hers* truly was

> "A pale stern face, and sterner far,
> Because it was a woman's face,
> Which gleamed a waning, worn-out star,
> Which once was bright with morning grace."

The gay voice of Amy fell suddenly upon my ear, and I turned away from the pictures.

"If you won't tell me, Ruth, *why* you have left that great black cobweb swinging in the corner I will certainly brush it down; it looks as though it had hung there for years."

Ruth Grey's cheek got very pale, and she said in an almost imploring tone, "It has *hung there for years*; but, oh, *please*, Miss Amy, do not take it down!"

"Why *not*, Ruth? tell me, or else—" and Amy *laughingly moved towards the corner*; but the old woman, with nervous hand, seized her by the arm.

"Unless you would see that which will make your young heart shiver, let the old web alone," she said quickly.

"Don't try to frighten me, Ruth; there can be nothing very terrible beneath a *spider's* web, and I *must* see!" As Amy spoke, she lightly brushed the wall, and the web black with dust, fell upon the floor.

What had it hidden? A single stain, red, deep and dark. Ruth Grey looked mournfully and silently upon it.

"Oh, Miss Amy," she at length said, "what have *you done*! Many a year it has been, since my old eyes saw that spot."

"What is it, Ruth?" asked Amy, gravely feeling, with myself, somewhat awed.

"What is it? Why, child, don't you see 'tis *blood*; Yes, the blood of"—and the old woman sat down, and wept bitterly.

"Ah, if you do not tell us all about the web, I shall think you were angry with me for brushing it from the wall. You are not? Well, then, Ruth dear Ruth, take this nice cushioned chair, and *Ellen I will sit at your* feet; now *do* begin; I must hear that story before the sun sets," and Amy Hill looked up coaxingly in the old housekeeper's face.

Ruth Grey sighed, and faintly smiled, as she smoothed back my cousin's sunny curls, and then she said: "It is a sad, story, Miss Amy, one you and Miss Ellen won't like very much, I am afraid."

"Begin, dear Ruth," urged Amy, twining her arm fondly around my waist, and thus we sat together upon the floor awaiting with eagerness the story of *The Cobweb on the Wall*.

CHAPTER II.

"It was a bright fall evening," said Ruth Grey, in a low tone of voice, as though she were fearful of being overheard, "when Hope Maybrith first came to Challan Ridge. She was a pretty young creature, not more than sixteen then; but she had seen a deal of trouble—It wasn't only her black dress told me that, but her face was pale and sad, and very often her large, bright eyes *were swollen red with crying*

"Mistress was very kind to Miss Hope. She seemed to love her dearly; and, before long everybody about Challan Ridge knew and loved the dear orphan child."

"Mistress wasn't then as you know her, Miss Amy, so dark and gloomy. She was the sweetest lady in the world, when every one obeyed her; but she had a will like stone. *It never bent to a creature; and if she was* crossed in a trifle, her temper would break out. It wouldn't be in sharp angry spells, but in a kind of terrible proud coldness, which always frightened one;" and *old* Ruth trembled, as some dark memory seemed to flit over her

"Master Richard was the only one in the house who *did not fear his mother's temper*. He was a noble handsome boy, as proud and fearless as could be; and my mistress fairly doted on him. He was her only child;—and I have often heard her say that *in him* lay all the pride and hope of her heart.

"I remember the evening Miss Hope came, my young master stood by the fire, and looked long and fixedly at her; then *he crossed the room*, and sat down beside her upon the wide sofa. I was laying the supper-cloth, and now and then I heard a word or two of their talk. Master Richard had a gentle voice; and it sounded *very* pleasant, as he said to the young stranger, 'do not weep, my sweet cousin; you shall not be alone in the world; I will love you like a brother, and take care of you.'"

"Miss Hope tried to answer; but *the great tear choked* her, and she cried like any child. Oh, how Master Richard's dear blue eyes did glisten, as he tried to quiet his cousin: and after a while she looked up and *smiled*.

"When Miss Hope had gone to her room, and as I came into the parlor with lights, I heard Master Richard say to his mother, "She is too lovely to be mortal; I can scarcely believe she is one of earth's children."

"Nonsense, Richard! you talk just like a foolish boy of eighteen, as you are;" answered my mistress, half smiling; but I thought she did not seem altogether pleased, and I knew they had been talking of Hope Maybrith.

"As Miss Hope began to feel more at home in Challan Ridge, she grew cheerful; and after a while she became one of the happiest and gayest young creatures I ever saw. Master Richard and she were always together. In fine weather they used to ride or walk through Challan Ridge grounds, and when the days were stormy, they sat side by side in the room, reading or talking;—and *sometimes Master Richard would give Miss Hope* lessons in her drawing. Poor children!" said old Ruth, with a tearful glance at the portrait, "they were so happy then!"

About a year after Hope Maybirth came to this house, my young master went to travel in distant countries. It was two years before he came back; and then he was of age, and had grown handsome, and taller. Miss Hope was fairer than ever; and I could see that Master Richard still loved her very dearly.

One *morning*, I stood by the *dressing-room* window, when Master Richard and his cousin rode up. They halted beneath those trees; and Richard, springing from his horse, *lifted Miss Hope tenderly to the ground*: and then she, kissing her little hand to him, ran lightly up the broad steps, her riding-hat upon her arm.

They both looked so loving, and so lovely, that I felt in my heart, and said aloud, "surely, God has willed Master Richard and Miss Hope to become man and wife."

I forgot that I was not alone; and when I turned from the window, and met the eyes of my mistress, I shook from head to foot. "How *dare* you say that, Ruth Grey?" she asked, sharply; and then as though something had crossed her mind, she said, in a quiet way, "Go down stairs, now, and never waste your breath again in such nonsense."

"I went quickly, and as I shut the door, I heard my mistress mutter, "Fool, fool that I have been, never to think of this! But it is not yet too late!"

While Master Richard was away, he gathered up many beautiful pictures, and learned to be a painter; so, when he came home, he hung them in the parlor across the hall, and called that his painting-room. It was then he painted the picture of Miss Hope; and there they had always sat alone until my careless words in the dressing-room. Then Mrs. Challan came in every day, and sat until Miss Hope's picture was finished. This angered Master Richard; and many a time I have seen him come out of that room with a clouded and vexed brow.

From the county next to this, a Mr. Lomond often came to Challan Ridge. He was a grave good-looking man, almost as old as my mistress, and said, in the neighborhood, to be *very rich*.—*Miss Hope used to laugh* at his stiff, queer manners. Poor child, many a time I have seen her lean back in her chair, when he was talking, and cover her pretty, smiling mouth with her fan!

One day—I remember it well—I went to the painting room to call Master Richard and Miss Hope to dinner. There was a glass, in the door which opened into the hall, and one passing along could look right into the room. My young master and his fair cousin were standing opposite a large picture; but they did not seem to see it.—*His arm was around her waist, her hand was in his, and* he was looking down into her sweet face with so much love, I cannot tell you how fondly.

I walked past heavily, so that I might startle them, [illegible] saw as I turned away? Who, but my mistress. She was coming, slowly down the great staircase, and her brow frowning. I knew by her stern look that she too had seen the young lovers, and was angry at them in her *heart*.

"Hope," said my mistress as they got up from the table, "stay here for a few minutes; I wish to speak with you." *Master Richard stood* by his chair, as though he had chosen to stay, too; but his mother looking at him, said, "You may leave the room; Richard." With a half smile, half frown, he obeyed, and I heard him, directly after, walking the hall.

"Go on with your work here, Ruth," said Mrs Challan, seeing me look towards the door; and I was obliged to stay, and hear all she said to Miss Hope. "Dear Miss Hope! she sat in the window seat, smiling so brightly That was the last day I ever saw that poor thing look *really* happy.

"My mistress did not seem cross, only grave and determined. "Mr. Lomond has done you the honor to propose for your hand, Hope," she said slowly, "and I have given him for you a favorable answer."

"Miss Hope did not speak; but, oh, how she laughed! Her laugh was so clear and merry, it rang through all the room. *I saw my mistress did not like it, for she* said, "This is a grave matter, and not one of smiles."—Alas! my poor darling soon found that out.

"Forgive me," said Miss Hope, with one of her sweet smiles; "I could not help laughing, and I thought, Aunt Margaret, (for so she always called my mistress,) "that you were only jesting."

"That was a strange mistake, child. But, now, as I tell you that I am serious, I wish you to listen gravely, and with attention:" and my mistress looked at Miss Hope; but *getting no answer, she went on*: "You are absolutely without a cent in the world; and, therefore, by one so poor, such an offer should not be treated lightly. Paul Lomond *is older than you, it is true; but he* loves you, Miss Hope; he is rich, and you must marry him."

"I cannot!" said Miss Hope, springing from her seat, and kneeling *beside my mistress*: "I cannot! Oh, Aunt Margaret, I do not love Paul Lomond. But," she said, with a strange, puzzled smile, "you are not in earnest? you would not have me marry that grave old man?"

I do not remember now what answer Mrs. Challan made to this; but Miss Hope went on to plead with tears and sobs, and they were of no use. She got up from her knees, and said, in a quick and angry tone, "Aunt, you are cruel! I won't marry Paul Lomond, for I hate him." I had never seen Miss Hope so vexed before.—Her cheeks *were very red*, and her eyes fairly flashed.

"Talk not this way to me," said my mistress, proudly. "Have you forgotten all I have done for you? Is this obstinacy my reward?"

"Have I forgotten all? No! I remember your kindness gratefully, affectionately, and you know I have returned it with love and obedience; but in this matter I *choose for myself*."

"You have chosen," cried my mistress, sharply; "Hope Maybrith, you love another, I know; you love Richard Challan."

"Yes," calmly replied Miss Hope, "I do love him, and I will never love any one else. He loves———"

"He loves Hope Maybrith as his *own heart's blood*," interrupted Master Richard, suddenly bursting into the room.

"Was this well, Richard? was this honorable thus to play the listner?" asked *my mistress with a bitter smile*.

"Don't let us trifle, mother; I heard my name, but a moment ago, across the hall, and I came to the door just in time to echo my *Hope's words—yes, my Hope*;" and Master Richard crossed the room, and stood by his cousin's side.

"What child's play is this, Richard Challan?"

"None *mother*, none. I love my cousin. Had I been older than I was, long ago would I have asked of you the boon that I do now. Give me Hope Maybrith for my bride."

"Never, while I have reason!" and the brow of my mistress grew darker, and her eye fierce.

"Then I will take her, for never while I have reason will I marry another;" and Master Richard drew Hope, closely, fondly, to his breast.

"Take back those words, Richard Challan, or you lose your mother's love."

"That was bitter; but bitterer far, would be the loss Hope." Then my young master said something gentle to her who clung to him, and she, raising her young head from his shoulder, smiled sadly.

I cannot remember all that passed between my mistress *and her son*; but at last *she ordered* Miss Hope from the room. For a little while, Master Richard would not let her go, but when she prayed him to unloose his arm from her waist and let her pass, *for it well-nigh broke her* heart to stand thus between mother and son, and he led her tenderly to the door. "Let this be a token, my beloved, that you are mine," said he stooped down and kissed Miss Hope's white forehead.

My mistress spoke of Paul Lomond, and Master Richard listened gravely, and in silence.

"*Hope* Maybrith shall never marry that man if I can help it. Mother, mother, and is it thus you would sell that sweet young creature? Oh, shame!"

"And yet, my son, I am only seeking Hope's happiness in this marriage;"

"You mean her misery, madam. Hope can be happy with no other than myself, for she loves me, as I do her, constantly, undyingly! She is mine and I will never give her up."

"Oh, Richard!" said my mistress, coming closer to *her son*, and laying her hand upon his shoulder, "what madness, what folly is this, that you should so obstinately cling to Hope Maybrith, a poor dependant upon your mother's bounty—one who can neither bring you wealth nor power"

"That poor dependant, as you call her, I love so well that I will marry none but her, mother. Wealth and power, what are they beside sweet Hope Maybrith?"

"As master Richard seemed so determined, his mother began to talk about Challan Ridge. I could not well understand all she said, but I remember she spoke of her fear that the estate would pass into other hands, unless he would marry some rich, great lady, and then she mentioned a name. Oh, how angry Master Richard seemed!

"Agnes Heath," he repeated, in a low, bitter tone.—"Think you that I would marry that cold girl?—*Never, never!* Oh, mother, the heart that loves a Hope Maybrith cannot turn to one like Agnes Heath; and now, hear me—for I am determined," he repeated, striking the table heavily, "that Hope and myself shall never be sold for Challan Ridge. It may pass from my hand—I shall never keep it at the price of her happiness and mine."

"Mistress looked terribly black, but smoothed down her anger, and after a little, said, in a proud icy way: "If you are calm now: I will show you the papers I spoke of," and she took from her desk a roll, which looked like some old deeds, and laid them upon the table.

I slipped from the room. I was frightened and troubled for master Richard and his cousin, and I wanted to be by myself. I sat down upon the back porch; it was very calm and peaceful there."

(CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.)

BUYING AND SELLING.—We do not know the author of the following, which we find among the "Mercantile [illegible] but it tells the plain truth on the subject of honesty in buying and selling, and those who really desire to be upright in dealing, will do well to lay it to heart:—"Some are not honest in buying or selling. Their rule is to buy at all times as cheap as they can, and to sell as dear as they can. This is a wicked rule. We often trade with those who do not know the worth of the thing bought or sold. This cheating them, to make the best bargain we can. Sometimes we trade with those who are in great want, and we fix our own prices, and make them much too high if we sell, or too low if we buy. There is a fair price for everything. Let that be paid or taken for everything. He who is just and true, and *loves his neighbor* as himself, will soon find out what a fair price is.—Most all men use too many words in buying and selling; and when too many words are used, there is almost always a lie somewhere."

ANNEXATION.—Soon after Texas was annexed, an officer named Boyle, commanding an American vessel in the Mediterranean, touching at Gibraltar, was invited to dine with Spofford, commander of the English vessel at that place. When dinner was over, and the wine flowed freely, the subject of annexation was introduced;

"And so," says Spofford, "I see you of the United States have annexed *Texas*."

"Yes, we have," says Boyle.

"Well you are a peculiar people."

"Yes; we do everything in a peculiar way."

"Do you intend to go on annexing."

"Certainly."

"And when do you mean to stop?"

"Stop! Why, when we get to the natural boundaries of the United States."

"The *natural* boundaries of the United States, and what are they?" *said* Spofford

"The Equator and the Aurora Borealis," replied Boyle.

The Lion's Fear of Man.

Lichtenstein says that the African Hunters avail themselves of the circumstance that the Lion does not attempt to spring upon his prey until he has measured the ground, and has reached the distance of ten or twelve paces, when he lies crouching upon the ground, gathering himself up for the effort. The hunters he says, make a rule never to fire upon the lion till he lies down at this short distance, so that they can aim directly at his head with the most perfect certainty. He adds, that if a person has the misfortune to meet a lion, his only hope of safety is to stand perfectly still, even though the animal crouches to make his spring; that spring will not be hazarded if the man has only nerve enough to remain motionless as a statue, and look steadily in the eyes of the lion. The animal hesitates, rises, slowly retreats some steps, looking earnestly about him, lies down, again retreats, till having thus by degrees quite got out of what he seems to feel as the magic circle of man's influence, he takes to flight in the utmost haste.

CHANGE OF FORTUNE.—Some years ago, a servant girl, who had robbed her mistress, a milliner in London, was transported to Sydney for a term of years. Since the discovery of the Bathurst plains, the female convict has written to her former mistress, that the colony was a good place; that as she now kept her carriage, she was happy to return the amount which she had stolen with interest; that she earnestly recommended her to come out and set up shop: and that, in that case, she would be happy to extend her patronage to a lady for whom she had so great an esteem.

☞ During the prevalence of the epidemic in Virginia, in 1849, the negroes on the different plantations became dreadfully alarmed, and thought they would certainly die with it. Among others, in one of the upper counties was a negro boy, who having heard his father say that *the cholera would soon be along their way*, left his work one day, and betook himself to the woods.—Here he was found by his overseer, soon after, fast asleep. Being taken to task by him for leaving his work, he excused himself on the ground that, not being "prepared in mind to die," he had gone to the woods to "meditate." "But," said the overseer, "how was it that you went to sleep?" "Well, I don't know, 'zactly," responded the negro, but I specks I must have overprayed myself."

Gutta Percha.

Previous to the year 1844, this article was almost, if not entirely, unknown to commerce. Its recent employment in arts, its great value in scientific experiments, and the ease with which it can be *formed into a great variety of* surgical instruments, and other similar apparatus, together with its power to resist the action of the most powerful acids and other decomposing agencies, demand for it a passing notice, as to its nature, the source from which derived, the mode of collecting, and the origin of its name.

Gutta Percha (pronounced *gut-ta pur-ka*) is obtained from the milky juice of a tree, belonging to *natural order* of plants, called *Sapotaceæ*, trees or shrubs which usually secrete a milky fluid. The *Ficus Elastica*, or gum elastic tree, (India rubber) belongs to this family.

The attention of the civilized world was first called to this remarkable product of nature, by D. Montgomery, a surgeon of the British colony at *Singapore*. He had observed its use in the manufacture of the handles of tools, among the wood cutters belonging to the colony, and as a reward for introducing it into England, he received a gold medal from the Royal Society. Since that period, its admirable properties have been fully discovered, and it is now rapidly and extensively coming into use, in the manufacture of *various articles, giving em*ployment to thousands, both in Europe and America.—The quantity exported from the East Indies, up to the present time, (twelve years,) amounts to six-six *millions* of pounds.

The appearance of *Gutta Percha*, in its crude state, as found in commerce, is of a brown color, slightly elastic, somewhat porous, and exceedingly tough and hard. It resists the action of the most powerful chemical agents, being totally insoluble in acids or alkalies, and is entirely insensible to the action to the most corroding gasses. It becomes, however, very much softened by heat, and in hot water can be moulded into any form, or several pieces may be united together into one mass.

The trees from which this gum is obtained, usually attain the height of from 60 to 70 feet, and are from two to three feet in diameter. There are several species that yield a sweet and wholesome fruit, which is used by the natives for food, such as the Sapodilla plumb, the Marmalade, the Star apple &c. Some of the species produce large seeds, which yield a bland fixed oil, which is sometimes thick like butter, as the *chee* of India, or *shea* (African butter tree,) described by Mungo Park, and which is also used as an article food, for the manufacture of soap, and in the preparation of medicine.

The *mode by which the natives obtain* the gutta percha, is as follows: The full grown trees are cut down, and ringed round the trunk, through the bark, about *twelve* or sixteen inches apart. *The milky juice or sap* exudes at these incisions, and is collected in cocoa-nut shells, placed under the body of the fallen tree. From these the sap is gathered and reduced to the condition of the crude article of commerce, by evaporation.

It may be proper to observe, that this method of collecting the gum, if persevered in for a few more years will destroy the source from which this valuable article is now obtained. *Present gain* is too often the motto of commercial men, and throughout the range of civilization, we find this *destructive policy* prevailing to an alarming extent, especially in the needless destruction of our native American forests, a waste which is wholly useless and wanton, but one which future generations will *feel*.

The name of *Gutta Percha*, is so unique in its character, that the *origin of the term* may not be uninteresting to the general reader. For this explanation of the term we are indebted to *Quekett's Histology of Vegetables*. On referring to the map of Asia, we observe that the Island of Sumatra presents a ragged outline. The Malay name for this Island is Pulo Percha, "pulo" signifying "island," and "percha," "ragged." "*Gutta*" is the Malay name for gum, hence this substance received the name of "*Gutta pulo Percha*," or gum from the ragged Island, from whence it was first derived as an article of commerce. It has, however, become the custom of late years, to omit the word "pulo," and hence the name of *Gutta Percha*.

Description of our Saviour.

The Boston *Journal* says, that the following epistle was taken by Napoleon from the public records of Rome, when he deprived that city of so many valuable manuscripts. It was written at the time, and on the spot where Jesus Christ commenced his ministry, by Publius Centullus, the Governor of Judea, to the Senate of Rome—Cæsar, Emperor. It was the custom of those days for the Governor to write home any event of importance which transpired while he held office.

"Conscript Fathers: There appeared in these our days a man named Jesus Christ, who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles, is accepted as a prophet of great truth; but his own disciples call him the son of God. He hath raised the dead, cured all manner of diseases. He is a man of stature tall and comely, with a very ruddy countenance, such as the beholder may love and fear. *His hair* is the color of the filbert when fully ripe, plain to his ears, whence downward it is most orient of color, curling and waving about his shoulders; in the middle of his head is a seam or partition of long hair, after the manner of the