

# THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

"I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man."—Thomas Jefferson.

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## TERMS:

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

### CURIOUS STORY:

A Parallel to the Courtney Maidness.

We conclude this chapter with relating, as we find it in "Hughson's Perambulations," an account of a most extraordinary affair, highly illustrative of the ignorance and credulity of the last century, which happened in this place in the year 1751.—Some country people were possessed of the opinion, that an old man and woman of that town, John and Ruth Osborne, were witches, on account of several cattle dying of a contagion, which they raged; great numbers of them assembled, some on horseback, and others on foot, and went and had them proclaimed as such, in three different market-towns. These unfortunate people were, afterwards, dragged from the vestry of the church, where they had been concealed, and so severely ducked that the woman died on the spot, and the man a few days afterwards. Several persons were committed to custody on the verdict of the coroners' jury; and one Thomas Colley (who, though a principal actor in this horrid affair, was prompted by others, and by the liquor which he had drunk) was tried at the ensuing assizes for Hertfordshire; capitally convicted. It came out, at the trial, that, on the 18th of April, 1751, one Nichols came to William Dell, the crier of Hemel Hempstead, and gave him a piece of paper, with four pence, that he might cry the words written thereon, in the market-place. The words were these: "This is to give notice, that, on Monday next, a man and woman are to be publicly ducked at Tring, in this county, for their wicked crimes."—The overseer of the parish where these people lived, having heard this cried at Winslow Leighton Buzzard, and Hemel Hempstead, on the several market-days, and being informed that the two people John Osborne and Ruth, his wife, he sent them to the workhouse for safety. The master of the workhouse, to make still more secure, removed them, in the middle of the night of the 21st, into the vestry room of the church; thinking the sanctity of the place would have some awe upon the mob, if they came. However, on the day appointed, more than five thousand people were collected together at Tring, declaring revenge against Osborne and his wife, as a wizard and a witch; they pulled down a large wall belonging to the workhouse, (the ancient priory,) and demolished the windows and window-frames. The master of the workhouse assured them they were not there; the mob would not believe him; but rushed in, and searched the house, the closets, and even the boxes and trunks. They declared they would pull the house down if the victims were not produced, and some proposed setting fire to it; at last, they all swore, that, if Osborne and his wife were not delivered to them, they would not only burn the workhouse, but the town of Tring. The master being apprehensive that they would do as they had promised, at length informed them where the unhappy people were.—The mob now went off in triumph, with Colley at their head. As soon as the mob entered the vestry room, they seized Osborne and his wife, and carried them to a

place called Gufflecote, about two miles off, where, not finding a pond to their purpose, they carried them to Wilston Green, and put them into separate rooms, there, they stripped them naked, and tied them up separately in a sheet, but, first, they crossed the man's legs and arms, and bent his body so as to tie his thumbs to his great toes.—When they came to the pond called Wilston Wear, a rope was tied under the armpits of Ruth Osborne, and two men dragged her into the pond, and through it, and Colley went into the pond and turned her, several times, over and over with a stick. After they had ducked the woman, they brought her to land, and then dragged the old man in; and ducked him. Then he was set aside, and the woman ducked again as before, and Colley made the same use of his stick. Then the old man was ducked again. After which the woman was, a third time, ducked; and Colley went into the pond and gulled her about until the sheet wherein she was wrapped came off, and she appeared naked. She expired soon afterwards. Colley then came out of the pond, and went round collecting money for the sport he had shown them to ducking the old witch, as he called her. After the woman was dead the mob carried John Osborne to a house, put him to bed, and laid his dead wife by his side. Ruth Osborne was seventy years of age; John was fifty-six. In consequence of those circumstances of cruelty, Colley was ordered for immediate execution, and his body was afterwards hung in chains at Gufflecote, in the parish of Tring, three miles off. Another instance of credulity and superstition occurred, in this neighbourhood, in the year 1759. At Wingrove, one Susannah Hannokes, an elderly woman, was accused, by her neighbour, of being a witch; for, that she had bewitched her spinning wheel, so that she could not make it go round, and offered to make oath of it before a magistrate; on which, the husband of the poor woman, in order to justify his wife, insisted upon her being tried by the church Bible, and that the accuser should be present; she was conducted by her husband to the ordeal, attended by a great concourse of people, who flocked to the parish church to see the ceremony, where she was stripped of her clothes to her shirt and under petticoat, and weighed against the Bible! when, to the no small mortification of the accuser, she outweighed it and was honorably acquitted of the charge.—*Railroadiana.*

### YOUNG MEN, READ THIS.

A scene from "Clement Falconer."

Mr. Crabbe entered his office late one evening, after having passed from the grave to the gay, in his usual manner at the table of a friend, and throwing himself into his own chair, 'Clem,' said he, 'lay aside that book, and let us talk.' And the volume being deposited on the table, he continued: 'I have turned out of my office a number of very clever, and a few very distinguished men, and whether you are to go in advance of your predecessors, or to fall behind them, must depend in some measure, upon nature to be sure, but mainly upon yourself. I was sitting in this place one morning in the fall of the year, when in stepped a long, lank, limber young Yankee. His cane was thrown over his shoulder, from which depended down his back a bandana handkerchief, containing all the worldly goods and clothes he possessed besides those he had on. He wore a slouched beaver, and a thread-bare coat, linen pantaloons, and coarse shoes, and travelled afoot from the mountains of New Hampshire, on his way to the West. But it occurred to him that morning, as he said, that before he arrived in the new States, he would like to study the law, and requested permission to begin his studies forthwith, in my office, desiring me to state, at the same time, what was the customary student's fee in these parts. Somewhat started at the apparition, I had thoughts at first of not receiving him; but there was something in the quiet determination of his eye, and the confident busi-

ness air with which he threw down his bundle, and opened the subject of his wishes, and still more in the hardy enterprise and firmness of purpose implied in the whole conduct of the young man, that pleased me exceedingly, and I told him that he was welcome to use my books, and to such aid as I could afford him in the prosecution of studies. That my charge for those young gentlemen who were able to pay me conveniently, was one hundred dollars per annum; but those who could not afford this expenditure; I willingly received without charge. He replied that he had no money, and could only say, that after he should be qualified to practice, and got into business, which he hoped he would not be long in doing, he would remit my fee from the West. He set in accordingly, paying his board and providing himself with clothing, by taking a class of young men, to whom he gave instructions at nights, in Latin and Greek, and was never absent from the office one day for three years, at which time he was admitted to the bar. He now again took up his cane and bundle, continued his tramp over the mountains, and sat himself down in the then territory of Indiana, whence he remitted me, in sums, from time to time the whole amount of my fee. I wrote to him declaring that I was unwilling to receive his money, and hoping that he would consider me satisfied; but he insisted upon paying me every farthing. And now that man is a Senator in the Congress from the West, building up a well earned fame among the Amphytyons of the Union."

### CURIOUS OCCURRENCE.

The peasants of Ulster use an enormous scythe, with the end of the handle sharpened to a point, that they may stick it into the ground. When they go home from work, they carry this formidable weapon over their shoulders, in such manner that the edge of the scythe lies round their necks. Two peasants were sauntering home by the side of a river, when they spied a large salmon with his head hidden under the roots of an old tree, and his tail lying out into the stream. "Look Paddy," said one, at the stupid salmon, he thinks because he can't see us, we can't see him; if I had but my pike I would let him know the difference." "Och!" said the other, creeping down, "sure the scythe handle will do for that—here goes." And so saying he struck at the salmon; and hit him truly enough,—only unfortunately, with the same stroke, he took off his own head, which fell plump into the water before the eyes of his astonished comrade. For a long time he could not understand how it was that Paddy's head fell off so suddenly, and maintains that there was something not quite as natural as it should be, in the business.

### The capture of the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa.

From the New Orleans Bulletin.

The capture of the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, has created quite a sensation here—not because it was an unexpected event—but the way it was done has excited the surprise of all. This fortress was reputed to be one of the strongest in America—the only mode by which the Mexicans got possession, was by starving out the Spanish garrison.—There were good grounds therefore to anticipate a stout resistance. Several days at least, it was thought, would be spent ere the formidable batteries were demolished. But when the news came that the work was done in three hours every one was astonished; and the impression generally was made, that the French were indebted for their success in a great measure to the weakness of their adversaries. This may in part be true the testimony of eye-witness proved that the French showed themselves to be admirable engineers. The destruction effected by their gunners in a few hours, upon a fort deemed hitherto impregnable, is sufficient evidence of that fact. The Mexicans too, stood their ground till their batteries were blown up, their guns dismantled, and the

walls of the fort were laid in ruins. We hear no account of an offer to capitulate, while there was any hope in resistance. It cannot be said then, that the conquest was easy for want of a resolute defence. The Mexicans fought well, under the shelter of their intrenchments, until they were buried under the rubbish of demolished batteries and crumbling walls. The fact is that the French excel in gunnery, and to their consummate skill and science is to be ascribed the conquest of San Juan de Ulloa.

Extraordinary Faculty.—There is in our Institution for the Blind, a pupil named Burras, who has the unaccountable faculty of computation so rapidly, that you may ask him what was any past year, or what will be any day of any year, or what will be any day of any year to come, and he answers you with perfect accuracy, almost but immediately. For instance, you say—"Well, what day was the 20th of January, 1830?" He tells you instantly. If you ask "what day will be the 6th of February 1840," again he answers at once: In fact, you can ask him no questions which he will not promptly and correctly answer. And yet this boy never had the least instruction in Mathematics to bring out this faculty. When he entered the Pennsylvania Institution he was regarded as almost an idiot—he was deformed, being drawn down by the negligence with which he had been permitted for years and years to sit in the corner by the fire-side in a state of absolute vacuity of mind. By the excellence of physical culture, he is nearly erect; and by the combined efforts of the benevolent leaders, he has also been astonishingly improved in his mental powers.

How this boy makes his computations of time, is not known, but it is certain that he goes by some mathematical rule of his own.

One morning a party came into the public rooms at Buxton somewhat later than usual, and requested some tongue. They were told that Lord Byron had eaten it all. "I am very angry with his lordship," said a lady, loud enough for him to hear the observation. "I am very sorry for it, madam," retorted Lord Byron; "but before I ate the tongue, I was assured that you did not want it."

A jury in one of the Clique Ports, being charged with an old woman, accused of stealing a pair of boots, moved probably by the infirmities and miserable appearance of the prisoner, returned the following verdict.—"We find her not guilty, and hope she will not do so any more."

An Enigma.—At a banquet, when solving enigmas was one of the diversions, Alexander said to one of his courtiers—"What is that which did not come last year, and will not come this year?" A distressed officer, starting up, said "It must be our arrears in pay." The King was so diverted that he commanded him to be paid up, and also increased his salary.

Long Beards.—The longest beard recorded in history, was that of John Mayo, painter to the Emperor Charles V. Though he was a tall man, it is said his beard was so long that he could tread upon it. He was very vain of his beard and usually fastened it with a ribbon to his button hole; and sometimes he would untie it by command of the Emperor, who took great pleasure in seeing the wind blow it in the faces of the courtiers.

Off with his Nose.—An English newspaper says that the new Russian Minister to the United States is called Somonosoff (saw my nose off.)—An attache of the same legation in Washington, Blownanosoff (blow my nose off.) Besides which we have Col. Kutmanosoff, of the imperial guard, (cut my nose off.) Marshal Pullmanosoff, (pull my nose off.) Gen. Nozebegun, (nose begone) and many others.

Boston Journal

## POLITICAL.

From the Wilkesbarre Advocate.

### MESSRS. BUTLER & STURDEVANT.

A number of Whig citizens who were at the meeting at Pettit's on Saturday, and approved entirely of the proceedings so far as they go, are yet, on further reflection, and seeing the unmeasured abuse poured out on our members by the Telegraph, disposed to go farther into the matter, we do therefore set forth the following facts and principles, believing them to be correct and true!

First, We do pointedly condemn the conduct of those return judges and other violent partisans who attempted to rob Charles Naylor of his unquestionable right to be returned to Congress, and hold up to reprobation the factious and disorganizing course of Charles J. Ingersoll, in stimulating them to that measure; which we believe has been the source of all the present mischief at Harrisburg. But two wrongs never made a right. Their misconduct, in setting at defiance the will of the majority, can be no justification for the whigs to commit the same error. Their crime should operate as a 'negative example,' and lead the whigs to a more rigidly scrupulous fidelity to the sacred republican maxim—the root and foundation of free government, obedience to the will of the majority.

Second, That there are 17 election wards and districts in Philadelphia county, and must therefore be 17 return judges, of which it takes nine to constitute a majority; and less than nine could not make an official return.

That in the county the Van Buren or democratic ticket had, taking the highest vote 10,036, the highest whig vote, 9490, giving a majority of 546; that the lowest on the democratic ticket had a majority of 985 over the highest whig; and that therefore, (what we are very sorry for,) the democratic ticket was elected—their members were entitled to be returned, and to take part in the organization of the House, according to the immutable principles of justice, and all former precedent.

That six judges of Philadelphia county made up a paper, setting forth the votes in only seven of out the seventeen wards and districts, leaving out the other ten—showing a majority for the whig members: that it was sent off by an express messenger to the secretary of the commonwealth;

The judges of elections have the right, and it is their duty to decide on the legality of votes presented at the district where they preside, while the election is going on; but when the poll is closed, their business is purely ministerial; they are bound to make up the returns as the votes were cast; they have no right to know, enquire, or decide, respecting the validity of votes cast in any other ward or district—the returns of votes cast are to be made to the Assembly when "each house," says the constitution, "shall judge of the qualification of its members," and they alone;

That the number of election wards of districts in any county, being a matter of law, need not be pleaded; the secretary is presumed to know the law, and the number of judges, and, therefore, in no case, were he vested with judicial power, could a paper signed by less than a majority be rightfully regarded as a legal return;

That at the convention of members elect for the purpose of organization, the Secretary took in them as the Return from Philadelphia county, only the paper signed by the six judges.

That the paper sent in by the six Judges was not a legal return from Philadelphia county.

That the paper sent in by the six Judges did not pretend on the face of it to be the return from the whole county, but only seven districts; and therefore could not be regarded as a true and official return;

(That the law demands the returns shall be placed in the nearest post-office, sealed or directed to the Senate or House, enclosed in an envelope to the Secretary of the commonwealth. The paper signed by the six