

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.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY H. WEBB.

Volume III.

BLOOMSBURG, COLUMBIA COUNTY, PA. SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1839.

Number 5.

OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRAT,
OPPOSITE ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MAIN-ST.

TERMS:

The COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT will be published every Saturday morning, at TWO DOLLARS per annum, payable half yearly in advance, or Two Dollars Fifty Cents, if not paid within the year.

No subscription will be taken for a shorter period than six months; nor any discontinuance permitted, until all arrearages are discharged.

ADVERTISEMENTS not exceeding a square will be conspicuously inserted at One Dollar for the first three insertions, and Twenty-five cents for every subsequent insertion. A liberal discount made to those who advertise by the year. LETTERS addressed on business, must be post paid.

POETRY.

FOR THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

A MAY MORNING WALK

ON THE BANKS OF THE SUSQUEHANNA.

'Tis morn, and the mountain, the valley and stream,
Are clad in the light of orient beam,
And the green of the meadows is glistening through
The fast falling drops of the silvery dew.

From the bondage of winter hath nature awoke,
And away from the chains that oppress'd her hath broke;
In the glow of the sun she exults to be free,
And holds thro' her empire a grand jubilee.

'Tis sweet on the bright Susquehanna to stray,
When the mists from the mountains are fleeing away,
And wood-notes are cheering its waves as they glide
And flowers are adorning its verdurous side.

The wild pinks with crimson are fringing the bank,
And the cowslips with yellow the meadow-turf dank,
While sweet-scented clusters of woodbine are seen
On the verge of the wood mid the thicket of green.

The flowers of the turf, and the bloom of the tree,
Are filled with the hum of the wandering bee,
And the air is all freshness and fragrance, while floats
On its bosom, the joy of the birds' mellow notes.

Hark! list to the varied lay of the thrush,
And the song of the wood-lark conceal'd in the bush;
While the gold-finch and robin their carols divine
Pour sweet from the boughs of the elm and the pine.

Oh! how does the spirit exult at the sight
Of the beauties of spring in a morn'g so bright,
Forgetting, amid so much verdure and bloom,
That this is a world of the curse & the tomb!

How strange so much sin, and misfortune and care
Should dwell in a world so enchantingly fair,
That the hearts of its lords keenest anguish should ring,
While the birds of the air so exultingly sing.

W. T.

WELLERISMS.

"How sharp your toe nails are," as the man said ven he had cotched the hornet.

"Are you looking for any one in particular?" as the rat said ven he saw the cat watching him.

"No gouging," as the chap said ven he felt the "critters" in his head.

"Let's clinch the bargain," as the bear said when he patted the man on the shoulder.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE THUNDER STORM.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

I never was a man of feeble courage.—There are few scenes either of the human or elemental strife, upon which I have not looked with an eye of daring. I have stood in the front of battle, when swords were gleaming and circling around me, like fiery serpents of the air—I have sat on the mountain pinnacle, when the whirlwind was rending its oaks from the rocky clefts, and scattering them piecemeal to the clouds—I have seen these things with a swelling soul that knew not—that wrecked not of danger—but there is some thing in the thunder's voice that makes me tremble like a child. I have tried to overcome this unmanly weakness. I have called pride to my aid, I have sought for moral courage in the lessons of philosophy—but all in vain; at the first moaning of the distant cloud, my heart sinks, quivers, and dies within me.

My involuntary dread of thunder had its origin in an incident that occurred when I was a child of ten years. I had a little cousin, a girl of the same age with myself, who was the constant companion of my childhood. Strange, that after a lapse of almost a score of years, that countenance should be so familiar to me. I can still see the bright young creature, her large eye flashing like a beautiful gem, her free locks streaming as in joy, upon the sunrise gaze, and her cheek glowing like a ruby through a wreath of transparent snow. Her voice had the melody and jousyness of a bird; and, when she bounded over the wooded hill, or the fresh green valley, shouting a glad answer to every voice of nature, and clapping her hands in the very ecstasy of young existence, she looked as if breaking away like a fresh nightingale from the earth, and going off where all things are beautiful and happy like her.

It was a morning in the middle of August. The little girl had been some days at my father's house, and she was now to return home. Her path lay across the fields and I gladly became the companion of her walk. I never knew a summer morning more beautiful and still. Only one little cloud was visible, and that seemed as pure, and white, and peaceful, as if it had been the incense-smoke of some burning censor of the skies. The leaves hung silent in the woods, the waters of the bay had forgotten their undulations, the flowers were bending their heads, as if dreaming of the rainbow and the dew, and the whole atmosphere was of such soft and luxurious sweetness, that it "seemed a cloud of roses, scattered down by the hand of a Peri," from the far-off gardens of Paradise. The green earth and the blue sea, lay abroad in their boundlessness, and the peaceful sky bent over and blessed them. The little creature at my side was in a delirium of happiness, and her clear sweet voice came ringing upon the air as often as she heard the notes of a favorite bird, or saw some strange and lonely flower in her wanderings. The unbroken and almost supernatural tranquility continued until nearly noon. Then, for the first time, the indications of an approaching tempest were manifest. Over the summit of a mountain, at a distance of about a mile, the folds of a dark cloud became suddenly visible, and at the same instant, a hollow roar came down upon the winds, as if it had been the sound of waves in a rocky cavern. The cloud rolled out like a banner fold upon the air, but still the atmosphere was calm, and the leaves as motionless as before, and there was not even a quiver upon the sleeping waters, to tell of the coming hurricane.

To escape the tempest was impossible. As the only resort we fled to an oak that stood at the foot of a tall and rugged precipice. There we remained and gazed almost breathlessly upon the clouds, marshaling themselves like bloody giants in the sky. The thunder was not frequent, but every burst was so frightful, that the young

creature who stood by me, shut her eyes convulsively, clung with desperate strength to my arm, and shrieked as if her heart would break. A few minutes and the storm was upon us. During the height of its fury the little girl silently raised her finger to the precipice that towered above us. As I looked up, an amethystine flame was quivering upon its grey peaks, and the next moment the clouds opened, the rocks tattered to their foundations, a roar like a groan of the universe, filled the air, and I felt myself blinded and thrown I knew not whither. How long I remained insensible I cannot tell, but when consciousness returned, the violence of the tempest was abating, the roaring of the winds was dying in the distant tree-tops, and the deep tones of the clouds were becoming in fainter and fainter murmurs from the distant hills.

I arose and looked tremblingly and almost deliriously around me. She was there, the dear idol of my infant love, stretched out upon the wet green earth. After a moment of irresolution, I went up and looked upon her. The handkerchief upon her neck was slightly rent, and a single dark spot upon her bosom told where the path of death had been. At first I clasped her to my breast, with a cry of agony, and then laid her down and gazed into her face, almost with a feeling of calmness. Her bright dishevelled ringlets, clustered sweetly around her brow; the look of terror had faded from her lips, and an infant smile was pictured most beautifully there; the red rose tinge upon her cheek, was as lovely as in life; and, as I pressed it to my own, the fountain of tears was opened, and I wept as if my head were waters. I have but a dim recollection of what followed. I only know that I remained weeping and motionless, till the coming on of twilight, that I was taken tenderly by the hand, and led away where I saw the countenances of parents and sisters.

Many years have gone by upon their wings of light and shadow, but the scenes I have portrayed, still come over me, at times, with terrible distinctness. The old oak yet stands at the base of the precipice, but its limbs are black and dead; and its hollow trunk looking upwards to the sky, as if "calling to the clouds for drink," is an emblem of rapid and noiseless decay. A year ago I visited the spot, and the thoughts of by-gone years came mournfully back to me, thoughts of the little innocent being who fell by my side, like some beautiful tree of spring, rent up by the whirlwind, in the midst of its blossoming. But I remembered, and Oh! there was joy in the memory, that she had gone where no lightning slumbers in the folds of the rainbow cloud, and where the sun-lit waters are never broken by the storm-breath of Omnipotence.

THE NATURE OF BETROTHMENT.

BY THE REV. J. M. DAVIS.

What is the nature of a betrothment? And what are the circumstances which will render it null and void.

First—I remark that a matrimonial engagement does not consist in any of the civilities and courtesies of life which a gentleman may extend to a lady.

It is not unfrequently the case however, that these are mistaken for declarations of love and the announcement is made at once that such persons are engaged. Such is the imprudence of friends often, and more frequently of the lady herself that the common politeness and attention, which are ever due between the sexes, are construed into proposals of matrimony, & a young gentleman hears the report of his engagement, while, as yet, not even the dream of the thing has passed through his own mind. By such imprudence the lady severs herself from the society, perhaps of an honorable and polished mind, and brings upon herself and friends the mortification and disappointment which would inevitably follow in such cases. If a gentleman attend a lady to church; if he escort her to the public assembly; if he walk with her in the street; if he occasionally visit her for her good society, the

report is not unfrequently set on foot, by some mischief-maker, or indiscreet friend, that the parties are engaged to be married.

Second—Neither does an engagement consist in any politeness or social intercourse which a lady may extend to a gentleman.

There are young gentlemen, however, of such conenmmate vanity as to suppose that such treatment is nothing less than the strongest intimation of personal attachment. If a lady so much as look at them, they fancy that it must be a love affair and equivalent to the most direct proposals for matrimony. A smile, a compliment, a social interview a walk or ride of pleasure, is set down by such conceited coxcombs, as the most equivocal declaration of love. They tell of the conquests they have made with an air of triumph, and never know their mistake till they learn it in that reserve and neglect which their conduct so richly deserves.

Third—Neither does an engagement consist in any of these preliminary steps which are so important, in order to form a just estimate of the character and qualifications of the person with whom you would be united for life.

Many persons, however, imagine that every such step is a step of committal. While the individual is only forming that wise estimate and making those judicious investigations which every one is bound to make in this affair, by a regard to his own happiness and that of others, he is considered as fairly committed, without possibility of honorable retreat. But this is all wrong, whether it be the sentiment of individuals, or public sentiment. The very object of his researches is to ascertain if the character and qualification of the person are such as will make him a happy companion for life. Without such investigation, he might as well commit his interest in this matter to a lady whom he had never beheld. He might as well be betrothed, as heathen children by their parents, without his consent or knowledge, and while yet in a state of infancy. He might as well blindfold himself, and rush into a great assembly, and select a companion at random. Parents must suppose their daughters little less than angels, if they expect to betroth them in this manner. And if young ladies are so superficial in character and accomplishment, as not to admit such honorable and wise scrutiny, they had better give up the idea of marriage life and become nuns at once. Such should be the sentiments on this subject, that every young gentleman should feel himself at liberty to make every necessary investigation of character, without subjecting himself to the report of being engaged, or of other than honorable intentions if, disappointed, he sees fit to retire.

Fourth—Neither does an engagement consist in the most unqualified declaration of love on the part of either gentleman or lady. This may all be, yet no obligations are assumed—no contract is formed. And yet there are those who suppose that such declarations of attachment impose an obligation on their friend, which cannot be resisted or violated. The gentleman whose province it always is to make such disclosures, considers that when he has done this he has secured, by right, his object. But not so. The lady may be wholly unprepared for such an event. Such a disclosure may be made before she has made the necessary inquiries and investigations herself. Such a disclosure may be made when she had no suspicion of any attachment existing and while her own engagements and circumstances do not admit of her entertaining such proposals for a moment. It is true, such a disclosure on the part of the gentleman imposes certain duties on the female. If her circumstances are such as to render an engagement impossible, she is bound by every principle to acquaint him immediately with the fact, & keep the transaction a secret. If she is satisfied with his character, and entertains such an affection for him as will render a union with him happy, she has nothing left but to make known to him in a modest and affectionate

manner her acceptance of his proposals. But if after due considerations, and inquiry and deliberation, she is conducted to a contrary conclusion, she should lose no time in informing him of the fact, in a way least likely to wound his sensibilities or mortify his pride. She will consider it, too, both a dictate of modesty, and prudence, and honor, to disclose the circumstances to no living being.

Fifth—A matrimonial engagement, then is when the parties, having made mutual disclosures of affection for each other, in view of such disclosures bind themselves by promises, to become each others wedded companion for life. There must be a contract formed in which the parties pledge themselves to each other for life, or there can be no matrimonial engagement. Nothing short of this can be accounted a betrothment, and nothing more necessary to perfection.

Singular Verification of a Dream.—A letter from Hamburg contains the following curious story relative to the verification of a dream. It appears that a locksmith's apprentice one morning lately informed his master (Claude Soller) that on the previous night he dreamed that he had been assassinated on the road to Bergedorf, a little town about two hours' distance from Hamburg. The master laughed at the young man's credulity; and to prove that he had little faith in dreams, insisted upon sending immediately to Bergedorf with 140 six dollars, (£22 8s.) which he owed to his brother-in-law, who resided in the town. The apprentice, in vain implored his master to change his intention, was compelled to set out at about 11 o'clock. On arriving at Billwader, about half way between Hamburg and Bergedorf, he recollected his dream with terror but perceiving the bailie of the village at a little distance, talking to some of his workmen, he accosted him with his singular dream; at the same requesting that, as he had money about his person, one of his workmen might be allowed to accompany him for protection across a small wood which lay in his way. The bailie smiled, and in obedience to his orders, one of his men set out with the young apprentice.

The next day the corpse of the latter was conveyed by some peasants to the bailie, along with a reaping hook, which had been found by his side, and with which the throat of the murdered youth had been cut. The bailie immediately recognised the instrument as one which he had on the previous day given to the workman who had served as the apprentice's guide, for the purpose of pruning some willows. The workman was apprehended, and, on being confronted with the body of his victim, made a full confession of his crime, adding the recital of the dream had alone prompted him to commit the horrible act. The assassin, who is 25 years of age, is a native of Billwader, and previously to the perpetration of the murder, had always borne an irreproachable character.

Jonathan Mason, a soldier of the revolution, died recently, at Tamworth, N. H. in the 74th year of his age. It is related of him that he was taken prisoner by the British, and on being brought before Burgoyne, that General said to him, "well, my lad, what do you think of yourself now?" His reply was, "I think you will all be prisoners within two weeks." The General then exclaimed with an oath, "All the Yankees in America cannot make a prisoner of me!" In three weeks from that day he and his army were prisoners.

A young lady taking a walk one morning, met a gentleman of her acquaintance, to whom she said, "you see, sir, I am for a little sun and air." "You had better get a husband first," was the ready response.

Little minds rejoice over the errors of men of genius, as the owl rejoices at an eclipse.