

THE STAR OF THE NORTH.

R. W. Weaver, Proprietor.

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THE STAR OF THE NORTH

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Choice Poetry.

I OWE NO MAN A DOLLAR.

BY CHARLES F. SHIRAS.

Oh, do not envy, my own dear wife,
The wealth of our next door neighbor,
But tell me still to be stout of heart,
And cheerfully follow my labor.
You must know the last of those little debts
That have been on my lingering sorrow,
Is paid this night! So we'll both go forth,
With happier hearts to-morrow.

Oh, the debtor is but a shame-faced dog,
With the creditor's name on his collar;
While I'm a king and you a queen,
For I owe no man a dollar!

Our neighbor who saw in the coach to-day,
With his wife and his flouting daughter,
While we sat down to our coverless board,
To a crust and cup of water.
I saw that the tear stood in your eye,
Thought you tried your best to conceal it—
I knew that the contrast reached your heart,
And you could not help but feel it.

But knowing now that our sunny face
Had freed my neck from the collar;
You'll join my laugh and help me shout,
For I owe no man a dollar!

This neighbor whose show has dazzled your eyes,
In fact is a wretched debtor.
I pity him all from my very heart,
And wished that his lot was better.
Why, the man is the vilest slave alive,
For his dashing wife and daughter
Will live in style though ruin should come—
For he goes as the lamb to the slaughter.
But he feels it tighter every day,
That terrible debtor's collar!

Oh, what would he give could he say with us,
That he owed no man a dollar!

You seem amazed, but I'll tell you more,
Within two hours I met him
Sneaking away with frightened air,
As if a fiend had beset him;
Yet he fled from a very worthy man,
Whom I met with the greatest pleasure,
Whom I called by name and forced to stop,
Though he said he was not at home.

He held his hat close! So I held him fast,
Till he took my neck from the collar,
Then I freed his hand as I proudly said,
"Now I owe no man a dollar!"

Miscellaneous.

Life of an Engineer.

The life of a railroad engineer is graphically depicted in the following extract from the *Schenectady Star*:

"But the engineer—he who guides the train by guiding the iron horse, and almost holds the lives of passengers in his hands—his is a life of mingled pain and pleasure. In a little seven-by-nine apartment, with square holes on each side for windows, open behind and with machinery to look through ahead, you find him. He is the 'Patfinder'; he leads the way at all times of danger, checks the iron horse, or causes it to speed ahead with the velocity of the wind, at will. Have you ever stood by the stack, of a dark night, and watched the coming and passing of a train? Away off in the darkness you discover a light, and you hear a noise, and the earth trembles beneath your feet. The light comes nearer; you can compare it to nothing but the sparks you imagine come from Beelzebub's nostrils—the fire underneath, that shines close to the ground, causing you to believe the devil walks on live coals. It comes close to you; you back away and shudder; you look up, and almost on the devil's back rides the engineer; perhaps the 'machine' shrieks, and you may imagine the engineer is applying the spur to the devil's sides. A daring fellow, that engineer—you can't help saying so, and you wonder wherein lies the pleasure of being an engineer. But so he goes, day after day, night after night. Moonlight evenings he sweeps over the country, through cities and villages, through fairy scenes and forest clearings. He looks through the square holes at the side and enjoys the moonlight, but he cannot stop to enjoy the beauty of the scenery. Cold, rainy, muddy, dark night, it is the same—perhaps the tracks are undermined or overflashed with water; perhaps some second-rate horse has placed some obstruction in the way, or trees been overturned across the track; and, in either case, it is almost instant death—to him, at least; but he stops not. Right on is the word with him, and on he goes, regardless of danger, weather, and everything, save the well-doing of his duty. Think of him, ye who shudder through fear in the cushioned seats of the cars, and get warm from the fire that is kindled for your benefit.

When the fishman first tried peaches, he said he liked their flavor, but the seeds lay hard on his stomach.

ELECTION OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

This may be the last No. of our Journal that will meet the eyes of Directors before they assemble to elect County Superintendents for the next three school years. The proper performance of that duty, so as to effect the original design of the liberal and far-seeing Legislature which established the office, will be of incalculable benefit to the State; and the contrary will be equally injurious. It is, therefore, our design, as one among the thousands of Pennsylvanians who are watching the workings of this new feature in our educational system with intense interest, frankly to state the conclusions to which our observations have led.

Three years ago, few Directors or others had any clear view of the necessity, nature, mode of operation, or probable results of this office. The natural consequences were, in the first instance, numerous mistakes in selection and compensation. These have been, we think erroneously, attributed, in and out of the State, to a settled purpose to defeat the office, out of general hostility to the system itself. In a few cases, the feeling may have had influence; but in most, the action complained of really grew out of mere want of knowledge of the nature of the office itself, and an honest belief that such an addition to the expense and the working machinery of the system was wholly unnecessary. Whatever may have been the cause, it is certain that the duty of selecting County Superintendents was so performed as to produce one of the three following results: Either,

1. An incompetent person was chosen, who failed, no matter what the salary. Or,
2. A competent person was chosen, who failed, or was crippled in his operations, by total inadequacy of salary. Or,
3. A competent person was selected, with adequate salary, who fulfilled the just expectations of the friends of the law.

From this it would appear that fitness in the person and adequacy of compensation are the elements—the essential conditions—of success. Of course, as in all other complex affairs, there are instances that appear to conflict with this conclusion; but on close inspection they will be found rather to confirm it. For example: one Superintendent may have been so well qualified for the station, and so devoted to the system, that he discharged his duties at a most shamefully inadequate salary. But who will argue from this, that it is the right of the public to impose such a burden on private means or individual patriotism? Or it may have been that all the conditions appeared to be secured—both adequacy of salary and skill and experience in the art of teaching—yet failure ensued. But who will condemn the office, because, here and there, a good teacher may have made a poor Superintendent? Many an able lawyer makes a miserable Judge; few of the most successful practicing physicians are qualified for the Professor's Chair; so a capital teacher of boys may not succeed as Teacher of Teachers and administrative officer of a complicated school system.

It would be no difficult task to run over the whole State and show the correctness of the conclusions just stated. But it is neither proper nor necessary.

Taking it for granted, that experience has fully justified the wisdom of the Legislature in requiring the selection of a fit person and the payment of a sufficient salary, for this office, two questions arise:

1. Who is a fit person for the office?
2. What is a sufficient salary?

1. **Military and scientific acquirements.** These are both indispensable, and the degree of them should be considerable. In every county, schools of every rank and grade—from the lowest primary to the high school, with its full round of branches—are or soon come into existence; and to discharge the office properly, the Superintendent must be qualified "to examine" all the Teachers, "to visit" them, and "give such instructions in the art of Teaching and the method thereof in each school" as the condition and grade of each shall require. How can this be done, except by one who is scholar enough to teach the Teacher of the highest branch taught in the highest school in his county?

2. **Skill and Experience in the Art of Teaching.** It is another requisite—not only skill to know, but practice to do. It is no doubt true, that, in some instances, the office has been well filled by persons of no great actual experience in the art. This is owing to the known fact that some men have naturally in them so much of the elements of the Teacher, and such a love for the work and the cause, as to supply, to a great degree all other defects. But the exception only proves the rule, for the instance of failure for want of this element have been too numerous to leave the question doubtful. But mere learning and professional skill are not sufficient, unless, as the law and the necessity of the case everywhere intimate, they are accompanied with power to make them efficient. Hence,

3. **Ability to impart knowledge, and give information, publicly as well as privately, is indispensable.** Since the passage of the act of 1854—in addition to the public meetings for the examination of Teachers, and the visitation of schools in the presence of directors and parents thereby prescribed—the holding of district academies, Institutes, Associations and Meetings, for the improvement of Teachers, and the delivery of public lectures and addresses for the furtherance of the system and the explanation of the law, have become so general, and are found to be so beneficial, that they may now be

regarded as an integral part of the Superintendent's duties. All these occasions impose the duty of addressing the public; and the officer who does not do it, fails in his duty. Some ability therefore to speak in public should be embraced among the requisites of fitness for the office.

4. **Energy of character and love for the work, are the last essentials that need be specified.** Without these, the highest degree of scholastic attainment, of professional skill, and of power of expression, will fail, for the great moving forces of the required character will be wanting. With these present in large degree, even a medium of qualifications in other respects may succeed.

Amongst the qualifications necessary to this most important office, it is, of course, not deemed requisite to speak of temperance, honesty or industry, nor of common sense, suavity of manners, or knowledge of human nature. These are requisites to the safe and efficient discharge of every public trust; the one in question being no exception to the general rule, but rather demanding them in greater degree than most others.

In a word, and aside from special requisites, the nearer the character of a County Superintendent approaches to that of the Christian gentleman, the greater will be his acceptance and success.

The answer to the question, What is an adequate salary? will depend mainly on the locality; and the experience of the past three years will, in many cases, modify past action on this point. Many of the Conventions fixed the salary in 1854, under a total or very material misapprehension of the nature of the office, the amount of service required, and the degree of good to be effected. Now, in many parts of the State, all these points are clearly comprehended, and the action of the directors will no doubt be different. No one who knows the people of Pennsylvania will, for a moment, suppose that injustice will be done in regulating the compensation of those who are found to be amongst the most useful, most laborious and most important of our public agents. The salary must, as just remarked, depend on the circumstances of each case; still, certain general principles are indicated by the nature of the office and the wants of the schools, which it may be useful to elicit.

The first point to be determined is, whether the whole, or only a portion, of the officer's time will be required for the full discharge of the office. This will wholly depend on the number of schools in the county. If they are materially over 100 and should be increased, then the best policy and the course most productive of good, will be to pay for his whole time and services. In such cases more than half of the year will be most beneficially devoted to school visitation, which, to be effectual, should be full and frequent. The rest of the year can be profitably devoted to the improvement of greater or less duration, to the officer's own improvement and to the preparation of his reports, &c.

In smaller counties a less portion of the officer's time will be needed, and the salary may be in proportion; but in all cases enough should be given to secure his whole time and efforts to the service of the schools while in operation, and to the improvement of the teachers during a portion of the recess.

The only other general principle to be kept in view in arranging the salary, is that of making it large enough to command the very best professional talent within the reach of the Convention. For reasons already given, no other should be thought of.

The man, then, whom Law, Experience and the Wants of the System demand for County Superintendent, is: *A practical Teacher, who is also an accomplished scholar, and a ready public speaker; with sufficient love for it to undertake, and energy to perform, the great work before him; and the salary should be sufficient to compensate him, as far as money can, for the efficient discharge of so great a labor.*

Wherever such a man is found, he should be selected. Wherever he has already been found, he should be retained.

At the present time it may be proper to recall to the attention of Conventions to elect County Superintendents, that Section 40 of the school law of 8th May, 1854, confers upon the State Superintendent of Common Schools, very considerable powers in reference to the commissioning of the persons elected. The words alluded to are these: "If objection be made within thirty days to the issuing of such commission, the Superintendent of Common Schools may require such evidence, under oath or affirmation, in regard to the election or qualification of the person elected County Superintendent, as he shall deem necessary, and shall then issue his commission to the person properly qualified who shall have received the highest number of votes."

Under this provision it is competent for any citizen, and it would seem to be his duty, to make objection to the commissioning of an unqualified person, and to set in operation, for the good of the system in this respect, the powers vested in the State Superintendent. In view of this fact, the true course for Directors in their Convention will be, to vote for none unless such as by learning and professional skill are fully qualified to discharge all the duties of the office.—*Pennsylvania School Journal for April.*

A SWEDISH TALE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF HEVEL.

In Falun, a mining town in Sweden, a hundred years or more ago, a young miner knelt his fair bride and said to her:

"On St. Lucia's day our love will be blessed by the priest's hand. Then we shall be husband and wife, and we will build us a nest little nest of our own."

"And peace and love shall dwell in it," said the beautiful bride, with a sweet smile, "for thou art my all in all, and without thee I would choose to be in my grave."

But when the priest, in proclaiming their bans in the church for the second time before St. Lucia's day, pronounced the words, "If, now, any one can show reason why these persons should not be united in the bonds of matrimony," Death was at hand. The young man, as he passed her house next morning in his black mining garb, already wore his shroud. He rapped upon her window and said good morning, but he never returned to bid her good evening. He never came back from the mine, and all in vain she endeavored for him a black cravat with a red border, for the wedding day. This she laid carefully away, and never ceased to mourn or weep for him.

Meanwhile, time passed on; the Seven Years' War was fought; the partition of Poland took place; America became free; the French revolution and the long war began; Napoleon subdued Prussia, and the English bombarded Copenhagen. The husbandman sowed and reaped, the miller ground and the smith hammered, and the miners dug after the veins of metal in their subterranean workshops. As the miners of Falun, in the year eighteen hundred and nine, a fortnight before or after St. John's day, were excavating an opening between two shafts, full three hundred ells below the ground, they dug from the rubbish and vitriol water, the body of a young man, entirely saturated with iron vitriol, but otherwise undecayed and unaltered—so that one could distinguish his features and age as well as if he had died only an hour before, or had fallen asleep for a little while at his work.

But when they had brought him out to the light of day, father and mother, friends and acquaintances, had long been dead; no one could identify the sleeping youth, or tell anything of his misfortune, till she came who was once the betrothed of that miner who had one day gone to the mine and never returned. Gray and shriveled, she came to the place hobbling upon a crutch, and recognized her bridegroom, when more in joyful ecstasy than pain, she sank down upon the bloated form. As soon as she had recovered her composure, she exclaimed, "It is my betrothed, whom I have mourned for fifty years, and whom God now permits me to see once more before I die. A week before the wedding time he went under the earth and never returned."

All the bystanders were moved to tears, as they beheld the former bride, a wasted and feeble old woman, and the bridegroom still in the beauty of youth; and how, after the lapse of fifty years, her youthful love awoke again. But he never opened his mouth to smile, nor his eyes to recognize; and she, finally, as the only one belonging to him, and having a right to him, had him carried to her own little room, till a grave could be prepared in the church yard. The next day, when all was ready, and the miners came to take him away, she opened a little drawer, and taking out the black silk cravat, tied it around his neck, and then accompanied him in her Sunday garb, as if it were their wedding day and not the day of his burial. As they laid him in the grave in the churchyard, she said, "Sleep well now, for a few days, in thy cold bridal bed, and let not the time seem long to thee. I have now but little more to do, and will come soon, and then it will be day again."

As she was going away, she looked back once more and said, "What the earth has once restored, it will not a second time withhold."

Decisive Battles of the World.

The decisive battles of the world, those of which, to use Hallam's words, "a contrary event would have essentially varied the drama of the world in all its subsequent scenes," are numbered as fifteen by Professor Creasy, who fills the chair of ancient and modern history of the University of London. They are the grand subject of two volumes by him, just from Bentley's press. These battles are:

1. The battle of Marathon, fought 490 B. C., in which the Greeks under Themistocles, defeated the Persians under Darius, thereby turning back a tide of Asiatic invasion, which else would have swept over Europe.

2. The battle of Syracuse, 413 B. C., in which the Athenian power was broken, and the West of Europe saved from Greek domination.

3. The battle of Arbella, 331 B. C., in which Alexander, by the defeat of Darius, established his power in Asia, and by the introduction of European civilization produced an effect which as yet may be traced there.

4. The battle of Meturus, fought 207 B. C., in which the Romans under Consul Nero defeated the Carthaginians under Hasdrubal, and by which the supremacy of the great republic was established.

5. The Victory of Arminius, A. D. 9, over the Roman legions under Varus, which secured Gaul from Roman domination.

6. The battle of Chalons, A. D. 451, in which Aetius defeated Attila the Hun, besides those assisted by regular charities, arise every morning without knowing how they will get a dinner, and that 17,000 habitual drunkards, of the most brutal character, disgrace the city.

7. The battle of Tours, A. D. 732, in which Charles Martel, by the defeat of the Saracens, averted the Mohammedan yoke from Europe.

8. The battle of Hastings, A. D. 1066, in which William of Normandy was victorious over the Anglo-Saxon Harold, and the result of which was the formation of the Anglo-Norman nation, which is now dominant in Europe.

9. The battle of Orleans, A. D. 1429, in which the English were defeated, and the independent existence of France secured.

10. The defeat of the Spanish Armada, A. D. 1588, which crushed the hopes of Papacy in England.

11. The battle of Bleheim, A. D. 1704, in which Marlborough by the defeat of Tallard, broke the power and crushed the ambitious schemes of Louis XIV.

12. The defeat of Charles XII, by Peter the Great, at Poltava, A. D. 1709, which secured the stability of the Muscovite empire.

13. The battle of Saratoga, A. D. 1777, in which General Gates defeated General Burgoyne, and which decided the fate of the American revolutionists, by making France their ally, and other European powers friendly to them.

14. The battle of Valmy, A. D. 1609, when the continental allies, under the Duke of Brunswick, were defeated by the French under Damouris, without which the French revolution would have been stayed.

15. The battle of Waterloo, A. D. 1815, in which the Duke of Wellington hopelessly defeated Napoleon, and saved Europe from his grasping ambition.

A Funny Phœnix.

"John Phœnix," a most quizzical writer, lately took a trip from Boston to New Orleans and gives an account of the same in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*.

John gives an account of a meeting between a fellow passenger and his wife, at New Orleans. He was accompanied by his old friend Butterfield, who had joined him at Memphis; he landed at New Orleans, and proceeded forthwith to the St. Charles Hotel. At this great tavern Butterfield expected to meet his wife, who had arrived from California, to rejoin him after a three months' separation. Phœnix says:

"I have never seen a man so nervous. He rode on the outside of the coach with the driver, that he might obtain the earliest view of the building that contained his adored one. It was with great difficulty that I kept pace with him as he 'impetuously rushed' up the steps leading to the Rotunda. In an instant he was at the office, and gasping 'Mrs. Butterfield.' 'In the parlor, sir,' replied Dan, and he was off. I followed and saw him stop with surprise as he came to the door. In the centre of the parlor stood Mrs. Butterfield. That Admirable woman had adopted the very latest and most voluminous style; and having on a rich silk of greenish hue, looked like a lovely but on the summit of a new-mown haystack.

TALLEYRAND'S APHORISMS.

Our welcome to a stranger depends upon the name he bears—upon the coat he wears; our farewell upon the spirit he has displayed in the interview.

There is so great a charm in friendship, that there is even a kind of pleasure in acknowledging oneself duped by the sentiment it inspires.

Unbounded modesty is nothing more than unworried vanity; the too humble obedience is sometimes a disguised impertinence.

The reputation of a man is like his shadow—gigantic when it precedes him, and pigmy in its proportion when it follows.

Beauty, devoid of grace, is a mere hook without a bait.

He who cannot feel friendship is alike incapable of love. Let a woman beware of the man who owns that he loves no one but himself.

The Count de Coigny possesses wit and talent, but his conversation is fatiguing, because his memory is equally exact in quoting the death of the Princess de Guemene's people.

To contradict and argue with a total stranger, is like knocking at a gate to ascertain if there is any one within.

The love of glory can only create a hero; the contempt of it creates a great man.

The errors of great men, and the good deeds of reprobates, should not be reckoned in our estimates of their respective characters.

It is something quite enough for a man to feign ignorance of that which he knows to gain the reputation of knowing that of which he is ignorant.

Both erudition and agriculture ought to be encouraged by government; wit and manufactures will come themselves.

Too much sensibility creates unhappiness; too much insensibility creates crime.

It is an attribute of true philosophy never to force the progress of truth and reason, but to wait till the dawn of light; meanwhile, the philosopher may wander into hidden paths, but he will never depart from the main track.

A generous man will place the benefits he confers beneath his feet—those he receives nearest his heart.

"The World owes me a Living"

That's false, sir! It doesn't owe you a farthing. You owe the world for the light of its days, the warmth of its sunshine, the beauty of its earth and sky, and for its love, affections and friendships, clustered around and along to your worthless trunk. For all these, and other blessings of countless number, you are a debtor. You have never even thanked God for health and life. You never made the world better for your living. You owe for the breath you breathe and the strength you enjoy. You have nothing to your credit on the day book or ledger of life—not a cent. You have never taken a dollar's stock in Heaven. You are a miserable, aimless, indolent bankrupt. You float down the stream of your lazy existence like flood-wood on water. Were you to sink to-day to oblivion, you would not leave a bubble.

From the Public Ledger. WHAT IS INSTINCT.

It is no unprofitable study in natural history to trace back the history of an instinct. Teach a sparrow to beg for food, and you often trace in its pupa a tendency to the same habit. Let a setter be trained to set, and its progeny will do so instinctively, though they may never even witness the action performed. The chicken, though countless generations, pick up crumbs and insects from the ground, while the woodpecker, with beak adapted for it, sits "tapping the hollow beech tree."

We may take the eggs of the duck, and the unconscious hen will sit upon them and hatch them, and guard the progeny as her own; but no sooner have these little ones cracked the shell, than by the inward impulse, they seek for the water and swim off, to the infinite terror of the poor hen who hatched them, and who vainly tries to lure them away from what seems to her to be their certain destruction.

This wisdom of the web foot, this propensity, or instinct, whence comes it?—Neither by education nor example, that is clear; neither is it anything communicated by the hen, nor her life, nor her instincts in any way transferred; neither is it any peculiarity in the matter of the egg, as analysis could probably show. Is it then the result of organization? And if so, what does this mean but the result of motion?

If we take an egg, and put the wet tip of the tongue to the large end of it, we at once become sensible of a gentle heat, if the egg is alive. This is then the germ of all the after vibrations of life, stimulated by the vital warmth of the hen, and these pulsations transmit the instinctive tendency that impels the duck to the water, embodying a kind of memory, or impulse, from former generations, quite distinct from that of the hen. These vibrations organize the fluid of the egg into a form corresponding with the idea of which the whole part suggests as the intended future of the bird.

The uneducated but honest Christian sees or thinks he sees, in this, however, the immediate finger of God, a part of the all pervading mind of Him in whom we live and move, and have our being; His wisdom directly imparting wisdom to each creature according to its wants.

But, as we have already seen, a more extended observation will indicate to a reflective mind that instinct is, after all, a part, at least the result of fixed laws, and but an innate tendency to reproduce actions that are habitual in the parent. And this very law, so far from allowing us to lose sight of a designer, will conduct us back to a preconcerting mind, comprehending, arranging and rewarding all actions, so that each violation shall consolidate into an habitually recurring purpose, each purpose into an instinct, and each instinctive habit shall entirely mould even the physical system in accordance with the whole—sharpening the beaks and hollowing the bones of birds, giving web feet to water fowl and claws to beasts of prey, the immaterial thus forming the material.

If then the differences of instincts are all merely those of development of the intentions and habits of the various animals, through the course of ages and generations, and if every exercise of every habit has in it the tendency to reproduce itself and to become hereditary and instinctive, it in no measure lessens the marks of a purpose in creation. Should it seem to remove us a step further from the designer, it only thus enables us to take broader views of His profound design.

DIGGING WELLS IN QUICKSAND—HOW TO MAKE A CURB.—The following from a Michigan paper, is a simple and ingenious method for the construction of the curb:

"When they came to the water, as was always the case there on the openings, they found an abundance of quicksand. So to stop that out they went to the woods and cut a white oak tree about three feet over, and about three feet of the butt, then mark off about three inches thick around the outside, and split it off in pieces like stove bolts, being careful to number them so as to set them up, hoop them together—having first chipped off the outside so as to sharpen the lower end, then let them down into the quicksand, a little at a time, being careful to keep them to their natural place, dipping out the sand from the inside, and thus settling them down till the top was even with the water. Being under water it would never rot out, and the thickness of the staves would prevent them from ever moving out of their place. It kept the sand out perfectly, the water came in from the bottom, and, after the first six months, was as clear as the crystal fountain."

A NEW LAW IN OHIO.—A bill has become a law in Ohio which provides that all property held for religious purposes shall be deemed to be the property of the congregation and shall be held by a corporation for that purpose, for organizing which the bill also provides; but in cases where it has already been decided to an individual, for the church, exclusive of any rights of the congregation, it may remain in his hands till his death or removal; after which it must pass into the possession of the contemplated corporation. But if no such corporation has been formed, it shall pass to the State, to be held in trust for the congregation. This, of course, would interfere with the present system of holding church property among the Catholics.

A Lady told her husband she read the "Art of Love," on purpose to be agreeable to him. "I had rather have love without art," replied he.