

# THE STAR AND BANNER.

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### The Old Farmer's Legacy.

He was a green money knoll, by the banks of the brook,  
And long ago he had been washed away.  
The old farmer was a fine old fellow,  
And the whole town was his admirer.  
He had a fine old farm, with a goodly stock,  
And the whole town was his admirer.  
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### THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JOHN ADAMS.

We have been permitted, through the indulgence of the publishers of this important work, to lay before our readers several extracts from it of interesting interest, but none will be read with more pleasure than the following. It is taken from the diary and written in Mr. Adams's thirty-sixth year, during the month of August.

**Appointment of Colonel Washington, as Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial Army.**

"This measure of imbecility; the second petition to the King, embarrased every exertion of Congress; it occasioned motions and debates without end, for appointing committees to draw up a declaration of the causes, motives, and objects of taking arms, with a view to obtain decisive declarations against independence, &c. In the mean time the New England army investing Boston, the New England Legislature, Congress, and Conventions, and the whole body of the People, were left without armaments of war, without arms, clothing, pay, or even countenance and encouragement. Every post brought us letters from my friends, Dr. Winthrop, Dr. Cooper, Gen. James Warren, and sometimes from Gen. Ward and his aids, and Gen. Heath had many others, urging imperative terms the impossibility of keeping their men together without the assistance of Congress. I was daily urging all these things; but was embarrassed with more than one difficulty, not only with the party in favor of the petition to the King, and the party who were jealous of independence, but thirdly, which was a Southern party against a Northern, and a jealous party against a New England army under the command of a New England general. Whether this jealousy was sincere, or whether it was mere pride and a haughty ambition of furnishing a Southern general to command the Northern army, I cannot say. But the intention was very visible to me, that Col. Washington was his object, and so many of our staunchest men were in the plan that we could carry nothing without conceding to it.

### CONNECTICUT IN 1666.

A volume has recently been issued in accordance with a resolution of the Legislature of Connecticut, containing the Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, to May 1665, when that Colony was united with New Haven Colony. The work was executed under the supervision of the Secretary of State, by Mr. J. Hammond Trainor, the Corresponding Secretary of the Connecticut Historical Society. It forms a handsome volume that does credit to all concerned. The following passages are extracted from it, the spelling being first modernized:

June 4th, 1666.—Ed. Veare, of Weathersfield, is fined 10s for cursing and swearing, and also he is to sit in the stocks at Weathersfield two hours, the next training day.

September 10, 1640.—Mr. Webster and Mr. Phelps are desired to consult with the elders of both plantations, to prepare instructions against the next Court for the punishing of the sin of lying, which begins to be practised by many persons in this Commonwealth.

April 8, 1643.—Aaron Starke is adjudged to be whipped at Windsor, to-morrow, and then to serve Captain Mason during the pleasure of the Court.

June 3, 1644.—It is ordered that no inhabitant within these liberties shall suffer any Indians to come into their houses, except the magistrates or traders who may admit of a Sachem, if he come not with a letter from a friend to the English, may come with 20 and his brother with 10.

### THE ETRICK SHEPHERD.

James Hood, well and widely known as the "Etrick Shepherd," was one of the most remarkable instances of the triumph of genius, under difficulties, on record. He was born on the 25th of January, 1772, in Salkilshire, Scotland, where his forefathers, for many generations, had pursued the humble calling of the Shepherd, among the wilds of Etrick and Yarrow; and when but seven years of age, says Griewood, in his "Poets and Poetry," the destined poet was compelled to earn his own bread by herding the cows of a neighboring farmer. He had therefore no opportunity to receive the ordinary education of the Scottish peasant. Of all the bards of his country, he was the only one really self-instructed. Burns, compared with Hood, had the accomplishments of a gentleman. He was taught to read, and he wrote a clear hand; but the subject of our biography was in his twentieth year before he learned the alphabet. Knowing by rote the words of ballads he had heard his mother sing, he had long leisure upon the hills; he compared them with the printed pages, and, by such slow process, attained, until "the hardest Scripture names could scarcely stump him." The rough but forcible stanza beginning:

"My name is Donald McDonald,  
I live in the Highlands lowland,  
I was sung throughout the Empire before their author could distinguish between a printed copy of them from a leaf of Blackstone."

About the year 1802, he went to Edinburgh with a flock of sheep, for the disposal of which he was obliged to write a few days in town. He could now write; he had acquired some local reputation by his traditional songs and ballads; and he determined to have a small volume of them printed. He succeeded; the collection which he had compiled he declares was "extraordinary" and "astonishing the attention of Scots, and others in the metropolis, and increased the consideration with which he was regarded by his class." It was not successful in a pecuniary point of view; but he was ambitious and undaunted; he soon had ready a second volume, for which Colquhoun paid him a hundred and fifty pounds, and with this amount, and another hundred, received for a treatise on the management of sheep, he deemed himself a rich man. He unwisely settled as a tenant on a large farm; in three years he was penniless, and went to Edinburgh, to pursue the business of authorship.

### LEARNED BIRDS.

This would seem to be scarcely the place for a notice of a display of the intelligence of birds which we have lately had the opportunity of witnessing, but there is something unique in the exhibition, so far as the common place, and so much that provokes curiosity and interesting thought, that it really falls within the province of art, and of that of an ordinary kind. We cannot describe the details of the exhibition better than they have been given in a notice which appeared in the "Chronicle." We would premise that the exhibitor is a young Belgian lady, Mlle. Vandermeersch, and that there appears to be no trickery or charlatanism in the extraordinary influence she exerts, or in the means by which she displays it over the graceless little creatures who obey her slightest suggestion.

"The young lady, who is strikingly handsome, lady-like, and not more than seven or eight years of age, enters any saloon where her attendance may have been desired, with a cage containing four apartments in each of which is a bird—a cardinal, a goldfinch, or some other variety. The cage is simply placed on a table. In front is placed a little trough, in which are some hundred and fifty or two hundred cards, exactly similar in shape and color. These cards are closely serial, their ends only being visible. Each card bears on its surface some inscription, either the ordinary court and common cards or a letter of the alphabet, the numbers simple and compound, the days of the week, the months, the seasons, and others we do not remember. These inscriptions are necessarily hidden while the birds are making their selections. Mlle. Vandermeersch does not touch the cards or the birds during the performance. She approaches some individual in the company and asks the time by her watch. He tells her, *so-to-say*. She then approaches the cage, speaks to one of the birds aloud, and requests him to tell the time. The door of the cage being opened, the little bird hops out and jumps along the platform of cards, apparently deliberating. At length he fixes on one, which after immense toggling, he pulls up from the pack. Suppose the time to be a quarter past three, this card would be inscribed with a "three."

Again the little fellow is again set to work, and after a similar display of reflection and physical strength, out he tugs a "thirteen," which he tosses in an amusingly cavalier manner on the platform, and then hops back to his cage. Should he by accident turn the card with his face downward, he is made to come back and present it in due form to the spectators. The tricks of which this is a specimen are very numerous. Following the same manner, the birds tell you the day of the week, the month, the season of the year, any day, month, season, or year you choose to name, any court or common card you may fix upon, and what is still more extraordinary, if you think of a word, either of these birds will spell that word for you letter by letter, always provided that any one letter is not repeated in the word chosen. Of course you communicate to the young lady what it is you fix upon. This brings the exhibition out of the range of conjuring into the more interesting field of the practical. As Mlle. Vandermeersch does not touch either the cards or the birds, and their address to the birds is made aloud, it is the nature of the influence by which she exercises such a singular control over these little animals that excites surprise wherever it is seen. From the description we have given it will be seen that there is nothing of commonplace trickery in the exhibition, but that it appeals to a higher kind of taste."

All this is strictly true, and stated without exaggeration.—*London Examiner.*

A lady lately took offence at the use by a gentleman, of a very common word, of which the primary and most obvious sense was unexceptionable, while its remote and unusual signification was indicated. "I beg pardon," said the offender, apologetically, "I certainly did not mean what you were thinking of!"—a remark which was as philosophical as it was just and severe.

**A DOUBLE EXECUTION.**—Foot and Mc-Caffray, the former convicted of the murder of a young girl, his adopted sister, and the latter of the murder of two elderly people named Mr. and Mrs. Smith, were executed on Wednesday, at New Haven (Ct.). They were both hung on the same platform. The scaffold was so constructed that when the Sheriff came down, he stepped on the last step, the platform gave way, and the murderers fell about ten feet, breaking their necks instantly.

Seventy millions of newspapers pass through the London post office every year. A man in a neighboring town had a good spy-glass, that, looking at his third cousin through it, it brought him an account as to be a first cousin.

### THE UPS TREE.

A correspondent of the New York Post, writing from on board the United States ship Plymouth, at Borneo, in the East Indies, says:

"Below Brunel is a real Ups tree. It is spoken of in Keppel's work. I send you a twig. It is a magnificent tree, about two feet or more in diameter, and rising sixty feet without a branch; there it spreads with a dense green foliage. The trunk is smooth, of a dirty silvery color. Upon touching it, a milky secretion exudes rapidly. I collected some for our cabinet. This is mixed with other juices, and used as poison for arrows. I suspect you would not be able to cut it, through a wound, I believe it is perfectly harmless. If it were not so, I should suffer, for you know too susceptible I am. It is very poisonous. I tried to get enough for a case for you, but could not. The only way we obtained the leaves was by shooting our guns into the lofty branches. The leaves, however, are some curiosity; for I doubt if there are any others in the United States."

### THE NIGHTINGALE'S CAGE.

The decorations of the suit of rooms at the Revue House which Jenny Lind occupies cost thirteen thousand dollars. In the parlour are two splendid mirrors and a thousand dollar piano. The toilet chamber, with its carpet, is covered with gold. The bed chamber is lined with silk, and the door is of silver, and is ornamented with a portrait of the Queen. The nightingale's cage, which was purchased by Mr. Orlon Butler, who had it sent, and it is now in a thriving condition. This bird is truly a *varia avis*, and comes pretty near being something new under the sun. "As black as a crow" will no longer answer for an illustration. The white crow is not entirely unknown in natural history, but it is a stranger bird than Poe's raven. Mr. Butler has refused \$50 for this specimen. *Kennebec Journal.*

### THE SHY LARK.

Bird of the wilderness,  
Blissome and content,  
Sweet thy mate's ear and nestland and nest,  
Emblem of happiness,  
How is thy dwelling place?  
Oh to abide in the desert with thee!  
Wild is thy by and by,  
Far in the downy cloud,  
Love gives it energy, love gives it life,  
Where, on the lowly wing,  
What art thou journeying?  
Thy lot is in Heaven, thy love is on earth.  
O'er all and kindest smile,  
O'er moor and mountain green,  
O'er the red starry that heralds the day,  
O'er the stoudest oak,  
O'er the rainbow's arch,  
Meads of clover, see, shining away,  
Then, when the glowing comes,  
Low in the heather bloom,  
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!  
Emblem of happiness,  
How is thy dwelling place?  
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### YANKEE DOODLE WITH VARIATIONS.

We have a young lady acquaintance who is a very fine performer on the piano. Calling at her house the other afternoon for a few moments, she entertained us with a few favorite pieces, together with two or three of the most admired songs of the day. Now, our friend's house is in rather close proximity to the street, and her parlor is not proof to the rude gaze of passers-by, or of those who are so rude as to take advantage of this too common fault of constructing dwellings in cities. While in the midst of her musical efforts, a tall, young Kentuckian, who had just made his egress from the "barrens" where he was born and raised, chanced to saunter along the street, and charmed with the novel music, but rather unformed as to the conventional rules of city society, approached the parlor window, and with eyes dilated and mouth extended, stood there enraptured while she sang, "Give me a cot in the valley I love."

"Are you fond of music?" inquired the lady, who is fond of a bit of sport.

"Well, I am, but very thing," said the blunt Kentuckian.

"Do you play?" asked our friend in a quizzical manner.

"I can play right smart of tunes on the fife," said the countryman, "but I don't mean if I ever saw any body play on a *bureau* before."

"This is what we call a piano, sir," said the performer, "did you never hear of such an instrument?"

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