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SUNBURY AMERICAN.

AND SHAMOKIN JOURNAL.

Absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of Republics, from which there is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism.—JEFFERSON.

By Masser & Eiseley.

Sunbury, Northumberland Co. Pa. Saturday, April 10, 1841.

Vol. I—No. XXIX.

TERMS OF THE "AMERICAN."

HENRY B. MASSER, PUBLISHERS AND JOSEPH EISELEY, PROPRIETORS.
H. B. MASSER, Editor.

[OFFICE IN MARKET STREET, NEAR DEER.]

THE "AMERICAN" is published every Saturday at TWO DOLLARS per annum to be paid half yearly in advance. No paper discontinued till all arrearages are paid.
No subscriptions received for a less period than six months. All communications or letters on business relating to the office, to insure attention, must be POST PAID.

A Dreadful and Cowardly Massacre.

A letter to the St. Louis Republican, from Fort Leavenworth, gives an account of a most cowardly and bloody massacre, committed by some Kansas upon some Pawnees.

The dastardly Kansas—65 in number—took advantage of the absence of the Pawnee warriors from their encampment, and massacred all but 11 of the women and children found in it.

One woman sold her life dearly. She sprang upon one of the Kansas warriors like a tigress—clutched his throat, and would have strangled him if her arms had not been hewn from her body.

The Pawnee prisoners were reached by a detachment of the American force stationed at Fort Leavenworth, and had been brought into Bellevue.

This massacre will be a signal for a fierce war between the Pawnees and the Kansas.

The teacher of the Africans has furnished us with a copy of a letter that Kalle the African boy addressed to the Hon. J. Q. Adams, after his visit to the Africans on his way to Washington, and in view of his having been engaged as one of their counsel.—Anti-Slavery Reporter.

NEW HAVEN, Jan. 4, 1841.

Dear friend Mr. Adams—

I want to write a letter to you because you love Mendi people and you talk to the grand court. I want to tell you one thing—Jose Ruiz says we were in Havana, he tells me. We stay in Havana 10 days and 10 nights, we stay no more. We all born in Mendi—we no understand the Spanish language. Mendi people been in America 17 moons. We talk America language little, not very good; we write every day; we write plenty letters; we read most all time; we read all Matthew, and Mark and Luke, and John, and plenty of little books. We love books very much. We want you ask the court what we have done wrong. What for Americans keep us in prison. Some people say Mendi people crazy; Mendi people don't, because we no talk America language. Mendi people no talk Mendi language Mendi people don't. They tell bad things about Mendi people, and we no understand. Some men say Mendi people very happy, because they laugh and have plenty to eat. Mr. Pendleton come and Mendi people all look sorry because they think about Mendi Land and friends we no see now. Mr. Pendleton say Mendi people angry; white men afraid of Mendi people. Then Mendi people no look sorry again—that why we laugh. But Mendi people feel sorry; O we can't tell how sorry. Some people say Mendi people got no souls. Why we feel bad we no got souls? I want to be free very much.

Dear friend Mr. Adams, you have children, you have friends, you love them, you feel very sorry if Mendi people carry them all to Africa. We feel bad for friends, and our friends all feel bad for us. Americans no take us in ship. We on shore and Americans tell us slave ship catch us. They say we make you free. If they make us free they tell true, if they no make us free they tell lie.

If America people give us free we glad, if they no give us free we sorry—we sorry for Mendi people little, we sorry for American great deal, because God punish liars. We want you to tell court that Mendi people no want to go back to Havana, we no want to be killed. Dear friend, we want you to know how we feel. Mendi people think, think. Nobody know what we think; teacher we know, we tell him some. Mendi have got souls. We think we know God punish us if we tell lie. We never tell lie; we speak truth. What for Mendi people afraid? Because they got souls—Cook say he kill, he eat Mendi people—we afraid, we kill cook. Then captain kill one man with knife, and cut Mendi people plenty. We never kill captain, he no kill us. If court ask who bring Mendi people to America? We bring ourselves. Creel hold the rudder. All we want is make us free.

To the Ladies.

The following true anecdote is respectfully dedicated to the ladies, being a practical and forcible illustration of their celebrated faculty of keeping secrets. P. is a little, pretty, reckless brunette; the idol of her father, and the spoiled child of her mother. Every body scolds at her quizzical and odd sayings, and all love her for her frankness and open heart. One day she was walking with a friend arm in arm, and she was teasing her friend to tell her something, which was not proper to be said. Her friend answered her. "You, P., no indeed. I shall do no such thing—you never kept any thing twenty-four hours in your life." She flung her arms around her friend's neck in a very convincing manner, and exclaimed, "O! Miss X, I can keep a secret, indeed I can. There was Miss A, told me six months ago, she was engaged to be married, and I never told a one of it, and I never told it."

It was not until her friend burst into fits of laughter, that she was aware her secret was out.—Pro Journal.

PRIVILEGE OF THE LADIES IN LEAP YEAR.—An ancient Anglo-Saxon law, which still remains in force, is enacted:

"All at as often as Leap Year doth occur the woman holdeth the prerogative over the man in matter of courtship, love and matrimony; and when the lady proposeth, it shall not be law for anyone to say her nay; but shall receive her proposal in all good courtesy."

Anecdote of the Revolution.

Almost every one is acquainted with the circumstances of the taking of General Prescott, the then commanding officer of the British forces on Rhode Island. He was exchanged for General Lee, who as previously captured by the British. Shortly after his exchange he returned to Rhode Island, and was invited to be on board the Admiral's vessel, with any other officers of the highest rank. General Prescott was naturally haughty, imperious man, and as a commander was very unpopular with officers and soldiers, and with the citizens of Newport, but was a brave and able officer.

It was often the case that boys as well as men were sent from the town board the admiral's ship for any offence, and confined there for some time, the arbitrary authority of those in power. Martial law was the law of the place. A small lad about thirteen years of age was placed in this situation previous to General Prescott's return, and on board with many others there. He did know General Prescott.

After dinner the wine circulated freely and a toast and song was repeatedly offered for. In the course of the evening the first lieutenant observed to the admiral, who was a real jolly son of a gun, that there was a Yankee lad on board who would shame all their tricks. "Bring him up here," said Prescott. The boy was accordingly brought into the cabin. The admiral called on him to give them a song. The little fellow, somewhat intimidated by gold-laced coats, epaulettes, &c., replied, "I ain't sing no songs but Yankee songs." The admiral perceiving that he was harassed, ordered the steward to bring him a glass of wine, saying, "come fellow, don't be frightened, give us of your Yankee songs." General Prescott spoke in his usual haughty imperious manner, "you d—d young fellow, give us a song, or I'll give you a one." The admiral interferred, and told the lad that he should be set at liberty the next day if he would give a song, any one he could recollect. The following doggerel, written by a clerk of Newport was given, to the great amusement of the company.

'Twas on a dark and stormy night
The winds and waves did roar,
Bold Barton then with twenty men
Went down into the shore.

And in a whale boat they set off
To Rhode Island fair,
To catch a red-coat General
That then resided there.

Through British fleets and guard boats strong,
They held their dangerous way,
Till they arrived upon their port,
And then did not delay.

A tawny son of Africa's race
Then through the ravine led,
And entering then the Overing house
They found him in his bed.

But to get in they had no means,
Except poor Cuffee's head,
Who beat the door down then rushed in,
And seized him in his bed.

Stop, let me put my breeches on,
The General then did pray,
Your breeches, Massa, I will take,
For dress we cannot stay.

Then through the rye stubble him they led,
With shoes and breeches none,
And placed him in their boat quite snug,
And then from shore were gone.

Soon the alarm was sounded loud,
The Yankee's they have come,
And taken Prescott from his bed,
And him they've carried home.

The drums were beat, the rockets flew,
The soldiers shouldered arms,
And marched around the ground they knew,
Filled with most dire alarms.

But through the fleet with muffled oars,
They held their devious way,
And landed him on Ganett shores,
Where Britain held their sway.

When onto the land they came
Where rescue there was none,
"A d—d bold push," the General said,
"Of prisoners I am one!"

There was a general shout of all the company during the whole song, and at the close, one who was a prisoner on board at the time, observed, he thought the deck would come through with the stamping and cheering.

General Prescott joined most heartily in the merriment. Thrusting his hand

into his pocket, he handed the boy a guinea, saying, "here you young dog is a guinea for you." The boy was set at liberty the next morning.

This anecdote is often related by an aged gentleman, now living in Newport.

* There is a deep ravine leading from the shore to the house which was occupied by General Prescott.

† Mr. Overing was a Tory, and owned the house in which General Prescott resided.

‡ He was landed on Narragansett shore, near Warwick.

Recovery of a Female after Execution.

The following account of the case of a poor girl who was unjustly executed in 1766, is given by a celebrated French author, as an instance of the injustice which was often committed by the equivocal mode of trial used in France:

"About seventeen years since a young peasant girl, possessed of a very agreeable figure, was placed at Paris in the service of a man depraved by all the vices consequent on the corruption of great cities. Smitten with her charms he tried every method to seduce her; but she was virtuous, and resisted. The prudence of the girl only irritated the passion of her master, who not being able to make her submit to his wishes, determined on the most black and horrible revenge. He secretly conveyed into her box many things belonging to him, marked with his name. He then exclaimed that he was robbed, called in a commissaire, (a ministerial officer of justice,) and made his deposition. The girl's box was searched, and the things were discovered. The unhappy servant was imprisoned. She defended herself only by her tears; she had no evidence to prove that she did not put the property in her box; and the only answer to the interrogatories was, that she was innocent. The judges had no suspicion of the depravity of the accuser, whose station was respectable, and they administered the law in all its rigor: a rigor undoubtedly excessive, which ought to disappear from our code to give place to a simple but certain penalty, which would leave fewer crimes unpunished. The innocent girl was condemned to be hanged. The dreadful office was intellectually performed, as it was the first attempt of the son of the great executioner. A surgeon had purchased the body for dissection, and it was conveyed to his house. On that evening, being about to open the head, he perceived a gentle warmth about the body. The dissecting-knife fell from his hand, and he placed in his bed her whom he was about to dissect. His efforts to restore her life were effectual; and at the same time he sent for a priest, on whose discretion and experience he could depend, in order to consult with him on this strange event, as well as to have him for a witness to his conduct. The moment the unfortunate girl opened her eyes she believed herself in the other world, and perceiving the figure of the priest, who had a marked and majestic countenance, (for I know him, and it is from him that I have this fact,) she joined her hands tremblingly, and exclaimed—'Eternal Father, you know my innocence, have pity on me!' In this manner she continued to invoke the ecclesiastic, believing, in her simplicity, that she beheld her God. They were long in persuading her that she was not dead—so much had the idea of punishment and death possessed her imagination. Nothing could be more touching and more expressive than the cry of an innocent being, who thus approached towards him whom she regarded as the Supreme Judge: and independently of her affecting beauty, this single spectacle was sufficient to create the most lively interest in the breast of an observing and sensible man. What a scene for a painter! What a moral for a philosopher! What a lesson for a legislator!

"The process was not submitted to a new revision, as was stated in the Journal de Paris. The servant having returned to life, recognised a man in him whom she had adored, and who, directing her prayers towards the only adorable Being, quitted the house of the surgeon, who was unquiet on her account and his own. She retired to hide herself in a distant village, fearing to meet the judges or the officers, who, with the dreadful tree, incessantly haunted her imagination. The villainous accuser remained unpunished, because his crime, though manifested to the eyes of two individual witnesses, was not so clear to the eyes of the magistrates and of the laws. The people subsequently became acquainted with the resurrection of this girl, and loaded with reproaches the execrable author of her misery; but, in this immense city of her misery, and the monster perhaps still breathes; at least, he has not publicly suffered the punishment which he deserves.

"A book should be published, containing a collection of cases in which innocent persons have been punished, in order, by showing the causes of error, to avoid them for the future. Perhaps some man of the law may undertake this important work."

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Arrest of Rail Road Robbers.

The robbers who have been long preying upon travellers on the Syracuse and Auburn Rail Road, are at length arrested. This was accomplished by the prompt and determined action of three gentlemen, who were robbed on Saturday.

Upon the arrival of the Cars in this city on Saturday afternoon, Col. Wilkie of New York, found that a package of money which Mr. G. R. Hart had handed him at Rochester, had been stolen from his valise.

William K. Strong, Esq. of Geneva, found that his trunk had been opened, and \$412 stolen from it.

Freeman Clark, Esq. Cashier of the Orleans Bank, discovered that his trunk had been opened, and \$4100 stolen from it.

The three gentlemen, on comparing recollections, became satisfied that the robberies were committed in the baggage car, between Auburn and Syracuse. They therefore returned to that place on Sunday, accompanied by Messrs. Young and Williams, Rail Road superintendents, by whom, as well as by the other agents of the Companies, and by Mr. Rust of the Syracuse House and General Wood of the American at Auburn, every assistance in the pursuit was rendered.

Suspicion fell so strongly upon Richard Graves, Collector on the A. & S. Road, and George Wall, porter to the S. U. Road, that they were both arrested. An examination failed to elicit any facts against Graves, who was discharged. Mr. Strong, however, went with Graves to Auburn, keeping an eye on his movements.

Mr. Clark took Wall into a room at the Syracuse House, and after locking the door, commenced a conversation which continued seven or eight hours, and resulted in a full confession of the robberies and the recovery of the money.

Mr. Clark drew Wall by degrees into familiar conversation, and in undertaking to account for various sums of money which had been traced to him, he got entangled in a labyrinth of contradictions. While thus embarrassed and alarmed, Mr. C. informed him that a mysterious box which had been made for him had been found, and that \$900 had been found at his boarding house. He then confessed that this \$900 was part of a package of \$1700 belonging to Messrs. White & Williams, of Buffalo, which he had stolen from E. Norton, last fall, and that the box referred to contained \$500 more of the same money.

Wall, finding himself cornered, became anxious to tell all under a promise that he should not be sent to his old quarters in the State Prison. Mr. Clark promised to "stand by him" if the confessed all and gave up all the money. He then said that he and Graves were in company; that on the night of the last Robbery, he started from Auburn, locked alone in the car next to the baggage; that after the engine started he went into the baggage car with a dark lantern, and by means of false keys, unlocked several Trunks, taking packages of money from those of Messrs. Clark, Strong and Wilkie; that after their arrival at Syracuse, he divided the money with Graves (who came in the same train as collector,) and after arranging it in such a manner as to preserve it, they secreted it in the basement wall of the Presbyterian Church, where, on examination, it was found, one of the packages having "R. Graves" on it, and the other being marked, "G. Wall."

On being asked if any of the money had been spent, Wall said that he took one \$20 bill from Col. Wilkie's package, and gave it to Graves. It was ascer-

tained, subsequently, that Graves changed a \$20 bill on Saturday.

From Wall's confession to Mr. Clark, it is quite certain that he stole a large number of silver spoons from Mr. Rust some months since. He also confessed to the robbery of a Merchant Tailor at Utica. He said that he had long kept his eye on Mr. Humphrey, the Bank Agent, but could not get at his trunk.

Graves returned from Auburn with Mr. Strong a few minutes after the money was found, and on being shown the package on which his name appeared, he lost his assurance, and sunk confounded in the chair.

Wall is an old offender, having been twice in the State Prison. He had been suspected and discharged, but kept around the Depot in temporary employment.

"Dick Graves" is extensively known at South and North. He has led a roving life, and has been more or less suspected for several years. But his vivacity and wit commended him to favor. He was an agreeable companion, and every body tried to think that "Dick" honest, but we regret to be compelled to say that his guilt is now too too clearly revealed.—[N. Y. Amer.]

The city of Paris has at length succeeded in procuring water from an Artesian well, which has for several years been in progress at Greenelle, at an expense of 160,000 francs. The boring instrument, after having reached the enormous depth of 560 metres, (1837 English feet,) reached the water, which immediately sprang up in abundance to the top of the bore. This operation has solved a highly interesting Geological problem, and proves that a body of water exists under the green chalk strata which forms the bed of the environs of Paris.

Taxation in England.

We can inform Brother Jonathan what are the inevitable consequences of being too fond of glory: Taxes upon every article which enters the mouth or covers the back, or is placed under the foot; taxes upon every thing which is pleasant to see, hear, feel, smell or taste; taxes upon warmth, light and locomotion; taxes upon every thing on earth, and in the waters under the earth; upon every thing that comes from abroad, or is grown at home; taxes on the raw material, and on every fresh value that is added to it by the industry of man; taxes on the sauce which pampers man's appetite, and on the drug which restores him to health; on the ermine which decorates the Judge, and the rope which hangs the criminal; on the poor man's salt and the rich man's spices; on the brass nails of the coffin, and the ribbons of the brazier; at bed or board, couchant or levant, we must pay. The school boy whips his taxed top; the beardless youth manages his taxed horse with a taxed bridle, on a taxed road; and the dying Englishman, pouring his medicine, for which he has paid seven per cent. into a silver spoon, which has paid fifteen per cent. flings himself back upon his elintz bed, which has paid twenty-two per cent. and expires in the arms of a taxed apothecary, who has paid a license of £100 sterling, for the privilege of practising his calling! His whole property is then taxed from two to ten per cent. and besides the probate, large fees are demanded for burying him in the church, his virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble, and he is at last gathered to his fathers to be taxed no more!—English paper

Comparative Loss on Gold and Paper, as a Circulation.

Mr. Page, a distinguished English writer, has, from the reports of the English and American mints, ascertained that there is a loss on gold coin by wear and tear of 4.61 per cent. in a century, which is less than 1.26th per cent. per annum, and so that of every £100 coined in any particular year, there would remain over £95 7s. 10d. in real value at the end of 100 years. A comparison is next made of the expense of a paper currency, which, at 2½ per cent. as stated by Mr. Norman, is found to be fifty-three times greater than the loss by wear on a gold currency. If the expense of a paper currency be 2½ per cent. per annum, this on a sum of £20,000,000 will amount in 100 years to £50,000,000, while the loss by wear of a gold currency of £20,000,000, during the same period, is only £932,000. The difference is therefore £49,068,000.

A Broken Heart.

A young girl, a German, died lately at Baltimore, under circumstances deeply affecting. She was engaged to be married to a young man of Philadelphia, who, for reasons best known to himself, communicated to her shortly since, his intention of abandoning her. On receiving this information she became the child of sorrow and despair for ten days, when reason left its seat, and she became an awful maniac, incessantly calling on her lover to "come to her." Just before her death, she ordered her "wedding garment to be prepared," saying that she "wished to be dressed in white," and that she "was to be married at ten o'clock," the precise time of her departure to a world of spirits!—Amer. Sentinel.

From The United States Gazette.

Vice and Misery.

He who looks only at the surface of society, sees but little to induce him to believe that man is born to evil. He who searches the lowest stratum only, finds nothing but wretchedness and vice. The truth lies between. And he who would judge of man as he is, and of man's character and experience as they are, must examine closely and personally, not by classes, and by inference, but individually, and by sample.

Mr. Cost, who took the census of the city of Cincinnati, has published, among other interesting statements, some account of the situation and character of those whom he saw, and the following is an extract:

Few people are aware of the ups and downs in society beyond the present moment. We see the man rise by some fortunate conjuncture of events, to honor, power, or fortune, whose descendants, perhaps, whose children, may be steeped in poverty or infamy to the very lips. But the same generation in this case, rarely witnesses the ascent and descent of the ladder; it is only by inquiry, or recorded history, that we are called to contrast the affluence or the dignity of the past, with the destitution or insignificance of the present.

In the course of my census travels, I found an old lady—the widow of a distinguished professor in one of our eastern cities—in such abject poverty, that a broad board stretched across an old barrel was all the table she possessed; the chairs were in keeping with the table, being sawed billets of wood. I discovered a man, who had been proprietor in a large foundry, on the river Carron, in Scotland, reduced to the condition of a day laborer at iron works here. I found a descendant of a distinguished Governor in one of the eastern States, and cousin of a late Governor of New Jersey, making their subsistence at washing by the day. What impressive rebukes to pride may be found in such lessons! In all these cases, the individuals appeared to bear their reversal of fortune with a suitable and becoming spirit, and some of them with such dignity and philosophy as commanded not only my sympathy, but my respect.

But I found deeper grades of wretchedness than these. "The spirit of man shall sustain his infirmity," but degradation and infamy, who can bear? Yes, some are so far sunk as to glory in their shame. The daughter of a respectable clergyman in ———, and a niece of a member of Congress from New York, is a public prostitute in this city, whom no remonstrances can rouse, nor recollection shame.—The grandson of a general officer of the revolution, a distinguished son of Pennsylvania, is now a vagabond in our city; now, and not for the first time, on the chain gaug, apparently one of the most helpless of the lost. I assisted to lift out of the gutter, in which he lay drunk, a man whom I knew years before in Pittsburgh, worth even in those days, when man's wealth was counted by only tens of thousands, as much in real estate and warehouse as fifty thousand dollars. I found, in another case, a man of my own age—I had left him in Philadelphia twenty-five years ago, a youth of the highest promise the pride and joy of his parents, and the delight and favorite of female society; he was so disgraced by intemperance, that not vestige by which I could recall him to memory, remained, and nothing but certain tones of his once musical voice, and the narration of early events, which a stranger could not have known, did at last induce me to believe him any thing else than an impostor. He was so completely ruined, that it was impossible to render him any service. He since has gone down the river to Texas—

"Texas, the needy outcast's general home."

Such is human life.

Let it be remarked, that what Cincinnati presents by tens, Philadelphia possesses by thousands. And no who should descend into the depth of wretchedness, poverty and vice, (each alternately the cause and the effect,) might present a scene of fearful, painful interest to the philanthropist. Let it be understood, that in nine times out of ten this misery is the consequence of an uneducated will.

A Good Wife.

She loves her home, believing with Milton, that
"The wife, whose danger and dishonor lurks,
Safe at and shielded by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures."

The place of woman is eminently, at the fire side. It is at home you must see her to know what she is. It is less material what she is abroad; but what she is in the family circle is all important. It is bad merchandise in any department of trade, to pay a premium for other men's opinions. In matrimony, who selects a wife for the applause or wonder of his neighbors, is in a fair way towards domestic bankruptcy. Having got a wife there is but one rule—honor and love her. Seek to improve her understanding and her heart. Strive to make her more and more such alone as you cordially respect. Shame on the brute, in man's shape, who can affront or vex, not to say neglect, the woman whom he has embarked with him for life, "for better for worse," and whose happiness, if served from his smiles, must be unnatural and monstrous. In fine, I am proud of nothing in America so much as our American wives.

Professor Jamieson of Edinburgh, in a letter recently published, remarked that the American Dictionary of Dr. Webster is as great an improvement on Johnson's Dictionary, as the latter was on that of his predecessors.