

TERMS OF THE "AMERICAN."

HENRY B. MASSER, PUBLISHERS AND JOSEPH EISELY, PROPRIETORS.

H. B. MASSER, Editor.

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Machine Poetry.

'Tis twilight's hour—yon golden cloud That gleams a living thing, Is very like a feather shook From off some angel's wing;

Stop the machine, Bill, for mercy's sake! We'll give it up as a bad job. My genius is all exhausted. I've no more ideas to throw into the hopper;

THE EDITOR TO HIS ARM CHAIR.

CAPE ISLAND, July 26, 1841.

Miller's House, Congress Hall.

My Dear Arm Chair:

I rarely visit a place without making enquiries for some of its traditions, seeking out some of the elders who bring down with them the stories of the other generation, and thus enable us to judge of the feelings and belief of the past, of whom we know the name, possessions, and the public acts.

The moralist inquires more closely into the feelings of the undistinguished, and learns to appreciate to the man without the adventitious trappings and performances of the hero. In many places I have derived profit from protracted conversations with some ancient resident, who, without the trouble of a comparison, or a deduction, has given me facts of elder times, which have opened up hearts that seemed to others to have been as close as the graves in which they now moulder.

I have not been as successful here as elsewhere.—The residents on this island, so far as I can gather, are not generally natives even of this section of country, the elders especially; and they exhibit a much greater tact in the modern art of money making, than in gathering and imparting knowledge of time past.

"Are there no legends connected with places on the shore?" "None," said he, "that I know of."

"But you have a haunted house on the main and." "Yes," said the old man smilingly, "there was a ghost or two there."

"Why, how came they there, and what became of the strange visitors? I should like to go to the house with you, and have you tell me all about those 'spirits' in their own circle."

"Why as to that, there are more haunted places than one in this neighborhood. The strip of ground on which yonder bowling alley was built, was once haunted; and there are many now alive who saw the ghost walk among the graves, then numerous, and visible in that place."

"Was that a burying ground?" "Yes; the dead bodies of persons cast ashore from wrecks on this beach were taken thither and buried."

"Did you ever see the ghost of which you speak?" "I saw it once standing within twenty feet of this place."

I felt that I had struck a vein which would be productive, as it was long since I had heard of a real ghost; and from the appearance of the old man, he was not likely to jest in such matters.

The bell then rang for the table, and I was called away to attend upon my female companions. It was not until the next evening that I saw the old man again. He was leaning against a rough fence, and looking occasionally upon the ocean, and then at the site of the old burying ground.

I immediately drew his attention to the subject of our former conversation. He hesitated for some time to comply with my request to tell the ghost story, and referred me to persons who recollected the apparition. But I preferred his edition; and, after saying that it might spoil some interesting illusions, resting his arms upon the fence, and collecting his thoughts as if to fix on some date, he thus commenced:

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.—JAYNEKOW.

By Masser & Eisely.

Sunbury, Northumberland Co. Pa. Saturday, August 14, 1841.

Vol. I—No. XLVI.

The old Man's Ghost Story.

It was in the winter of 18—, and in the midst of one of the severest storms of the season, that a brig, coming from Boston, struck upon the shoals off this beach. Nothing but a miracle could have saved the life of a single human being on board, and that miracle, I believe, was not interposed in the behalf of a single one of either crew or passengers. Several bodies were shortly afterwards found upon the shore; they were supposed to belong to the Boston brig. Leaning on one of the bodies, which was apparently better dressed than the others, was a large dog, nearly as stiff with ice as his human companions, but he was not dead.

As the dog brought no name with him, we gave him that of his master; and Dupont came to be an inmate of my family, though he never forgot the place in which his master was buried. Thither he repaired as often as he came to the island, and seemed to linger over the spot, as if sacred associations connected him with the grave.

Two or three years after the shipwreck, and during the height of our bathing season, I was requested by a lady to look for a trunk, which had probably been taken to the other house. "It has upon it," said she, "the name of A. Dupont."

"I am afraid," she added, "you will forget the name." "Not at all, madam," said I, "by the token that I have a dog of the same name."

When I returned, the lady was so much pleased with the result of my errand, that she asked by what good luck she had the honor of sharing her name with a dog. So I told her how the animal came by the name, and then, I think, for the first time, I looked into her face. It was beautiful, marked, indeed, by a settled melancholy, from which a smile faded away, like the gleam of candle light which is passing over the lawn.

The lady said she would come and see her namesake when they rode out. And in a few days a carriage stopped at my door, and the same lady was handed out by a gentleman whose dress indicated that he was a clergyman.

She inquired for the dog, but learned, from my family, that he had accompanied me to the island.—As she evinced, or expressed some interest in the animal, on account of his name, though it is probable that she really thought little of the circumstance, my wife told her that there was something else in the house which bore her name also. Astonished at the popularity of her name in my family, she desired to know what it was, and, accordingly, the piece of coin was taken from its place, and brought to her.

It was fearful, they said, to look on the young woman when her eye first rested on the silver. My wife was afraid of convulsions, but fainting ensued, and when she was sufficiently recovered they conveyed her back to the island, whither I repaired again next morning, and in private acquainted her with the circumstances by which I came in possession of the silver and the dog. I inferred, without being fully informed, that the young lady had left Scotland after a pledge of marriage, and that the young man was fulfilling his promise to come to her in America. The dog belonged to her brother, and the token bore her name and his.

I pointed out to her the place in which William had been buried, and took my leave, promising when I came again to bring the old dog with me. I learned that the gentleman in attendance was an avowed lover.

It was about this time that one of the servants of the family whispered to another his belief that a ghost had been seen among the graves. Watch was kept from a distance, and the belief was confirmed by the appearance after midnight of a figure in white, moving slowly around the graves.

Having suspicions that I knew more of the ghost than most others, I determined to watch the next night, and ascertain whether I was right in my conjectures. Accordingly, about midnight I took a station near where we now stand, and shortly afterwards saw approaching a white figure, apparently a female. She advanced slowly and looked cautiously around; then she knelt slowly upon the grave of William, and poured forth a flood of tears, I could hear that she prayed, but the constant dash of the waves against the shore prevented me from distinguishing many of the words of her prayer. I

heard occasionally a sentence—one in particular I yet remember. She seemed to have had in view other troubles and other sorrows than those resulting immediately from the death of him over whom she knelt, and she was asking for support under the new trials that awaited her. The petition, however, concluded with the following quotation:—"Lover and friend hast thou put far from me and mine acquaintance into darkness."

Just then I saw a figure emerging from the shadow of the house, and moving towards the grave. I looked anxiously, and discovered that it was the dog Dupont. I was fearful that he would alarm her, and render it necessary for me to discover myself to prevent harm; but the animal moved forward slowly, until he came in full sight at the female. He paused, and advanced, and paused again. The woman started when she discovered Dupont. The dog sprang towards her, and fell crouching at her feet. "Poor dog, poor Cato," said she, calling him by his proper name, "you at least are spared to me." She knelt down to caress the animal, and both were prostrate over the grave of a beloved friend. That night taught the young woman that her heart was in the grave with William, and she refused the addresses of the clergyman in attendance; and when only a few months ago I heard of her death, and received back poor old Dupont, who had been her companion, I wished that one decent grave might have been the resting place of William and Anna; nor do I think that the earth would be desecrated should poor old Dupont, when he comes to die, be laid by their side.

"You will ask, 'is this ghost story true?' "Undoubtedly, my dear chair, as true as you live."

Thine, THE EDITOR.

Buckingham's Character of American Women.

In his book of travels in America, Buckingham has the following observations on the character of the Women of America:—"The American ladies did not appear to me to evince the same passionate admiration which is constantly witnessed among English females, for the pursuit or object in which they are engaged. Neither painting, sculpture, poetry, or music, neither the higher topics of intellectual conversation, nor the lighter beauties of the belles lettres, seem to move them from the general apathy and indifference, or coldness of temperament which is their most remarkable defect. In England, Scotland, and Ireland in Germany, France, and Italy, and even Spain and Portugal, well educated women evince an enthusiasm, and express, because they feel a passionate delight in speaking of works of art which they may have seen, of literary productions which they may have read, or of poetry or music which they may have heard; and the sympathy which they thus kindle in the minds of others only seem to increase the fervor and intensity of their own. Among the American ladies, of the best education, I have never yet witnessed any thing approaching to this; and as it is not a deficiency of information, for most of them possess a wider circle of knowledge, in whatever is taught at school, than ladies do with us, it must be a deficiency of taste and feeling. Whether this is the result of climate and physical temperament, as some suppose, or the mere influence of cold manners, as others imagine I cannot determine; though I am inclined to adopt the former supposition, because the same phlegmatic temperament is evinced in the progress of that which if women have any passion at all, however deep-seated it may be, will assuredly bring it out. I mean the progress of their attachments, or loves; for I have neither heard nor seen any evidence of that all absorbing and romantic feeling, by which this passion is accompanied in its development, in all the countries I have named, and although probably the American woman make the most faithful wives, and most correct members of society, than any nation or community can furnish, I do not think they love with the same intensity as the women of Europe, or would be ready to make such sacrifices of personal consideration, in rank, fortune, or conveniences of life, for the sake of obtaining the object of their affections, as women readily and perpetually do with us."

Let no one, however, be too sanguine of great and immediate profits; they will come somewhat slow, but sure. In some instances the advantages of liming have been made in such an almost imperceptible manner, that farmers have been discouraged. Generally, however, those who have used lime are pleased, and regret that they have not the means of doing it more extensively.

Lime, like all other alkaline manure should be kept some time on the surface, for the purpose above mentioned, that it may be dissolved, and that the soil may become saturated with the ley. It should not be wet and lumpy when spread, or it will not be dissolved, but become a carbonate, and do but little good. It never loses any thing by evaporation, and in that respect it is unlike the two former kinds of manure, which we have noticed.

Some eight or ten years ago, a Mr. Nelson of this county, commenced liming his land at an expense of twenty dollars per acre. He was one of the first, perhaps the very first, and his neighbors thought he was crazy. They found, however, in a few years, when a field of twenty acres produced four hundred barrels of corn, that there was "method in his madness."

As it regards the price at which a farmer can afford to use lime as a manure, it must be regulated by the price of wheat. According to my estimate, a bushel of wheat should pay for five or six bushels of lime delivered on the farm.

The learned and caustic Bishop Warburton said, "It is wrong to define man to be a reasoning animal; all that we can predicate of him is, that he is an animal capable of reasoning." We every day meet with facts confirming the truth of this humiliating remark.—Boston Mercantile Journal.

From Dr. Horton's Prize Essay. Lime.

Of all the blessings bestowed on the husbandman by the beneficent hand of an all-wise Creator, next to pure water perhaps should be placed lime. It has been well observed that those substances most essential to the life of man have, by the goodness of a divine Providence, been distributed in the greatest abundance, and over the greatest extent of the globe. This is certainly the case with water, which covers a great portion of it, and without which man could not long exist. So with lime, which forms whole chains of mountains; is a component part of all soils; is a constituent part of most grain; and enters essentially into the formation of man, as well as the lower grade of animals. So far as chemical science has developed the resources of nature, lime is believed to be the only article that can give permanent fertility to soils; and from the most accurate experiments that have been made, on very fertile soils, they have been found to contain at least one-tenth part of lime. In a soil containing the other essential ingredients of silex, alumina, and vegetable matter in due proportion, with one-tenth lime, as above stated, nothing can be easier, on the part of the good husbandman, than to keep it in a state of fertility any given length of time.

This is the only substance that can be obtained by agriculturists generally, in such quantities and such prices as will admit of its use as a manure, for a restoration of the soil. It may be applied in various ways; but that which has been found best is to spread it on a grass sod, soon after it is slaked, and while in a state of fine powder. This part of the process is more essential than at first view may occur to casual observers. If the lime be permitted to get so wet, after being slaked, to form lumps, it will do but little good, as will appear more plain for what we shall say presently. The lime should, as a general rule, be spread in the fall, that it may lie through the winter to be dissolved by the cold rains; lime possessing the singular property, perhaps different from any other substance, of being dissolved more readily in cold than in warm water.

It requires, I think, about 600 pounds of cold water to dissolve one pound of lime; hence the impropriety of putting a large quantity on the soil at once, as a considerable portion would in that case, by absorbing carbonic acid from the atmosphere, become what it was before it was burnt—limestone, or carbonate of lime.

The quantity proper for different soils must, of course, vary from 50 to 150, or even 200 bushels; but I would recommend the application of but 50 bushels at once, which quantity may be repeated until the requisite fertility is obtained. Let it be observed that I speak of unslaked lime, when I mention these quantities.

It would not be proper to attempt to lime more than one field a year, and but few can accomplish that, if the field be large. In this way the profits, derivable from liming, will, after the first year, nearly cover the expenses; or at any rate they will greatly assist in the operation.

Let no one, however, be too sanguine of great and immediate profits; they will come somewhat slow, but sure. In some instances the advantages of liming have been made in such an almost imperceptible manner, that farmers have been discouraged. Generally, however, those who have used lime are pleased, and regret that they have not the means of doing it more extensively.

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From the 11th to the 24th ult., 3315 passengers arrived at New York from foreign ports.

A Novel Fight.

On Tuesday last a young lad of this town, named Samuel Bell, was hunting in the woods near here, with two dogs. He had lost sight of them a few moments, when he heard their piteous cries and yells, as if in the greatest distress. Supposing a leopard had caught one of them, he advanced cautiously in the direction of the noise, and had gone but a few paces when he found himself within half a dozen yards of a huge boa constrictor, in whose vast folds both of his struggling dogs were enveloped.

The snake at the same moment discovered him, and raising his head in a threatening manner, began slowly to recede with its prey. The lad instantly levelled his gun and fired, wounding the snake in the neck and head, but without causing him to relinquish his hold upon the dogs. The monster still faced his antagonist and kept its ground.

The young hunter, with admirable coolness and courage, re-loaded his piece and again fired full at the head of the boa; but even the second shot, though it took effect, did not finish the conflict, nor cause the release of the poor dogs which were still held fast in the snaky coil. Again the determined lad loaded and fired, and this time with entire success. The victory was complete, and the hunter bore off in triumph the monster he had so bravely conquered, and was followed home by the wounded and bleeding dogs he had so gallantly rescued.—[Liberia Herald of April 26.]

Battle of Lake Champlain and Plattsburgh.

MACOMB AND MACDONOUGH. As Macomb, like Macdonough, is now numbered with the dead, those who take a proper interest in the American Army and Navy may be gratified with a brief notice of the brilliant services rendered to their country by the forces under the command, at the Battles of Plattsburgh and Lake Champlain. In noticing the events of 1814, Hale refers to the drafts of troops taken from the Champlain frontiers for the purpose of reinforcing the troops under Brown and Scott, engaged along the Niagara frontier. He then adds—

The march of the troops from Plattsburgh having left that post almost defenceless, the enemy determined to attack it by land, and, at the same time, to attempt the destruction of the American flotilla on Lake Champlain. On the 3d of September, Sir George Prevost, the Governor General of Canada, with an army of 14,000 men, most of whom served in the wars of Europe, entered the territories of the United States. As soon as his object was ascertained, Brigadier General Maccomb called to his aid the militia of New York and Vermont, who with alacrity and without party distinction, obeyed the call.

On the 6th, the enemy arrived at Plattsburgh, which is situated near Lake Champlain, on the northerly bank of the small river Saranac; on their approach, the American troops, who were posted on the opposite bank, tore up the plank of the bridges, with which they formed a slight breastwork, and prepared to dispute the passage of the stream. Several attempts to cross it were made by the enemy, but they were uniformly defeated. From this time, until the 11th, the British Army were employed in erecting batteries, while the American forces were every hour augmented by the arrival of volunteers and militia.

Early in the morning of that day, the British squadron, commanded by Commodore Downie, appeared off the Harbor of Plattsburgh, where that of the United States, commanded by Commodore MacDonough, lay at anchor prepared for battle. The former carried ninety-five guns, and was manned with upwards of 1,000 men, the latter 86 guns, and was manned with 820 men.

At nine o'clock the battle commenced. Seldom has the ocean witnessed a more furious encounter than now took place on the bosom of this transparent and peaceful lake. At the same moment, the enemy on the land began a heavy cannonade upon the American lines, and attempted, at different places to cross the Saranac. At a ford above the village the strife was hot and deadly. As soon as the enemy advanced into the water, they received a destructive fire from the militia, and their dead bodies floated down the stream literally crimsoned with blood.

At half past eleven, the shout of victory, heard along the American lines, announced the result of the battle on

PRICES OF ADVERTISING.

Table with 2 columns: Description of ad (e.g., 1 square 1 insertion, 1 do 2 do, 1 do 3 do) and Price (e.g., \$0 50, \$0 75, \$1 00). Includes rates for subsequent insertions and yearly advertisements.

the lake. A second British squadron had yielded to the prowess of the American seamen. The cry animated to braver deeds their brethren on land. In the afternoon they withdrew to their retrenchments. In the night, they began a precipitate retreat, and had fled eight miles before their departure was known in the American camp. Upon the lake, the American loss was 110; the British 194, beside prisoners. On land, the American loss was 119; that of the British was estimated at 2500. In the latter number, however, were included more than 500 British soldiers, who preferring America to their native country, deserted from the retreating army. With these splendid victories closed the campaign on the northern frontier.

A Virtuous Man.

During the war in Germany, the captain of a troop of cavalry was ordered out on a foraging party. He marched at the head of his corps to the quarters assigned him, a solitary vale, uncultivated, and nearly covered with wood. In the middle of it stood a small cottage, the residence of a poor man, one of the Moravian brethren. On perceiving the hut, the captain knocked at the door, when the aged, pious son of poverty made his appearance. His beard and locks were silvered by old age, while his countenance bespoke that inward peace which the world cannot give or take away.

"Father, said the officer, 'show me a field, so that I can set my troopers foraging.'"

"I will, presently, if you will follow me," replied the old man.

After leaving the valley, about a quarter of an hour's march, they found a fine field of barley.

"There is the very thing we wanted," said the captain.

Have patience for a few minutes replied his guide, "and you shall be satisfied."

'They went on, about the distance of a quarter of a league farther, when they arrived at another field of barley. The troopers dismounted, cut down the grain, bound it up, and re-mounted, while the guide looked on. When they were about to depart, the officer said:

"Father, you have given yourself unnecessary trouble in coming so far; the field we first saw was much better than this."

"Very true, sir," replied the good old man, "but it was not mine."

This stroke (says the author very justly) goes directly to the heart. I defy an atheist to produce any thing to be compared with it. Surely he who does not feel his heart warmed by such an example of exalted virtue, has not yet acquired the first principle of moral taste.

Indian Ball Play.

The Red River Republican has the following: We understand that a ball play lately came off near the Calcasieu, in this parish, between the Bulex and Choctaw Indians. The parties bet every thing they possessed in the world, saddles, bridles, and even the clothing on their backs, including their shirts. The Choctaws proved triumphant, and their opponents surrendered them every thing they had, and went home naked. While the play was going on, the squaws got to betting among themselves, and the Bulex squaws soon found themselves, in the same fix as their lords.

An Unhealthy City.—Houston, Texas, which was settled five years ago, has now four thousand inhabitants, and within the same period, there have been six thousand burials! An average of nearly four every day in the year.—Southern Patriot.

Curious Titles of Old Books.

In the earliest history of the art of printing, writing even religious writers—were not at all punctilious as to the titles given to their books. We find a few mentioned in the New York Evening Signal; a few others we quote from memory; some of which are English and some versions of the French. "The Snuffers of Divine love"—"A Spiritual Mustard Pot, to make the Soul Sneeze with Devotion"—"The Cupcubin Booted and Spurred for Paradise"—"A shot at the Devil between the Horns of Christ's Altar"—"High Heel shoes for Dwarfs in Holiness"—"A pair of spectacles for Short-sighted Believers"—"A Pump to raise the Waters of Salvation"—"A Flail to Thrash Wheat out of the ungodly."

The Fattest Man.—Dixon H. Lewis of Alabama, is the largest man in Congress. He weighs 460 pounds. He did not take his seat in the House until the 21st—his enormous weight having delayed his arrival. The correspondent of the N. Y. Herald says, that on some of the rough roads in Alabama, where the teams are light, the coaches had to go twice for him. He is the greatest man in the House.