

TERMS OF THE "AMERICAN."

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

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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.

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The Learned Pig.

'Tis education forms the mind; As Piggy's taught the hog's inclined; So now 'tis neither strange nor queer To see a hog become a seer;

Which had most brains, the pig or man Who should the hog, solve best who can; The thing is certain, well we know The pig was Lion of the show;

The moral then of this is plain A porker can improve his brain; And though a siltan purse, 'tis said, Of a sow's ear cannot be made;

Dear pratties, or murrises, or whatever name The farned may call ye, I love ye the same; Ye're the roughest, the sweetest, the best of all fruit

Just scrape them gintly when put in the pot, And take them up smoking and ate them quite hot; And while on their beauties my soul is regaling, I'll loudly proclaim they require no repaling;

Swate fruit! while down my pleased throat as ye roll, Be assured that Mike Leary will ne'er charge ye toll.

The gintles may talk of their fruit from afar, Of the grape, and the peach, the apple and pear; But the praty so many, the praty is mine; May the praty and shamrock for ever entwine!

CONTRASTS OF LIFE.—A physician met me: "Would you like to see a curious picture of life?" said he. "Of course, how far off?"

We turned out of Broadway, and in a few moments were at the foot of a rude and dirty staircase leading up on the side of a wretched building to a kind of temporary loft.

"Have you taken the medicine?" asked the Doctor. "No sir!" "Why not?" "I'm sick of life, Doctor. I didn't send for you."

Here the sick man turned his back to us with a groan of pain at the effort, and drew the dirty coverlet over his head. "The Doctor leaped over him and got hold of his pulse."

"Don't trouble me, Doctor," said he. "I hope I shall pop off before night. There's no room for me in the world."

The Doctor said something kind to him, and he went on, speaking brokenly and with great difficulty. "I couldn't get to the almshouse, for I hear its full. I can't go no work, if I was ever so well—people don't have their shoes mended now, I believe. I have no pleasure in life at the best. There's no comfort for me—I'd rather die and be quiet. I was glad when I got sick."

He persisted in refusing the medicine, and the kind physician who had been called in by one of the neighbors, gave some directions to a poor woman who lodged in the cellar below, and we left him. In three minutes more we were again in gay Broadway, and the waltz was playing most merrily in the balcony of the Museum, and the fountain was still leaping joyously in the Park. Truly there is here and there a contrast in the world we live in.—N. Y. Evangelist.

A PRESUMPTUOUS PEERESS.—The "prond Duke of Somerset" was twice married. His second wife one day threw her arms around the neck of her pompous partner, and gave him—a kiss!

THE BAG OF GOLD.

Brightly shone the moon over the fair city of Venice, and whenever her silver rays kissed the dark waters of the many canals which intersect the mart of merchants, as the gay gondolas passed and repassed rippling the smooth surface with their prows and fin like oars, they appeared like the shining scales of huge serpents, undulating and sporting among her marble palaces.

In one of the remotest corners of the place dwelt the usurer Gouiseppo Valdoni. Rumor reported him rich as Croesus; but he had one gem in his possession which he valued above his gold—his only daughter, Bianca, a jewel without a flaw! Serenades were nightly performed under the balcony of his residence, and all gallants of Venice endeavored to win the attention of the wealthy heiress of Valdoni.

Of all the suitors who sought the lovely Bianca, none found favor in her eyes but Ludovico, the gay, bold, reckless Ludovico. In person he was eminently handsome, and in her estimation, who had only the opportunity of judging of a lover by sight, he was far above all his competitors. She loved him! ah, and with a fervor which is only known in southern climes.

Truth to say, Ludovico was an inconstant man, a gambler and a bankrupt in every virtue.

It was midnight, and Bianca, with palpitating heart, was watching in the balcony. Ludovico came along in a gondola. She threw to him a bag of gold, and was about to descend, and place herself under the protection of her suitor.

"Dearest, best beloved Bianca," said the deceiver, to-morrow at this hour I will be here and bear you away, if I survive the disappointment of to-night.—Every thing will then be ready for my bride. Farewell!" And he rowed briskly away from the startled damsel, who for his sake had betrayed the confidence of her fond father by abstracting the bag of gold.

Cold and heartless as was Ludovico he felt a pang as he lost sight of the confiding and affectionate Bianca. "But," thought he, with plausible sophistry, "had she not robbed her own father! And shall I keep faith with one who has proved faithless to him who gave her being? Worthless wanton!"

The gallant, having reached his destination, hastily moored his gondola, and eagerly clutching the bag of gold, concealed it beneath his cloak, and hurried homewards. Passing beneath a colonnade, reposing in the still shadows of the moon, and calculating in his own mind the worth of the ducats of which he had so unworthily possessed himself, he was startled by approaching footsteps, and, turning round observed three men close upon his track.—They were eventually bent upon overtaking him, and almost before he had presence of mind to draw his rapier, they fell upon him, and enumbered by his cloak and the weight of his treasure, he was unable to repel their ransoming attack, and dropped lifeless at the feet of the brigands, pierced by many wound. The bag of gold clinked upon the pavement; they seized the weighty prize, and rushing from the spot, turned into the Piazza di San Marco, thence crossing the Rialto, they encountered the night-watch who surrounded and captured them.

They were searched, speedily deprived of their newly-acquired treasure, and conducted forthwith to the guard house, where being recognized by the authorities as indifferent characters and being examined separately, giving a different account of their objects and pursuits, they were locked up, in order to be examined the following morning by the magistrate.

They would willingly have relinquished their plunder to bribe their captors; but the latter were too numerous to act dishonestly without the fear of detection, although, under other circumstances and for such a consideration, they might willingly have refrained from pressing their charge.

The magistrate before whom the culprits were ushered on the following morning was a stern man, possessing great influence in the state of Venice.

"Fortunately for ye," said he, addressing the prisoners, "there is no proof that you have obtained this bag with violence, but we may reasonably infer that such plunder was not fished from the lawful possessor while he retained life. Justice, ever associated with divine mercy, and of which we are the unworthy dispenser, charitably gives you the benefit of our ignorance and want of evidence. Your lives are spared, and may you repent of your evil deed. We attach the property in behalf of the rightful owner, and in the meantime consign you to imprisonment, in order that should any evidence hereafter arise in your favor, you may have the benefit of it. Away with them."

The prisoners were removed, and the night watch who had captured them were liberally rewarded. The bag of gold remained with the magistrate, who was too much occupied with official business to set on foot any inquiries respecting the lawful possessor. He placed the treasure in his strong chest. When the investigation took place, his two nephews were present, and contemplated the bag, which appeared to have some talismanic influence upon all who gazed upon it with an irresistible desire of approbation.

They laughed at the idea of the idea of being locked up, and consigned to the same fate as the prisoners. In their liberal philosophy they determined that distribution was far wiser than accumulation; and with a virtue that is so uncommon in the world, they had long practised what they preached. In the exercise of this moral principle they had both become deeply indebted, and, with that fervent generosity known only to the heart of youth, they longed to liquidate their liabilities. There was no owner for the bag of gold, therefore they argued that it could not be better disbursed than in the payment of their debts of honor. Having come to this conclusion, the two honest youths resolved to cut up this stray golden goose and feast themselves and their creditors forthwith.

When sleep had sealed the eyelids of all within the magistrate's dwelling, Giovanni and Gouiseppo stealthily quitted their chambers, and proceeded to the strong room where the bag of gold was carefully deposited. The sympathy of their pursuit had compelled them, although individually reluctant, to come to a mutual understanding. Now Gouiseppo, who was married, contended with his cousin that he was entitled to two-thirds of the treasure; his liabilities, too, were larger than Giovanni's and, in his opinion, justified this division. They both at last came to the determination of decamping, should they obtain possession, and thus escape both the ire of their uncle, and the importunities of their creditors. Gouiseppo's wife was on a visit to her father, and his only son, a beautiful boy of four years old was left in his care; he therefore took the precaution of consigning him to the care of a trusty gondolier, who was to row to a certain point, where he proposed to join him.

But to return to the magistrate's strong-room which overlooked the canal. They succeeded with some difficulty, in forcing open the chest containing the treasure, and Giovanni grasped the coveted prize. "This mine!" cried he exultingly. "This ours," said Gouiseppo holding out his eager hand. "Stay," replied Giovanni, "I had half the danger,—surely I am entitled to half the plunder. Nothing less will satisfy me."

"How!—why, did you not promise to be content with one third?" said Gouiseppo. "I had not then possession," said Giovanni. Gouiseppo burned with rage, and darting forward, snatched the bag of gold from his cousin's grasp, and rushed towards the balcony, exclaiming, "Do you persist in your demand? Will nothing less satisfy you?"

"Corpo di Bacco! nothing!" answered the other savagely. "Then thus ends the dispute," said Gouiseppo; and opening the casement, he wildly cast the gold into the canal.

A piercing shriek followed, not from the disappointed Giovanni, but from the waters below. Gouiseppo had cast the bag of gold upon the innocent head of his child, and killed it!

Giovanni fled, conscious of his partnership in the robbery, and too soon the distracted father learned the fate of his boy, and went raving mad!

Giovanni, the fugitive, was reported to have plundered his uncle. The gondolier, meanwhile, had cunningly concealed the bag of gold, and produced a log of wood, which he asserted had been cast from the window, and was the cause of the death of Gouiseppo's son, and, safe in the insanity of the wretched father, he carried home the treasure.

A slip of parchment was tied round the mouth of the fatal bag, indicating that it contained one thousand stolen ducats. But through fear, or some mysterious influence, the gondolier could not be induced to break the seal that fastened it; fearful even of keeping it in his humble dwelling, he carefully enclosed it in a box, and buried it in his little garden.

Now the gondolier had an only daughter, Veronica, who was very beautiful; she had many suitors among her own class. The handsome, gay, and dissipated Beppo, however, was her chosen favorite. He rowed so well and sang so sweetly that the maid was charmed, notwithstanding his suspected gallantries.

An old tradesman of Venice happened to meet Veronica one evening as her father was taking her home in his gondola and became enamored of her charms. He sought her father, and offered her his protection. The gondolier confessed himself highly flattered by his notice, but declined the honor.

"Take her to wife," said the bluff gondolier, "and she is yours. I can give her a dowry. Say the word, and the girl, and a thousand golden ducats are yours."

"What!" exclaimed the tradesman, whose avarice equalled his new passion, "you are joking."

"By the Virgin!" replied the father, "I speak the truth."

The affair was soon settled between the gondolier and the tradesman; but there was one person who was by no means pleased by the bargain, Beppo, who vowed vengeance against the bridegroom, although he was quite ignorant of the means which had brought about the marriage.

Veronica was married, and the old man conveyed the maid and the bag of gold to his house. On the following morning he was found murdered, stabbed in fifty places by a poignard. As he was but a tradesman, the authorities took little or no trouble in seeking out the assassin. These affairs were so common in the city of merchants.

The widow took possession of the old man's property and concealed the bag of gold, which had been the fatal cause of this unwise and unpropitious alliance.

A few months afterwards the tearless widow married the murderer of her husband. Gouit, however, rarely goes un punished; and ere a few months elapsed, Veronica discovered that the man whom she once idolized, and for whom she had sacrificed so much, was in every way unworthy of her love. He lavishly expended the estate of her late husband in his unlawful pleasures, while she, deserted by him, pined in sorrow and solitude. Proud, overbearing and revengeful, Veronica's passion of love was soon transformed to hatred the most intense.

The bag of gold, which she had carefully concealed, remained untouched. Depositing it in a place of safety, she instantly sought the presence of the judge, and denounced her renegade and unworthy husband as a murderer.

Beppo was seized, and the evidence she produced was so conclusive that the worthless husband was condemned to the rack.

Veronica retired to a nunnery, and presented the bag of gold as an offering to the convent.

The purser or treasurer of the convent was a certain Brother Anselmo; a thin, bilious man, severe and taciturn, who verily looked like a skeleton clothed in parchment. He first probably, entertained the insane idea of casting the "root of all evil" beneath the blue waves of the Adriatic; but upon mature deliberation, he contended that it would be better to lay it by for charitable purposes. Sinner as he was, he might one day be in want of it; he therefore resolved to deposit it forthwith in the hands of a trusty friend in need, who had supplied his necessities in the days of his lamented extravagance.

Unfortunately for Brother Anselmo, he carried the bag of gold to the lawful owner, who instantly recognized and reclaimed the stolen ducats.—He possessed irrefragable proofs that the parchment label was in his own handwriting, and embraced the precious bag of gold with the fondness of a parent who had recovered his lost child.—Brother Anselmo vainly remonstrated, and the interview concluded by the miserly money lender unceremoniously kicking him out, retaining possession of the fatal treasure.

Fain would the astonished purser have resented this unseemly rebuff; but a consciousness of his own villany made him quip the indignity which was put upon him, but he vowed vengeance.—Before he could put in execution his secret purpose, his defileation was discovered—he was summoned before the tribunal, and condemned to pass the remainder of his wretched existence in a dungeon!

The bag of gold thus returned unbroken to the hands of the rightful owner, having been in its travels the cause of so much crime and misery to its intermediate possessors.

Wealth, obtained by a long life of toil and honesty, does not always produce happiness—all gotten gold, never!

Mr. Stephens, in his speech on Saturday night, referring to the ignorance which prevailed in some quarters in relation to the tariff, and the gross misrepresentations which had been indulged respecting it, told an anecdote of a Georgia backwoodsman, who being out hunting one day, and never having seen or heard of a steam car, approached the railroad in the pine glades, and saw a car approaching. Horror struck, he took to his heels, and ran some two miles to the nearest house, when, being asked what was the matter, he replied, terror depicted on every feature, he did not know, unless the abominable tariff had broke loose!

Richard Whig.

PEAR TREES.—At a recent meeting of the Philadelphia Agricultural Society a useful fact was mentioned in relation to the means of forcing a pear tree to bear fruit, which had proved barren for upwards of thirty years. The owner was advised to bury a small quadruped at the roots—this was done, and the next year and ever since the produce has been abundant. The explanation is—that by digging among the roots many of them must have been cut, the luxuriant growth was checked, and the formation of fruit buds or oviparous branches thereby encouraged. A similar effect has followed the digging up fruit trees and replacing them with some fresh mould.

The English Duke.

The True Sun in sketching these sprigs of Royalty says:—

The Duke of Cumberland never had a good character. He could not have obtained the situation of a gentleman's servant if he had been in common life. The Duke of York was disgraced by his infamous connections. The Duke of Cambridge is a respectable kind of person, but a poor general and a vacillating politician. The Duke of Kent was rather a respectable person, but still very mediocre in ability. The late King William Fourth, was what might be termed a whole souled man, but not over scrupulous in the gratification of his tastes. The Duke of Sussex appears to have been considered an agreeable good-hearted man, but he too was forced by his temperament and by his fancies, to give himself and his countrymen a good deal of trouble.

When a young man he visited Italy, and while at Rome fell in love with a lady by the name of Augusta Murray, although she was at least seven years older than himself. She appeared to repulse him at first, but this only made him more determined to succeed. They were married privately.

The correspondence of these personages is quite absurd and common place, and rises but little above that of a child. Among the documents we find the contract of marriage between the parties, drawn up by himself. It reads thus:—

"As this paper is to contain the mutual promise of marriage, between Augustus Frederick and Augusta Murray, our mutual names must be put here by us both, and kept in my possession; it is a promise neither of us can break, and is made before God our Creator and all merciful Father. On my knees before God, our Creator, I Augustus Frederick, promise thee, Augusta Murray, and swear upon the bible, as I hope for salvation in the world to come, that I will take thee, Augusta Murray, for my wife, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death us do part, but thee only, I forget thee. The Lord's name be praised. So bless me, so bless us, O God; and with my handwriting do I, Augustus Frederick, this sign, March 21st, 1793, at Rome, and put my seal to it, and my name.

(L. S.) AUGUSTUS FREDERICK. ("Completed at Rome, April 4th 1793.")

March 21, 1793, Rome. "On my knees before God, my Creator, I Augusta Murray, promise and swear upon the bible, as I hope for salvation in the world to come, to take thee, Augustus Frederick, for my husband; for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death us do part. So bless my God and sign this." AUGUSTA MURRAY.

Not long after the Lady Murray became his wife, the Duke found out, if he did not know it before, that his marriage was illegal. After a while she became very unhappy, and her sufferings were intolerable. Letters soon passed of a disagreeable character. To expressions of disappointment on her part, succeeded those of reproach on his. The contract was quite forgotten, and the lovers who had signed it on their knees, became estranged forever.

The lady sank under her grief and mortification. The Duke lived on, to be considered a jolly good fellow, to preside at public dinners, to try corner stones of public buildings, and collect the rarest specimens of bills ever seen in England. Nay, in the society of a Lady Bug-gans, (we think that is the name,) he lost his heart again, and again drew a contract, not on his knees, for he was become too stout to stoop so low, in which he vowed eternal fidelity.

At Cincinnati, on the 27th ult., Mr. James Passmore, narrowly escaped death in the following manner:—

He was carrying up a bucket of water, and just as he had reached the third story, on the inside of the building, he fell backwards from the ladder, striking in his fall a board placed across a hatchway on the second story, and snapping it in two. He struck something on the first floor, that turned his heels up, and again broke his fall. He then dropped head first into the cellar, where the earth happened to be soft and muddy, his head being plumply imbedded in the mud, to the depth of three or four inches. He got up and walked to a carriage, and is likely to suffer no inconvenience from the accident except some soreness from sundry bruises received in his rapid descent.

"A great lie," says the poet Crabbe, "is like a big fish on dry land; it may fret and fling, and make frightful bother, but it cannot hurt you. You have only to keep still, and it will die of itself."

"Here's the bonisters, but were are the stairs?" as the drunken fellow said, when he fell his way around the bedstead in the dark.

LUDICROUS ANECDOTE.—Dr. Anderson relates the subjoined anecdote, which shows how perseveringly these animals will follow their leader, and presents an amusing fact in illustration of natural history. A butcher's boy was driving about twenty fat weathers through the town of Liverpool, but they ran down a street along which he did not want them to go. He observed a scavenger at work with his broom a little way before them, and called loudly for him to stop the sheep. The man accordingly did what he could to turn them back, running from side to side, always opposing himself to their passage, and brandishing his broom with great dexterity, but the sheep much agitated pressed forward, and at last one of them came right up to the man, who fearing it was about to jump over his head, while he was stooping grasped his broomstick in both hands, and held it over his head. He stood for a few seconds in this position, when the sheep made a spring and jumped fairly over him, without touching the broom. The first had no sooner cleared this impediment than another followed and another, in so quick succession, that the man, perfectly confounded, seemed to lose all recollection, and stood in the same attitude till the whole had jumped over him; not one of them attempted to pass on either side, though the street was quite clear.

A REASONING LOBSTER.—SOMETHING OF A "FISH STORY."—Mr. Atkins, who resides in Willow street, Brooklyn, and who has been extensively engaged in the Whaling business, while standing on the dock at Nantucket, saw what is commonly called a Quolock clam, lying in the water with its shell partially open, and a lobster manoeuvring around it. Presently the lobster picked up a large pebble and dropped it in the clam shell, which prevented it from closing, and then set about devouring its prey. This, says the Brooklyn Advertiser, certainly shows the lobster capable of drawing an inference and a clam out of its shell at the same time.

No BOTTOM!—A chap who wasn't afraid of water, rolled up his pantaloons above his boots, and went wading along the submerged sidewalk on Front street, yesterday, amid a great deal of laughter and jeering from the people on the boats.

"O, you be d—n—n, (blucked is what we all ways mean in making use of this blank)" said the man, "I know where I'm going!"

"Going" had barely escaped his lips, when he was gone, clear out of sight, into a cool cellar, the door of which had been removed to receive an anchor that moored a steambot.

As he scrambled out, the laughing of course was more furious than ever, and the wet individual sang out, "O, I've come to anchor, but you can't say I'm aground!"

WIPE LOST. SCENE IN A STEAMBOAT—AN ACTUAL OCCURRENCE.—"Which is the Captain of this boat?" inquired a tall athletic man, as he came out of the cabin of a steambot with great precipitancy.

"That gentleman yonder" said a bystander. "Are you the captain, sir?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where is my wife?"

"Indeed, I do not know, sir—I have not seen her."

"Now, explain this is too bad. I came out aboard the boat last night, and paid you six dollars passage for myself and wife, and I should like to know where my wife has been put."

"Have you been in the ladies' cabin?"

"Yes—but she is not there."

"Shall I have the pleasure of the lady's name sir?"

"Mrs. Maria Smith, the wife of Jerome V. Smith, your humble servant."

"Mrs. (to the chambermaid,) is Mrs. Maria Smith in the ladies' cabin?"

"No, sir," she replied, "I've inquired, and she is not there."

"There—I told you so," said Mr. Smith, in great amazement.

"Captain," said a wag standing by, "supposing John should ring the bell all through the boat, and say—'Mrs. Maria Smith who came on board last night, cannot be found.'"

"That's a good idea," echoed a hundred voices at once.

So John, a cream colored Lion, with an eye like an eagle's, set his bell a going, crying round at every interval—"Lost, Mrs. Maria Smith—any person who knows where she is, or will please hand her up to the captain's office, for the benefit of her disconsolate husband."

John bawled through the boat, somewhat to the amusement of the passengers, and finally reached the upper deck, when, in passing the state-room, he set off in desperation at his wail of sorrow, he raised his voice to the steambot piteously a Keex—"Lost, Mrs. Maria Smith!" when the ferocious rushed out of one of them, evidently disturbed in her slumbers, with—

"Whose's I am lost! Here I am. Where's Jerome?" It is needless to say that a very pleasant turn to the whole affair, and the captain (good soul) escaped the charge of stealing a man's wife.