TERMS OF THE "AMERICAN."

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

H. B. MASSER, Editor.

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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.

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☞Sixteen lines or less make a square.

From the Boston Courier.

Old Times and New.

Read at the New England Society's Festival at New York, December 22d, 1846, by

ALLEN C. SPOONER, of Boston.

'Twas in my easy chair at home,
About a week ago,
I sat and puffed my light segar
As usual you may know.

I mused upon the Pilgrim flock
Whose luck it was to land
Upon almost the only rock
Among the Plymouth sand.

In my mind's eye, I saw them leave
Their weather-beaten bark—
Before them spread the wintry wilds,
Behind, rolled ocean dark.

Alone that little handful stood
While savage foes lurked nigh,
Their creed and watchword, "Trust in God
And keep your powder dry."

Imagination's pencil then
That first stern winter painted,
When more than half their number died
And stoutest spirits fainted.

A tear unbidden filled one eye,
My smoke *had* filled the other;
One sees strange sights at such a time,
Which quite the senses bother.

I knew I was alone—but lo!
(Let he who dares deride me—)
I looked, and drawing up a chair,
Down sat a man beside me.

His dress was ancient, and his air
Was somewhat strange and foreign—
He civilly returned my stare,
And said "I'm Richard Warren!"

"You'll find my name among the list
Of hero, sage, and martyr,
Who in the Mayflower's cabin signed
The first New England charter.

I *could* some curious facts impart—
Perhaps some wise suggestions—
But, then, I'm bent on seeing sights,
And running o'er with questions."

"Ask on," said I, "I'll do my best
To give you information,
Whether of private men you ask,
Or our renowned nation."

Said he, "First tell me what is that
In your compartment narrow,
Which seems to dry my eyeballs up,
And scorch my very marrow."

His finger pointed to the grate—
Said I, "That's Lehigh Coal,
Dug from the earth"—he shook his head—
"It is, upon my soul!"

I then took up a bit of stick,
One end was black as night,
And rubbed it quick across the hearth,
When lo! a sudden light!

My guest drew back, uprolled his eyes,
And strove his breath to catch—
"What necromancy's that," he cried—
Quoth I, "A friction match."

Upon a pipe just overhead,
I turned a little screw,
When, forth with instantaneous flash,
Three streams of lightning flew.

Uprose my guest; "Now Heaven me save,"
Aloud he shouted then,
"Is that hell-fire?" "'Tis gas," said I,
"We call it hydrogen."

Then forth into the fields we strolled,
A train came thundering by
Drawn by the snorting iron steed
Swifter than eagles fly.

Rumbled the wheels, the whistle shrieked,
Far streamed the smoky cloud,
Echoed the hills, the valleys shook,
The flying forests bowed.

Down on his knees, with hands upraised
In worship, Warren fell—
"Great is the Lord our God," cried he—
"He doeth all things well."

"I've seen his chariots of fire,
The horsemen, too, thereof;
O! may I ne'er provoke his ire,
Nor at his threatenings scoff."

"Rise up, my friend, rise up," said I,
Your terrors all are vain—
That was no chariot of the sky,
'Twas the New York mail train."

We stood within a chamber small—
Men came the news to know,
From Worcester, Springfield, and New York,
Texas and Mexico.

It came—it went—silent but sure—
He stared, smiled, burst out laughing:
"What witchcraft's that?"—"It's what we call
Magnetic telegraphing."

Once more we stepped into the street;
Said Warren, "What is that
Which moves along across the way
As softly as a cat?"

"I mean the thing upon two legs,
With feathers on its head—
A monstrous hump below its waist,
Large as a feather bed;"

"It has the gift of speech, I *hear*;
But sure it can't be human?"
"My amiable friend," said I,
"That's what we call a woman."

"Eternal powers! it cannot be,"
Sighed he, with voice that faltered;
I loved the women in my day,
But Oh! they're strangely altered."

I showed him, then, a new machine
For turning eggs to chickens,
A labor-saving *hennery*
That beats the very dickens.

Thereat, he strongly grasped my hand,
And said, "'Tis plain to see
This world is so *transmogrified*,
'Twill never do for me."

"Your telegraphs, your railroad trains,
Your gas lights, friction matches,
Your hump-backed women, rocks for coal,
Your thing which chickens hatches,

"Have turned the earth so upside down,
No peace is left within it"—
Then, whirling 'round upon his heel
He vanished in a minute.

Forthwith, my most veratious pen
Wrote down what I had heard,
And here, dressed up in doggrel rhyme,
You have it word for word.

ELECTRICITY.—*A pleasing experiment*—Notwithstanding the effects of the wonderful power of electricity are continually before us, and we are constantly witnessing its wonderful phenomena, with all the mysterious developments and results which it produces, we can scarcely realize how inseparably connected it is with all the various and ramified working and changes of the natural world, and its consequent connexions with our own vital properties and powers. The Mechanics' Magazine relates a simple and pleasing experiment, illustrative of its singular effect from a simple sheet of foolscap paper. The Magazine says:

"Place an iron-japanned tea-tray on a dry, clean beaker glass; then take a sheet of foolscap paper, and hold it close to the fire until all its hygrometric moisture is dissipated, but not so as to scorch it; in this state it is one of the finest electrics we have. Hold one end down on a table with the finger and thumb, and give it about a dozen strokes with a large piece of India rubber from the left to the right, beginning at the top. Now take it up by two of the corners and bring it over the tray, and it will fall down on it like a stone; if one finger be now brought under the tray, a sensible shock will be felt. Now lay a needle on the tray with its point projecting outwards; remove the paper, and a star sign of the negative electricity will be seen; return the paper, and the positive brush will appear. In fact it forms a very extemporaneous electrophorus, which will give a spark an inch long, and strong enough to set fire to some combustible bodies, and to exhibit all the electric phenomena not requiring coated surfaces. If four beaker glasses are placed on the floor and a book laid on them, a person may stand on them insulated; if he then holds the tray vertically, the paper will adhere strongly to it, and sparks may be drawn from any part of his body, or he may draw sparks from any other person as the case may be; or he may set fire to some inflammable bodies touching them with a piece of ice."

WORKING FOR A LIVING.—The following excellent article in the 'Offering,' edited by the factory girls of Lowell, breathes the right spirit:—

Whence originated the idea that it was derogatory to a lady's dignity, or a blot upon female character, to labor? and who was the first to say sneeringly, 'Oh? she works for a living?' Surely, such ideas and expressions should not be heard on a republican soil. The time has been when ladies of the first rank were accustomed to busy themselves in domestic employment. Homer tells us of princesses who used to draw water from the springs and with their own hands wash the finest of the linen of their respective families. The famous Lucretia used to spin in the midst of her attendants—and the wife of Ulysses, after the seige of Troy, employed herself in weaving until after her husband returned from Ithaca.

FRENCH COAL MINES.—The report of the engineer, appointed by the administration of roads and bridges in France, states that that country is in the third rank as regards the production of coal: England and Belgium being the first and second. The production of England annually is 23,500,000; of Belgium, 4,500,000; of France, 3,783,000; and of the Zoll-Verein 3,000,000 tons.

AN ARTIFICIAL MAN.—The Memorial Bordelais says, that near St. Sever there lives an old soldier, with a false leg, a false arm, a glass eye, a complete set of false teeth, a nose of silver, covered with a substance resembling flesh, and a silver plate replacing part of his scull. He was a soldier under Napoleon, and these are his trophies.

The bar of the tavern leads to the bar of the bench, and the prison bar speedily follows.

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

To the Senate and House of Representatives.

(CONCLUDED.)

The adjustment by Congress of the rates of duty on imports, is a topic that continues to divide public sentiment. In my message of the 7th of January, last, I took occasion to express the views which I then entertained regarding it, and to these views I continue to adhere. I can entertain no doubt of the constitutional power of the federal government, to make such discriminations in the rates of duties on imports, as may afford reasonable encouragement to domestic manufactures and productions which may be injuriously affected by foreign competition. This is a power incident to every sovereign State, and as the seperate States of this Union are by the express terms of the constitution prohibited from its exercise, it follows, that, unless it resides in the federal government the United States are without this essential attribute of National sovereignty.

The extent of these discriminations, bearing, as they do, upon conflicting interests, and in some degree arraying those of one portion of the Union against another, can only be adjusted under the influence of that spirit of concession, and compromise, which prevailed in the adoption of the Constitution itself. The history of our legislation on this subject, demonstrates most conclusively, that a tariff, to be permanent, which is so essential to the manufacturing, as well as all the other great interests of the Country, must be reasonable and equitable, and that all attempts to establish a rate of ultra protective, or low horizontal duties, have only tended to keep the question in a state of constant agitation, than which nothing can be more prejudicial to the interest of the business community.

"I am, therefore, in favor of such just discriminating duties as may be sufficient to sustain all our great National interests against injurious competition from abroad; such as will give to the home manufacturer, and producer, reasonable profits on his capital, and enable him to pay his workmen fair wages, without unnecessarily taxing the consumer."

Pennsylvania, possessing as she does, such vast agricultural, manufacturing and mineral sources, and commercial advantages, has a peculiar interest in the adjustment of this question, upon a permanent basis. Should the changes made in the rate of duties, by the tariff act of 1846, affect injuriously any of the great interests of the country, we must unite our efforts to induce Congress, to whose care and discretion the subject is committed by the Constitution, and on whose wisdom and justice we may safely rely, to make all just and reasonable amendments.

From all the reflection I have been able to give this vexed and complicated subject, I am thoroughly convinced, that reasonable discriminating duties, such as can be permanently maintained, in connection with the operations of the Constitutional Treasury, and a sound currency, will do more to promote the permanent and general prosperity of all the great interests of the Country, than any other system of policy which can be adopted.—High duties, with the employment of banks as the depositories of the public moneys, and a consequent inflation of paper currency, by which the advantage of the duty to the home manufacturer and producer is destroyed, are as certain to hasten and aggravate those commercial revulsions, to which all nations are exposed, as profligacy and vice are to produce want and misery.

The repeal, or modification of the British corn laws, while it was a measure dictated alike by sound policy, and humanity, toward the suffering population of the United Kingdom, has had a most happy influence upon our farming interests. This measure has already augmented the demand for our bread stuffs, at enhanced prices and there is reason to believe, it will continue to increase permanently our agricultural exports, which cannot fail to add to the general wealth and prosperity of the State and Nation.

In the last annual message I expressed my views at length, in regard to the policy of the banking system, to which I respectfully refer. To the opinions therein contained, I continue to adhere. At present there is reason to believe that our banks are in a comparatively sound condition. Without ascribing this creditable and healthy state of things entirely to the policy which has been adopted, of limiting the amount of the banking capital, and making bankers individually liable for the payment of their debts, I am persuaded that it has a salutary influence in preserving the soundness of the currency, and that it should be adhered to inflexibly.

I refer you with great pleasure, to the able report of the Canal Commissioners, for a detailed statement of the operations upon the public improvements, during the past year.

The economy, skill and integrity, with which they have been managed, for a few years past, have greatly tended to restore public confidence and restablish the credit of the State, and justly entitles every member of the respective Boards of Canal Commissioners, who has had an agency in producing this great reformation to the gratitude and confidence of the whole community. I refer to the fact, with no ordinary satisfaction, that during the last three years there has not occurred, among all the officers and agents employed on the several lines of improvements, a single case of defalcation.

The improvements of the Ohio river, from its mouth to the city of Pittsburg, has heretofore been deemed an object of sufficient national importance, to claim the attention of the federal government. Numerous appropriations have been made for this purpose, but not sufficient to carry out any efficient and useful system. Many of the Western and South-Western States of the Union, are interested in this improvement. The connection, however, of the main line of our canals and railroads, at the city of Pittsburg, renders its improvement an object of the greatest interest to this State. If it were made navigable during all seasons of the year (except when ice-bound) for steamboats of a large class, it would add to the commerce of Philadelphia and Pittsburg, and to the carrying trade upon the public works, an amount of business that cannot be readily estimated. I therefore suggest to the members of the General Assembly, the propriety of memorializing Congress on this subject, and pressing it upon the attention of the general government, unincumbered with any minor projects, as one worthy its special consideration and favor.

I refer with much satisfaction, to the reports of the Auditor General and State Treasury. They exhibit in detail the condition of the finances of the State, and shew the laudable industry and intelligent care which these officers have employed in the discharge of their important and laborious duties.

Before the passage of the act of Assembly of last session, which transferred to the county in which the crime may have been committed, payment of expenses for arresting fugitives from justice, the State had become liable to various agents, duly authorized, to an inconsiderable amount. This liability could not be met, because no appropriation was made for that purpose. The individuals interested in this matter are justly entitled to remuneration, and I respectfully recommend that an appropriation be made to liquidate their claims. The amount will be laid before you by the Auditor General.

In consequence of the engagements of the Adjutant General in the organization of the volunteers for the service of the United States in the war with Mexico, his annual report upon our military affairs has not yet been received, as soon as it comes to hand it will be transmitted to the General Assembly.

The Act of the 29th of March, 1836, provided for the appointment and compensation of a State Geologist and his assistants, and a competent practical, analytical, and experimental chemist, for the purpose of making an accurate geological and mineralogical survey of the State, with a view to determine the order, succession, arrangement, relative position, and the dip or inclination, and the comparative magnitude of the several geological formations within the State, and to discover and examine all deposites of ores, coals, clays, marles and such other mineral substances as may be deemed useful or valuable. The State Geologist was required to make annual reports of the progress of the survey—to cause to be represented on the map of the Commonwealth, by colors and other appropriate means, the various areas occupied by the different geological formations in the State, and to mark thereon the local ties of the respective deposites of the various mineral substances discovered. It is made the duty of the chemist, to make full and complete examinations, assays and analyses of all such rocks, ores, soils, mineral substances and mineral waters, as may be submitted to him by the geologist, and to furnish him with a detailed and complete account of the results so obtained. It was also made the duty, among other things, of the State Geologist upon the completion of the survey, to compile a memoir of the geology and mineralogy of the State, comprising a complete account of the leading subjects and discoveries embraced in the survey.

In pursuance of this act, a State Geologist and his assistants, &c., were appointed, who proceeded with the work, and the State expended upon it the sum of $76,657 87. A number of annual reports were made, as provided by law; but the main object of the Legislature, the publication of a complete memoir of the survey, exhibiting the results of the examinations, and embodying for the use of the public the vast sum of information, for which so large an amount of public money was expended, has not yet been accomplished. It appears to me that this subject is of sufficient importance to secure Legislative consideration.

Frequent complaints have for years been made by the people, of the time consumed in the Legislature by the passage of private and local bills, which greatly increase the business, and create subjects for repeal and amendment. Many laws are thus enacted which appear to be regarded as of little consequence or value, for of the acts of the last session, forty-three remain in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, which have neither been enroled nor printed, because the small amount of tax to which they are subject by the act of the 16th of April, 1845, has not been paid into the State Treasury. Thus, after the time in preparing and passing these bills has been consumed, and the cost of printing and transcribing them has been incurred, they are suffered to remain in the office, useless and neglected. This proves that much private legislation could be profitably dispensed with, and the time it occupies devoted to subjects of general legislation, by which the duration of the sessions would be shortened, and the expenses of government greatly diminished.

The progressive increase of the number of divorces granted by the legislature, forces this subject upon the consideration of the General Assembly. It appears to be the settled policy of this State, to provide by law for the dissolution of the marriage contract, for other causes than adultery. These causes are enumerated in the Act of the 13th of March, 1815. They embrace a wide range, and seem to provide for all the grievances that may arise in this interesting relation, which require legal interposition.

Special acts of the Legislature for disturbing the contract between husband and wife, are calculated to arrest the attention of every good citizen, when it is remembered that the disregard of marriage vows, and facilities for releasing parties from their obligation, are justly regarded as strong indications of degeneracy in public virtue and public morals; and that a high regard of marital rights, and a sacred observance of marriage contracts, are among the strongest proofs of the progress of civilization, and of the influence of true religion.

The preamble of the act of 1815, commends itself to our approval by the wisdom and aptness for which it is distinguished. The Legislature there say, "Whereas the divine precepts of the Christian religion—the promotion of the best interests of human happiness, the design of marriage, and the object of parties entering into the marriage state require that it should continue during their joint lives."

These salutary truths, so well expressed, present, in imposing terms, the duty of extreme caution in interfering with the sanctity of the marriage contract.

It may be true that cases occasionally arise of such extreme hardship, as to warrant the passage of special acts of divorce; but such as require legislative interposition can but seldom occur, unless the wide range of the act of 1815 is extended beyond reasonable limits.

The signing of bills for dissolving the bonds of matrimony has always been to me a perplexing duty. I have hitherto given my assent to them, confiding in the judgment and discretion of the representatives of the people, to whom, and not to the Executive, the facts of each case are submitted. But upon a review of the special divorces granted since the enactment of the act of 1815, it appears that there has been an alarming increase of them, which should, in my opinion, be arrested. During the first period of ten years after the passage of the said act, laws were passed for divorcing the parties to *sixteen* marriage contracts; during the next ten years, *forty-two*, and during the last ten years, *ninety* were passed.

I know of no change in the habits, manners, or condition of the citizens of the State, in their social relations, or in the increase of their number, that accounts for, or warrants this increase of divorces. It is possible that the cause of it may in a degree be found in the facility of obtaining legislation on the subject. Without further inquiry into the cause, the effect is, in my judgment, injurious to the public welfare, and should be strictly guarded against in future.

Whatever doubts may have been, or are now entertained, of the power of the Legislature to pass divorce laws, for any other cause than adultery, or to pass them under the provisions of the Constitution of the United States, that no State shall pass any law impairing the obligation of contracts, it seems to be concealed, against the opinions of many wise and good men that the power may be constitutionally exercised; but in view of these opinions, the extreme delicacy and reponsibility of granting these applications, appear in a strong light.

Under the marriage contract, important and valuable rights are vested in the parties, and heavy responsibilities are assumed which should not be disturbed, even when the power to interfere is unquestionable, without legal notice to the party who is to be affected by the proceeding, and a fair and open trial, the right to which cannot be doubted, and can only be secured by referring the parties to the judicial tribunals.

In every view I can take of this interesting subject, I am persuaded that these special legislative divorces, have a dangerous tendency, and that if the power to grant them is exercised at all, a proper regard for the public welfare requires that it should be limited to cases of extreme hardship and unquestionable propriety.

The progress of our age in civilization, has been distinguished in Pennsylvania, by the amelioration of the penal code, and her improved prison discipline. The organization of her penitentiaries, their domestic economy, and the care and attention to the support, cleanliness, industry, and moral instruction of their inmates have secured the general approbation and confidence of our own citizens, and have excited the admiration of other States and nations, and furnished models for their imitation.—The Philadelphia society for alleviating the miseries of public prisons, has exercised and efficient agency in producing these valuable results. In order that all the benefits of experience may be had and improved, they submit the propriety of making provision by law for obtaining, annually, accurate information relative to the convictions for crime, the character of the criminals, the condition and expenses of the penitentiaries and prisons of the Commonwealth, and the costs of supporting the convicts.

The motives of this society are so disinterested, and the reasons they assign for collecting the information required, are so conclusive, and so ably represented in a communication which I have received from them, that I take great pleasure in transmitting copies of it herewith, in order that the philanthropic views of the society, and the importance of the subject may receive that early attention of the General Assembly which they so richly merit.

The government of Pennsylvania, and her literary, charitable and benevolent institutions, are among the first and best. The people are industrious, intelligent and enterprizing. In time of peace, quiet and unobtrusive—in war, firm and decided.—Blessed in her physical resources and her institutions, and animated by the spirit of her holy religion, her onward course in improving her social condition is rapid. The great element of preserving, enlarging and perpetuating her greatness, is the universal education of her youth. In this, too, she has for a number of years advanced with the vigor by which all her great efforts are distinguished. The able report of the Superintendent, presents the steady and uniform progress of the system of common school instruction. That it is yet imperfect, and to some extent inefficient, may be freely admitted; but, who can doubt that the wisdom and energy which commenced, will mature and perfect it.

In conclusion, gentlemen, accept assurance of my hearty co-operation with you in all measures for advancing the welfare of our citizens, and maintaining the honor and dignity of our beloved Commonwealth. FRS. R. SHUNK.

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Harrisburg, January 6, 1847.

A BLIND MAN TRAVELLING ALONE, ALL OVER THE WORLD!—The Liverpool (Eng.) Mercury of Oct. 30, has the following paragraph:

The Blind Traveller.—The celebrated blind traveller, Lieut. Holman, returned to this country on Thursday evening, after an absence of upwards of six years, during which time he visited Portugal and Spain, Algeria, and all the places in the Mediterranean, penetrated Egypt and Syria, crossed the desert to Jerusalem, and finally made an extensive tour through the least frequented parts of the south east of Europe, including Hungary, Transylvania, Servia, Bosnia, &c. As on all former occasions, this extraordinary man travelled perfectly alone. He has returned in perfect health and spirits.

NEW MOTIVE POWER—or rather an old one newly applied—We understand, says an exchange paper that an ingenious Yankee has put up a saw mill, which is driven by *force of circumstances!*