

HUNTINGDON JOURNAL.

"ONE COUNTRY, ONE CONSTITUTION, ONE DESTINY."

A. W. BENEDICT PUBLISHER AND PROPRIETOR.

HUNTINGDON, PENNSYLVANIA, WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 13, 1839.

[Vol. IV, No. 18.]

Whole No. 174.]

TERMS OF THE HUNTINGDON JOURNAL.

The "Journal" will be published every Wednesday morning, at two dollars a year if paid IN ADVANCE, and if not paid within six months, two dollars and a half. Every person who obtains five subscribers and forwards price of subscription, shall be furnished with a sixth copy gratuitously for one year. No subscription received for a less period than six months, nor any paper discontinued until arrangements are paid. All communications must be addressed to the Editor, post paid, or they will not be attended to. Advertisements not exceeding one square shall be inserted three times for one dollar for every subsequent insertion, 25 cents per square will be charged—if no definite order is given as to the time an advertisement is to be continued, it will be kept in till ordered; but, and charge accordingly.

THE SUICIDE, OR THE DOUBLE-BEDDED ROOM.

"Well, after all," I exclaimed, "there are few things so comfortable as snug quarters in a good inn;" and, so saying, I drew up my chair a foot or so nearer the fire, and manifested the exuberance of my satisfaction and the soundness of the poker by reducing a superincumbent mass of the best Walls-end to minute fragments. A ride of some eighty miles outside the mail in a biting November day had thrown me into that state of delicious languor, which disposes any one to regard anything in the best light, and I had abandoned myself to the enjoyment of the pleasurable so far as it was to be obtained in the best parlor of the head inn in the provincial town of Nibblington. A neat repast had fastened me "light and choice," and a second tumbler of brandy and water, "warm with," stood exhaling its fragrance at my elbow. The fire was in fine spirits, and went laughing and crackling up the chimney; it took part in the satisfaction it afforded, we were sworn friends. "What a glorious thing it is," I muttered to myself, as I rested my heels upon the fender, and stretched myself backwards in my chair—"what a glorious thing it is this taking one's ease in one's inn! It hath a relish almost too fine for earth—it smacks of Elysium! You have cheated fate for once, given business the go-by, and left the anxieties that dog your footsteps daily, in the lurch. Here you are 'yourself alone,' none to thwart, to fret, to frown upon you,—with a few sovereigns in your pocket, you are yourself a king. How respectful is mine host?—he is your chancellor, and holds you tenderly in his keeping, as royal consciences are kept. The waiters, how obsequious!—like angels, ever eager-eyed!—these be your ministers, watchful to do you will all the more that the prospect of the gratuity to be secured thereby is ever vividly present to their imagination. The chambermaids, your maids of honor, and honored as maids—lighting you to dreams of love and bliss, like second Heros, with warming-pan and bed-room candlestick of brass. Your bed—but, ecod! I never thought of that!"—and I started up and tugged the bell in considerable trepidation.

My call was answered by the appearance of one of those sminking animals, that go about inns with towels over their left arms.

"Have you secured a bed for me?"

"Yezzir," I resolved the dog should have an additional half-crown for his attention. "Sorry, sir, could not let you have a room to yourself, sir."

"Eh, what!" I exclaimed, and my contemplated generosity sunk at once below zero.

"Single bedrooms all engaged, sir?"

"The devil!"

"Yezzir,—full of lawyers, sir. Assizes this week—crowded—not a corner to cram a cat in."

"And where am I to be stowed away, pray?"

"Excellent apartment, sir—third story behind—two capital beds, well aired. Other gin'm'n very quiet, sir."

"Who or what is he?"

"Don't know, sir. Came here a week ago, sir—breakfasts at ten minutes to eight precisely—cup of coffee, sir, and half a roll—goes out, and comes home at eleven every night. Mute as a mouse—tried myself to draw him out—wouldn't speak, sir. Strange man, sir—neither works nor eats—how he lives, can't tell, what he does, ditto—where he goes, a mystery as dark as *Omnibus*, sir."

"Hum! Queer fish, seemingly."

"Yezzir, singular man, sir—indeed I may say, a very singular man, sir. Seems in rather low spirits, sir. Any more brandy and water, sir?"

I ordered a fresh supply of this terrestrial nectar, and flung myself into my chair with the air of a man who feels himself a victim to untoward destiny.

"That this should have happened to me of all in the world—to me, who never could tolerate bedfellows in my life—"

slept with locked door and window fast, and not a soul within half a dozen rooms of me—whose chief motive for remaining single—my Marion was certainly a very, very charming creature!—I do half incline to believe, was the horror of having my habit of loneliness invaded! Possibly the wretch snored. Oh, horrible! most horrible! Well, if I do strangle him, no enlightened jury can bring in a worse verdict against me than that of "justifiable homicide." Looks melancholy, too! Oh your melancholy men have a trick of speaking in their sleep; and I shall be kept shuddering all night at his incoherent *oh's* and *ah's*! It is positively too bad! And again I dashed the poker into the bowels of the fire, and stirred it fiercely. The exercise only threw my brain into a livelier state of activity, and my fancies assumed a darker hue. To be shut up in in-out-of-the-way room, in a confounded old rambling wilderness of an inn, with a fellow whom nobody knows anything about—to have your valise and breeches ransacked, their *valise* lining turned out upon the night, while you are woeing the carresses of the drowsy god—or possibly like the Irish member, to wake in the morning and find your throat cut! A cold line seemed drawn across my woe and at the thought, and I grieved inwardly. Seizing my brandy and water, I whipped it off at a gulp; but it had lost its flavor,—was cold, vapid, ineffectual stuff, and left no relish on the palate. I sank into a reverie, a dull and quasicomplacent state of misery, on starting from which I found that the fire had sunk down to few cinders and a ghost of flame which looked up for a moment, as if to reproach me for my neglect, and quietly went out. Conjuring up a smile at my fears—a very hectic sort of an affair, indeed—I called for a light, and, following the pilotage of the "chambermaid," was herded along a succession of passages, and up a labyrinth of staircase, until I reached the room that had been selected as my demeritory.

Its dimensions were something of the smallest. Two beds, placed directly opposite each other, engrossed three-fourths of the apartment. They were divided by an alley of some four feet in breadth, at the end of which, in the window recess, stood a table with the usual appurtenances of mirror and carafes, and the window itself looked out upon Cimmerian darkness and the devil knows what. The other furnishings consisted of certain cane chairs, whose appearance was anything but calculated to inspire confidence in their trustworthiness. "The rusty grate, unconscious of a fire," stood shivering in the yawning fire-place, above which a cloudy mezzotint, conveyed the faintest possible intimation of the blasted heath, with a gibbet in perspective, decorating a wall, which time and damp had reduced from its primitive shade of green to the most miscellaneous diversity of tints.—Here was an appearance of things, not certainly the most favorable for dissipating the unpleasant feelings that had for some time been fretting my lesser intrigues to the tenuity of fiddlestrings; but I put a bold face upon the matter, and after a leisurely survey of the apartment deposited myself in bed. Sleep, however, was not to be thought of till the arrival of the person who was to share the apartment with me, and I lay forming all sorts of speculations as to the probable appearance. At length, towards midnight, a heavy step sounded on the staircase, and I heard some one advancing with a stately tread, to the room in which I lay. Now then, for a solution of my uncertainty? I half raised myself on my elbow to examine the person that should enter. The door opened leisurely, and a figure advanced into the room, that increased rather than abated my perplexity. It was that of a tall, powerfully-built man, dressed all in black, with a cloak of the same color about his shoulders, and as he held the candle before him as though he held it not, its light fell upon features of a character singularly impressive, but pale and blasted, as it were, with untold woe. His long raven hair fell away in masses from his forehead, like blackening pines upon a lightning-scathed mountain summit, and his eyes burned with a dull, moveless glare. He appeared to be utterly unconscious of my presence, notwithstanding my endeavors to excite his attention by sundry admortory coughs and hems.—Finding these of no avail, I resolved to attack him more directly, and, in an indignant tone as I could muster, exclaimed,

"Good night, sir?"—no answer—"Good night, sir?" with a stronger emphasis—still not a word; and it was not till I had repeated the salutation several times that he turned his eyes upon me. And oh what an inward hell did that look reveal! In words that dropped like minute guns from his lips, he said,

"I wish you may have a good night sir."

This was enough; I was thoroughly relieved of any desire for farther converse

with a gentleman of this kidney; so he relapsed into his abstraction, and I into my pillow and speculations.

I was fatigued, and would fain have slept, but this I soon found to be impossible. In vain I turned from left side to right, from right to left, and then in despair threw myself on my face, and dug my head into the pillow. I tried to think of discourses on political economy, of sermons on temperance, of all the most sovereign narcotics I could recall. I repeated the alphabet letter by letter and then groped my way through the multiplication table; but it was of no use. Sleep was not to be coaxed. The gentleman in black had betaken himself to bed. The room was as dark as midnight could make it; and I heard a sigh and the curtains drawn closely round in front where he lay. Strange precaution, I thought. What can he mean? Has he the same doubts of me that are haunting me with regard to him, and so wishes to place the slight barrier of a piece of dimity between us? Or perhaps the gentleman is conscious of sleeping in rather an ungainly style, tosses his bed-clothes off him perhaps, or lies with his mouth agape, like a fish in the death pang; and may not wish the morning light to disclose his weakness? But this comfortable view of the matter soon faded away as the remembrance of his appearance pressed upon my vision. Those features so pale and rigid; that massive figure, trained in no ordinary toils; those eyes dead to all outward objects, and lighted up with fires that seemed inwardly consuming him, stared vividly before me. I saw him as he entered the room, and went through all the operations of undressing, with a motion merely mechanical. What could have so palsied the senses & the will! Was it remorse for some unutterable guilt that preyed upon his heart or was he even then meditating some act of inexplicable crime? I was lying there alone, in darkness, with a felon, perhaps a murderer! And then his answer to my friendly salutation; "I wish you may have a good night sir!" came back upon my ear. May have a good night! There was then a doubt, which even he confessed. I stirred in my bed with as much noise as possible, coughing at the same time, to see if I could elicit any corresponding sound from my opposite neighbor. But was hushed. I could not even catch his breath. Oh, I thought, he must be gone to sleep. He, at least takes the matter easy. But still his words: "I wish you may have a good night sir!" haunted me. What was there to prevent my having a good night but something of which he himself was alone conscious? The night was a quiet one, and no room so much out of the way to be visited by any one of the usual sleep-dispelling noises of an inn. Would to heaven it had been less so! Again I thought of the curtains drawn so carefully in front of his bed. Might he not behind them be preparing the knife, with which he was to spring upon my secure slumbers? I coughed louder than before, to assure him that I was still awake! This horrible fancy now took entire possession of my mind. His sepulchral "I wish you may have a good night!" pealed a perpetual alarm in my ears. It was an intimation to settle accounts with the world.

He would not kill my unprepared spirit. Not he! He was a sentimental murderer, an amateur assassin, and Fate had kindly quoted me into his grasp. I lay riddled to my couch, expecting every moment to hear the curtains torn apart, and to feel his fingers at my throat. Every nerve and faculty were strained to the utmost pitch, till even the suspense grew more fearful than the reality itself could have been. A death-like hush filled the chamber. Its "very hush and creeping" grew oppressive. The stirring of a mouse would have been worth worlds to me.

Worn out with excitement, I fell into a perturbed and gasping slumber, and, on starting from it, my ear seemed to catch the expiring echo of a groan. It might, however, have only been the wind striking a favorite note in the crannies of the chimney. Day had by this time begun to break, and the gladsome light gave me courage to look out between my curtains. Those of the opposite bed were still down, and its inmate seemed locked in profound repose. I turned my eyes towards the window to strengthen myself by the sight of some cheering object against the anxieties that still hung about my mind, and found that it looked out upon a desolate court, commanding a prospect at the same time, of which the leading features were some crazy old chimney-stacks. The sky was wet and weltering, and no sound of life was audible, except the occasional rattle of a cart blended with the driver's whoop, rousing the echoes of the slumbering streets. The whole feeling of the time and place was as cheerless as possible; and to complete my discomfort, a superannuated raven, a creature worn with the throes of lackless

prophecy, settled upon a chimney right before my eyes, and began croaking its monotonous chant of woe. Oh, how that eternal "caw! caw!" did chafe me, "mingling strangely with my fears," and pressing the coming of some unknown horror! It threw my thoughts back into their old channel. Alarm, however, had now given place to curiosity, and I determined at all hazards to know more of the mysterious man who had occasioned me such a night of torture. I lay intent to catch the minutest sound, but in vain. Fine ear himself, that hears the grass grow in the fairy-tale, could not have detected the shadow of a breath. This, I thought, is the most unaccountable man I ever met with. He knows nobody knows whence, goes nobody knows where, eats nothing, drinks nothing, says nothing—and sleeps like no other mortal beneath the sun. I must, and will sound the heart of this mystery.

Here was I, with fevered pulse and throbbing brow, after a night of agony, while the cause of my uneasiness was taking deep draughts of that "tired Nature's sweet restorer," of which his singular appearance and ominous words had effectually robbed me. It was not more strange than provoking. I could bare this state of things no longer, and discharged a volley of tearing coughs, as if all the pulmonary complaints of town had taken refuge in my individual chest. Still there was not a movement to indicate the slightest disturbance on the part of my tormentor. I sprang out of bed, and paced up and down the room, making as much noise as possible by pushing the chairs about, and hitching the dressing table along the floor. Still my enemy slept on. I rushed to the fire-place, and rattled the shovel and poker against one another.—He cannot but stir at this, I thought; and I listened in the expectation of hearing him start. Still the same death-like silence continued. I caught up the fire-irons and hurled them together against the grate. They fell with a crash that might have startled the Seven Sleepers,—and I waited in a paroxysm of anxiety for the result I had anticipated. But there were the close curtains as before, and not a sound issued from behind them to indicate the presence of any living thing. I was in a state bordering upon frenzy. The fearful suspense of the past night, the agony of emotions with which I had been shaken, working upon a body already greatly fatigued, had left me in a fever of excitement, which, if it had continued, must have ended in madness. I was wild with a mixed sensation of dread, curiosity and suspense. One way or another this torture must be ended. I rushed towards the bed; upsetting the dressing table, in my agitation. I tore open the curtains, and there, oh God! lay the cause of all my agony—a suicide—weltering in a pool of blood. I felt my naked foot slip in something moist and slimy. Oh! Heaven, the horror of that plashy gore! I fell forwards on the floor, smitten as by a thunderbolt into insensibility.

When I revived I found the room crowded with people. The noise of my fall had alarmed the occupants of the room beneath, and they had burst into the chamber where we lay. But my sufferings were not yet at an end. The noises I had made in endeavoring to rouse the stranger had been heard, and were now construed into the struggle between the murderer and the victim. How it happened I know not, but the razor with which the suicide had effected his purpose was found within my grasp. This was deemed proof conclusive of my guilt, and I stood arraigned as a murderer in the eyes of my fellow men. For months I was the tenant of a dungeon. "It passed, it passed, a weary time;" but at length my trial came. I was acquitted, and again went forth, with an unstained name. But the horrors of that night have cast a blight upon my spirit that will cling to it through life, and I evermore execrate the wretch who first projected the idea of a DOUBLE-BEDDED CHAMBER.

Letter from Gen. Harrison to Marner Denney.

NORTH BEND, 2ND DEC. 1838.

Dear Sir,—As it is probable that you have by this time returned to Pittsburg, I do myself the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter from Philadelphia, containing the proceedings of the National Democratic Antimasonic Convention, which lately convened in that city. With feelings of the deepest gratitude, I read the resolution unanimously adopted, nominating me as a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. This is the second time that I have received from that patriotic party, of which you yourself are a distinguished member, the highest evidence of confidence that can be given to a citizen of our Republic. I would attempt to describe my sense of the obligations I owe them, if I were not convinced that

any language which I could command, would fall far short of what I really feel. If however the wishes of the Convention could be realized, and if I should be the choice of those who are opposed to the present administration, and success should attend their efforts, I should have it in my power to manifest my gratitude in a manner more acceptable to those whom you represent, than by any professions of it which I could at this time make. I mean by exerting my utmost efforts to carry out the principles set forth in their resolutions by arresting the progress of those measures "destructive to the prosperity of the people and tending to the subversion of their liberties," and substituting for them, those sound democratic republican doctrines, upon which the administration of Jefferson and Madison were conducted.

Among the principles proper to be adopted by an Executive sincerely desirous to restore the administration to its original simplicity and purity, I deem the following to be of permanent importance.

1. To confine his services to a single term.

11. To disclaim all right of control over the public Treasury, with the exception of such part of it as may be appropriated by law, to carry on the public service; and that to be applied precisely as the law may direct, and draw from the treasury agreeably to the long established forms of that department.

111. That he should never attempt to influence the Elections, either by the people or the State Legislature, nor suffer the Federal officers under his control to take any other part in them, than by giving their own votes when they possess the right of voting.

IV. That in the exercise of the veto power, he should limit his rejection of Bills to such as are in his opinion unconstitutional. 2nd. Such as tend to encroach on the rights of the states or of individuals. 3d. Such as involving deep interest, may in his opinion require more mature deliberation or reference to the will of the people, to be ascertained at the succeeding elections.

V. That he should never suffer the influence of his office to be used for purposes of a purely party character.

VI. That in removals from office, of those who hold their appointments during the pleasure of the Executive, the cause of such removal should always be communicated to the person removed, and if he request it, to the Senate, at the time that the nomination of a successor is made.

And last but not least in importance.

VII. That he should not suffer the Executive Department to become the source of Legislation, but leave the whole business of making the laws for the Union to be done by the Departments to which the constitution has exclusively assigned it, until they have assumed that perfect shape where and when alone the opinions of the Executive may be heard. A community of power in the preparation of the laws between the Legislature and the Executive Departments, must necessarily lead to dangerous communications and greatly to the advantage of a President desirous of extending his power. Such a construction could never have been contemplated by those who framed it, as they well know that those who proposed the bills, will always take care of themselves, or the interest of their constituents, and hence the provision in the constitution, borrowed from that of England, restricting the originating of Revenue bills to the immediate Representatives of the people. So far from agreeing in opinion with the distinguished character who lately retired from the Presidency, that Congress should have applied to him for a project of a Banking System, I think that such an application would have manifested not only great subserviency upon the part of that body, but an unpardonable ignorance of the chief danger to be apprehended from such an institution. That danger unquestionably consists in a Union of interests between the Executive and the Bank. Would an ambitious incumbent of the Executive chair neglect so favorable an opportunity as the preparing of the law would give him to insert in its provisions to secure his influence over it? In the authority given to the President by the constitution "to recommend to Congress such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient," it was certainly never intended that the measures he recommended should be presented in a shape suited for the immediate decision of the Legislature.—The sages who made the constitution, too well knew the advantages which the Crown of England derived from the exercise of his power by his ministers, to have intended it to be used by our chief magistrate, or the heads of departments under his control. The boasted principle of the English constitution that the democratic Branch of the government was not only necessary

to receive money from the people, but that it was its unavoidable prerogative also to originate all the bills for that purpose, is true in theory as in the letter, but rendered utterly false and nugatory in effect, by the participation of the ministers of the crown in the details of Legislation. Indeed the influence they derive from setting as members of the House of Commons, and from wielding the immense patronage of the crown (constitutional or usurped) gives them a power over that body, that renders plausible at least the base flattery, or as is more probable, the intended sarcasm of Sir Walter Raleigh, in an address to James the 1st that the demand of the sovereign upon the Commons for pecuniary aid, was intended only that the tax might seem to come themselves; whereas the inference is, it was really laid by the sovereign himself.

Having thus given you my opinion of some things which might be done, and others which should not be done, by a President coming into power by the support of those of the people who are opposed to the principles upon which the present administration is conducted, you will see that I have omitted one, which is deemed by many of as much importance as any other. I allude to the appointment of members of Congress to office by the President. The Constitution contains no prohibition of such appointments, no doubt because its authors could not believe in its necessity, from the purity of character which was manifested by those who possessed the confidence of the people at that period. It is, however, an opinion very generally entertained by the opposition party, that the country would have escaped much of the evil under which it has suffered for some years past, if the constitution had contained a provision of that kind.—Having had no opportunity of personal observation on the conduct of the administration for the last ten years, I am unable to decide upon the truth or error of this opinion. And I should be very willing that the known subserviency of the legislature to the Executive, in several memorable instances, should be accounted for in a way somewhat less injurious to the character of our country and Republicanism itself, than by the admission that the Fathers of the land, the trusted servants of a virtuous people, could be seduced from the path of duty and honor, by the paltry trappings and emoluments of dependant officers. But if the evil really exists, and if there be good reason to believe that its source is to be found in the corruptibility of the members of the Legislature—an effectual remedy cannot be too soon applied. And it happens in this case, that there is a choice of remedies. One of those however, is in my opinion free from the objections which might be offered to the other. The one to which I object is, that which the late President has been so loudly called upon to adopt, in consequence of a promise made at the commencement of his administration, viz that the Executive under no circumstances, should appoint to office a member of either branch of the National Legislature.—There are in my mind several weighty reasons against the adoption of this principle. I will detain you with the mention of but two of them, because I believe that you will agree with me, that the alternative I shall present, while it would be equally effectual, contains no feature to which a reasonable objection could be made.

As the Constitution contains no provision to prevent the appointment of members of Congress to office by the Executive, could the Executive with a due regard to delicacy and justice, without usurping power from the people, declare a disqualification which they had not thought necessary? And where is the American citizen who regard the honor of his country, the character of its people, or who believes in the superiority of a Republican form of government, who would be willing to proclaim to the world, that the youthful nation which has attracted so much of its attention which it has so much admired for its gigantic strength, its undaunted courage, its high attainments in literature and the arts and the external beauty of its Institutions, was, within a mass of meanness and corruption? That even the chosen servants of the people, were ever ready, for a paltry consideration, to abandon their allegiance to their lawful sovereigns, and to become the servants of a servant. The alternative to this degrading course, is to be found in depriving the Executive of all motive for acquiring an improper influence over the Legislature. To effect this, nothing in my opinion is necessary but to re-establish the principle upon which the administration was once conducted, with a single addition of limiting the service of the President to one term. A condensed enumeration of what I conceive these principles to have been, is given above. And I think no one can doubt that, if faithfully carried out, they would be effectual in securing the independence