EASTON GAZETTE.

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VOL. XXII. EASTON, (MD.) SATURDAY MORNING, MARCH 30. 1839. No. 14.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY *Saturday Morning*, BY

Alexander Graham.

TERMS.

TWO DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS Per annum, payable half yearly in advance

ADVERTISEMENTS

Not exceeding a square inserted three times for ONE DOLLAR; and TWENTY-FIVE CENTS for every subsequent insertion.

From the National Magazine and Republican Review.

MUSINGS BY THE HEARTH.

No 11.

The critics are down upon us with a vengeance, for our February article, under the above encircling caption, and we are not a little amused at the difference even of opinion with regard to the style, or the mannerism of our mode of writing. One sage youth remarks, how very like the style of Carlysle, and another, most competent authority we admit, cries out, lo! here is Schiller revived! Now we confess to the accusation of having tried to write well, and therefore it is that we fell into the current that swept even to immortality the author of the 'Robbers,' & the author of the 'French Revolution.' It was natural, and instead of taking it as a castigation, we have pasted the criticism within that sacred volume of compliments, that lieth so convenient to our greatness and our fame, upon the lower shelf of our humble cup-board. Another reviewer of the goodly and sagacious Republican, writing in the National Intelligencer, says we will not be appreciated by the mass. By the mass! and we will lay him a wager of a good dozen Spanish segars, the very best, that he is out of it on that score. But we will not linger long with our enemies, who write very often without reading, and read very often without thinking. Had they read our article in the proper spirit, they would have found food for meditation It would have led them back through the avenues of ages to the first causes, where beams the truth on the summit of the primal world, shining but dimly to unphilosophic eyes, like a star blazing but faintly through the plumage of the interval

did not read us in the 'con amore,' with the mind pre-disposed to muse. They sat, with their pens dipped in their ink, and gazing through their spectacles at our sentences and our fancies, merely to criticise. But no more of this dispute.

Our lamp burns but indifferently, and the evening has closed in with a soft sensation around us, that gives a calm distress to the mind. We are sad and we wonder that we cannot stimulate ourselves to rejoice. The sky has been full of gold all day, and the earth has been opening to let the buds in the embryo, peep up and inhale a little of the winds. No clouds have been loitering about the skies, like lazy vessels, ruderless and pilotless, but an unusual sentiment of sunshineness has infused itself into all things, and yet we have not been in good spirits. How comes it so, and what has gone wrong? We cannot tell. We have walked all day and trod even among the woods, and we have imagined his power with us, and what he has left undone we do. He has made as we wandered beneath the stately trees, that glorious and singular scenes were going on before our touched vision. We saw Titania sporting before us, in her tiny carriage, and Puck and Ariel, floating along on sunbeams, or rising from an old leaf-cradle that a melancholy looking cricket had been rocking: we have heard a tiny brazen horn, mellow as the echo of a spirit's faintest laugh, calling the array together.

"O come to my bower
At the noontide hour,
And wait not for the moon;
O come where the wood boughs drip & twine;
We have bees for pipers, dews for wine,
In the merry, merry month of June."

and yet with all these phantoms darting about in our mind, although that mind was peopling the air with winged impersonifications of beauty and swiftness and grace, though we heard upon the inner and refined drum of our metaphisical ear the music that no mortal-angel's voice can match, we are still not in a happy humor, and our glass of wife-brued punch stands untouched before us. What a misterious thing it is to cogitate!—To go forth, even like a machine, into the fields and forests and ponder upon all matters, and everything. Is it not enough that we are permitted to see the delightful and magnificent handiwork of our God, mapped out on the shadow-casting hill, and on the rolling stream, and the herd-cropped meadows, but that we are also permitted, out of our own god-powerful minds, to erect upon the barren heath a temple with golden cupolas and ivory pillars, and cornices of chased silver, and to fill it with persons, beautiful as the morning, and crowned each with garlands; and even to see the smoke rising from censers and filling the air with fragrance. That we are permitted to cover the yet unflowered plains with plants of sweetness and delight, and to populate the air with creatures that fan

*George Hill.

our senses with the music-making wing, and fill the woods with troops of gay fantastic elves, that peep at us from behind old mossy oaks and birch trees, and smile at each other with most expressive looks! These are meditations that crowd upon the mind as we go forth on ordinary rambles into the open fields; and yet we do not wonder at the existence of these powers of conjuration in our mind. The Creator has halved the great physical system perfect, and compact, and solid to our eyes and to our touch, and he leaves it to ourselves to endow the scene with temples, and angels, and fairies. Descending from these high soarings, we move dryly and dusty to the city walks. We see the smoke curling from the kitchens, and we hear the hum-drum of civilization and mankind. We see the poor, with their faces of agony go by us, and the rich roll along in their glittering carriages, but little thinking that the next vehicle in which they will ride may be a hearse. With the suddenness of abrupt thought comes life, and with the celerity of a lover's wish does life depart.

We well remember, it was exactly in such weather as we have now, while we write, that we were with a party of young hey-days of our own age—no matter how long ago, but it was when we thought less than we do now, though we wished more. We were a high-hearted, merry set, and full of life, and love, and liberty. We walked here and there, and kept the hours bright by scattering along the path of time the freshest flowers from our young hearts. Even now as we sit, all slippered in the easy-chair, with the few coals burning in the grate, and our little folk asleep up stairs, and the music of the wife's low breathing is in our ear, we have before us those friends of our early days. We were saying that it was exactly about this time in the year 18——, that we were all together, and as the scene rises to our memory, we will make a record thereof in these pages

In the city in which this noble fraternity of youths resided, there lived a certain barber his name was Francis Bartoli, an Italian. In appearance he was like no one, and the mirror in which he gazed, fairly refused to reshadow the horrible mass of features presented to its surface, but shadows would fall in here and this or that lineament. His hair was black, and fell in long wiry ringlets down from his temples, over his shoulders. He tied it up behind and wore it on the back part of his head, but he gloried in the curls in front His eyebrows were thin, very black, and arched, meeting over the nose, just where a hard roll of skin served as an extra ridge to prevent one eye from burning out the other with its wild and extraordinary fire.—His mouth was not to be described, but after once seeing it, you never forget it; it would haunt your dreams, and be upon the face of every corpse of which you might dream, for we dream oftener of such things than anything else. It was withering, blighting, demoniac, and terribly cruel in its cold ironical smile, and that smile never was away from it. His hands were as delicate as the fairest lady's, and his fingers were covered with rings. To be shaved by such a hand was exquisite pleasure. He never spoke a word of English, and seldom, indeed in his own language. He held communion with but few. The only being whom he seemed to love, was a poor meagre looking boy that rinced the basins and lathered the faces of customers, and yet this creature would creep about the shop with the pace of a cat, apparently in awe least he should incur the rage of his master. The boy was about fourteen years of age, and would have been, under any other tutelage, a handsome, sunny-looking, healthy and happy boy; but he lived in the shadow of an awful countenance, and though he met with kindness, and seemed to sympathize with his superior, yet he was miserable, and always started round when his master moved suddenly. No one knew aught of the barber's history, though dark surmises were entertained with regard to his former occupation, and the general belief was that he had been a pirate. Whatever had been his former mode of life, he was now a quiet barber, without a wish to gossip or to hear gossip. He shaved his customers with promptness, and then held out his soft woman-like hand to receive his change. Few knew how he lived. He had no family, though rumor, ever active about the habits and character of the mysterious, declared that a delicate creature, with a pale and beautiful foreign face, was seen at times passing within his house by the windows. It was true that we have often heard, of a calm moon light in summer, long after the city had sunk to rest, the sound of two voices in song, making the air rich with melody, from one of the open windows of Bartoli's dwelling. There was a deep-toned bass, the barber's, and the other was a silvery flute-like voice, and in unison they mingled rapturously, and formed one of the most delightful treats we had ever listened to. The songs were all in Italian, and were plaintive and sad, though at times Bartoli would pour forth an air that seemed to describe a fight, mingled with loud mirth and victory. A mystery hung about our barber that few barbers could boast of exciting, in this common lather-the-beard kind of world.

The barber was therefore a hero.

It so happened that of our set there was a young man, whom we shall call Seymour, that had never seen the barber. Not being a resident of the city, but living in the country, he did not frequent his shop. We had often talked to him about the renowned Bartoli, and impressed his mind with a full idea of the singularity and wildness of his character. Seymour, it will be necessary for us to premise, was a man of a high and sanguine temperament, full of imagination, and somewhat of a poet. Had he wrote out his ideas, it is not improbable that his effusions would have been of the first order

It so happened that, about this time in the year 18——, our party had assembled to celebrate some occasion on which we wished to enjoy ourselves, and Seymour was of the party; and we can see his noble figure now as it stood before us then, full of health, and beauty, and high hope, and courage. We had met at night, and the bottle flew fast, and the song was sung at our board, and we were merry, & noisy, & possibly happy. The conversation turned, as it often does with young men, upon courage, and every one had something to say in behalf of his own spirit, with some daring adventure with which to illustrate the matter.—The hours flew fast, and the grey tints of morn came into our room, those healthy tints that are so cold and bracing, and still we wild men were sitting with our candles flickering in their sockets, and our glasses half filled with mixed wine.

We could not sleep. We had drank ourselves into a high state of excitement, and talked ourselves into an equally high state of self-opinion, with regard to our immense degrees of firmness and courage. Oh, what wild and haggard stories some of those young men told that night! The memory of them grins ghastly on the paper over which this hurried pen is passing, and we see their distended eyes and white cheeks as some story more ghastly than the rest, was told. Seymour, in particular, was full of weird and imaginative narratives; whatever he told was remarkable for the high coloring he imparted to it, the shadowing cast from his own affrighted soul, upon the picture in which he tried to paint himself the untrembling hero.

full of benedictions, came in upon the feverish scene. There was no sleepy eye among us, but all were rather too much awake. There was no one drunk, nor did any even totter or utter incoherent words. It had been a peculiar night, in which, though we had drank deep, we had talked of matters that brought on a counter-excitement and prevented the occurrence of that stupid effect which we too often see among young men after a night's debauch. Indeed, it is far better not to drink at all, but if people will drink, and drink some poor fellows will, let them have some poet among them, some man of high creative powers, that he may keep their minds above the torpid surface of their wine, and fill them with trembling but preserving apprehension, by the tremendous force of his fictions.

With the morning we had coffee, strong and black, and the effect therefrom upon our nervous system was to redouble the excitement and the wakefulness in which we were. We remember well that, for our own part, we had an acute, angular, icy pain near the centre of our forehead, that made us eager to move from place to place, fearful that if we remained long in one situation we would die off suddenly. The power of locomotion assuring us that we had our physical capacities in full force.

Seymour sat by an open window looking in the street. His eye was bright as a spirit's and his lips were blackish, and his face streaked with livid splotches. At first it appeared as if candle-snuff had been rubbed across his forehead, but upon closer examination they showed themselves to be dark shades caused by high mental and corporeal excitement. For some time he sat motionless with his bright eyes glaring into the empty street. By and by the sun rose up and drove him from the window. He walked up and down the room without speaking to a soul, occasionally looking at his watch, which he grasped firmly in his marble-looking hand.

At length one of the party proposed to go over to Bartoli's, and submit ourselves to his hands. There is nothing equal to a barber's razor after a carouse. You loll back, with your head on his head-piece affixed to the chair, with your eyes closed in vacant and dream like luxury.—The brush soft and fragrant is swayed to and fro over your cheeks and chin, and the razor, so sharp, and keen, so delicate, crops the thick array of beard, like a mighty reaper. Many persons feel a very strong inclination to sleep while under the operation and we have indeed seen fat old gentlemen, who read newspapers or post accounts late afore night, go into the snores before the lather had settled, like wet snow, in the guillies of the face.

The proposition was acceeded to with pleasure, and we forthwith started to put our design into effect. Seymour lingered behind. He hesitated and objected, but finally we overruled his reluctance and bore him along with us. The distance was not great between the scene of our nights dissipation and the barbers shop, and we arrived just as he was opening the windows. He did not seem to like our early visit, though he bowed politely enough, but his boy's face gave evidence of strong alarm. We did not regard either of the individuals, farther than to set them about the preparation for our operations.

It is not important now to know who underwent the first shave. Perhaps it was ourself. The barber was exceedingly pale, and his brows were darker than ever. His mouth bore its usual sneer, that serpent like expression.

Seymour was very much struck with Bartoli, and exhibited evident reluctance to allow him to shave him. Seymour's eye was wider than ever, but he took his seat.

The boy lathered him, and then Bartoli bent over and waved the razor quickly back. He seemed to gaze into Seymours face with a peculiar expression and then he moved back of him. Meantime the young men were engaged in looking at the various pictures that were scattered along the walls, but we watched Bartoli from behind a newspaper, for we were anxious to see the effect his manner and countenance would have upon Seymour, who was laboring under such high excitement.

Seymour's eyes followed every gesture and motion that the Italian took, and we could see that his cheeks were jerked as by spasms, when the barber returned to him, after having left him for a moment. Seymour was certainly under a violent nervous action

Presently the barber applied his razor along the chin and drew it gently down and swept off the beard on one side, and then gazed into Seymours eyes, & wiped the razor on the small towel, that was laid upon Seymour's shoulder, suddenly he placed the razor directly on the jugular vein! Seymour suppressed a movement, and settled himself gently in his chair. He seemed ashamed to make known his fears. The razor played about the neck, and every now and then the Italian bowed low, and softly moved the instrument over that life-containing artery. For ourselves we were almost as much agitated as Seymour.

On his forehead stood large drops of [illegible] and his face was as livid as

as snow, were clinched over the elbows of the chair, and his eyes were fixed upon vacancy. A horrid idea had evidently taken possession of his mind. He thought that the dark Italian was trying to get a chance to cut his jugular vein in two. Just as we were preparing to interrupt the agony of the silent but highly wrought scene, Seymour sprang upon his feet, and uttering a wild and never to be forgotten scream, fell forward on his face. We all rushed towards him. We turned him round with his face upward and he was dead! No mark of violence, no cut was upon his face or neck, but the former was spotted with blotches of deep black. We instantly sent off for a doctor, but medical aid was in vain.—The physician opened his arm, but no blood flowed. He was pronounced to have died from an overwhelming rush of the blood to the brain caused by the combination of liquor, and mortal and extraordinary fear.

The barber spoke not a word, he stood with the fatal razor in his hand, but his frame shook like a withered leaf in the wind. Upon examination it was established by his own testimony that he had wilfully practiced on the fears of his victim. That he had indulged in a fiendish triumph, exulting in his demon like glare.

He was imprisoned, but before his trial he committed suicide. The boy and the female were shortly after seen loitering about the grave of the culprit, and no trace was ever afterwards discovered of their residence. What became of them was never after ascertained.

Thus in the midst of life our blood is gradually getting cooler and cooler in the shadows of the death cloud, like a bottle of wine, that is consumed the faster when it is cooled in ice. So the farther we are in the darkness of the wing, the less there is of us. The story we have introduced, was done so, as a sudden ray of painful recollection waved across the dungeon of the soul, and will serve to illustrate the trite idea, that the rich roll by us, in their glittering coaches, never thinking that the next carriage they may travel in, may be a hearse.

But why should we be melancholy.—Here is spring around our garden walls, and the old Potomac glides on uniced, and the rose bushes, are thinking of the spring fashions. Congress thank heaven, is on the eve of its departure, and those ragged flags, that fly from the staffs over the representative bodies of the lower and the upper house, will be hauled down and boxed up for some months to come. Yes, Congress is on the toe of departure. What a world it is, and what an animal is an M. C. No conjunction of any two letters of the alphabet, can express half as much, in the United States, as the conjoined letters M. C. M. C. member of Congress. It is the payment of postpage. It is the cabalistic union, that keeps the holder out of the penitentiary or the common jail; but it keeps him from no other place within this district otherwise. It is a passport to scenes where guilt may revel watched by no rebuking eye. How is the character of the M. C. disgraced by the conduct of many. This is a republican form of Government. It is a moral, a christian, a pure system. It is a government of the people, and the men of the people, the law makers, and the law executors, and the law judges. How necessary then is it, that those high in place should be immaculate. That they should be stars, not Jack-o'the Lanterns; and the people suppose that their representatives are moral men, examples of high probity, of eminent virtue. Shall we draw aside the veil that hides the skeleton of reality! No, not now, nor here—but we are glad that some of the members are going away—that they are leaving our city, would that it were forever.

The public press (we are musing now by our own dear hearth,) should enter into the discussion of these matters.—They have been too long overlooked.—We who live here, and are "to the manner born," see the guilty criminals stealing forth at night, ripe for crime. We can see them staggering at the early dawn, with all the glories of M. C. written upon their swaggering brow. We feel for the morals of the place, and we repeat the prayer, that the public press, should show up some of these individuals who come here, clothed in the M. C, panoply in order that away from family and friends, they may blacken the record of heaven with rank and horrible outrages. Yes, with the first balm-days Congress will wend away. Blessing upon those true hearted men that do good and honor to their country, who belong to the two bodies. We wish them God speed with a hearty cheer, and our handkerchief will wave a farewell hurrah for them as they glide behind the hills.—The time is coming when Congress must be purified, under the motto, that bad men in private are unfit to make laws for a free and moral people. And thus we shall conclude. We have wandered along regardless of any system of composition, but careful not to utter any sentiment that may lead to error or vice.—The lamp is refractory, and as to musing by the vulgar tallow, we cannot possibly do that. So until next month, farewell.

ROOTS—ROOTS.

The importance of raising roots to be during our long winters, cannot be too often nor too strongly impressed upon the farmers of Maine, at least until more of them enter somewhat more largely into the business than they do at present.

Potatoes are planted by every one as a matter of course. Next to potatoes perhaps the Ruta baga crop commands the most attention. The Sugar beet is next in order, though of but recent introduction. Mangel Wurtzel have not generally found so much favor with the farmers of Maine as they ought to; nor has the carrot—but the most neglected of all is the parsnip. We do not recollect of ever having seen a field of parsnips growing in Maine, and yet we verily believe that, all things considered, they are the most profitable of either as an article of food for stock and swine. We have heretofore tried some experiments on a limited scale with them, and, Providence permitting, we shall go more extensively into it another season. They require a little more care when they first come up, and are smaller than Ruta Baga, but are not so difficult as the carrot. They seem to be more nourishing than any other root, and chemical analysis warrants this idea. They will keep in the ground during the winter, but must be dug before they vegetate much in the spring. They will not keep so well in the summer as the Ruta Baga. The farmers in the Island of Jersey, near England, are said to make their main dependence upon this root, and their cattle and swine are thereby rendered very profitable. The only objection that we know of to the carrot is the trouble it gives in weeding when it first comes up. Its small leaves so much resemble some of the weeds, that if the ground is very foul, it requires careful management to avoid hoeing it up with them. We have seen the good effects of these upon a horse to which they were given during the winter season. They certainly are preferable to oats, or at any rate were for that horse. The animal was a very fleet one and belonged to a neighboring Physician who had a great deal for him to do; and yet he kept in perfect condition with no other food than good hay, and from a peck to a half bushel of carrots per day.

The Mangel Wurtzel will yield when put in a favorable situation as much per acre, perhaps, as any other root. John Hare Powell once raised 1634 bushels on one acre and 14 rods; and Messrs. H. & T. Little, of Newbury, raised thirty three tons, ten hundred and fourteen pounds to the acre. But English writers have told us of sixty tons to the acre. We believe that it requires a richer soil than Ruta Baga, and more of a clayey loam. Hogs are very fond of them.—We saw Mr. Hains of Hallowell feeding his swine with them last fall, raw, and the manner in which they took hold of them, and the good condition which they exhibited convinced us that they were very profitable and nutritious to them.—See his communication in the last number of the Maine Farmer. The more we see and learn of the value of the several root crops in Maine, the more convinced are we that it is the true policy of our farmers to cultivate them extensively; and we hope that many who never have yet paid particular attention to this business, will begin this year.—Manure high and plant close, and we will insure you a good and a profitable crop.—*Maine Farmer.*

PLANTING LARGE AND SMALL POTATOES.

Considerable diversity of opinion exists among farmers in regard to planting potatoes, whether the seed, which is put into the ground, should be large or small, cut or uncut. Some are of opinion that, in order to prevent the seed or variety from "running out," large potatoes should be used; others will contend that small pieces and small potatoes will afford as good a yield as the large ones, and that being the case, it is much more economical to use them. The late Dr. Parker, of Gardner; once informed us, that he never had but one variety of potatoes in his life, and that he invariably planted one large size tuber in the hill, and thereby prevented any deterioration of the crop. It would seem from theory that this would be the result, because the potatoe which is planted must of necessity afford nutriment to the young plant until its roots have become sufficiently large and extended to draw its support from the earth. The more nourishment there is on hand the greater the crop.

Accurate and careful experiment, however, does not establish this as an invariable result. The following statement is from a friend in a private letter—Mr. D. is an excellent farmer in the eastern part of the State, and a close observer, does not seem to warrant the plan of using only the large potatoes for seed. "I have been," says he, "trying for five years to prove that large potatoes are better than small ones, and have for that length of time kept two distinct breeds, selecting the largest of the one, and small ones of the other for seed each year, thinking that they would degenerate, but cannot yet perceive any difference.—The small breed this year yielded as many and as large ones as the others."

"The potatoe crop with us has been this year a pretty profitable one, although we had a small one: yet it turned out bushels, of which I sold the merchantable, say about two hundred bushels for 70 cents per bushel."

After all, it would seem that much, if not the whole of the secret of obtaining a good crop, is the planting on a good soil and having a good season. The enormous yields that have been obtained the last year and the year before from the Rhohan potatoe, is owing probably more to the good cultivation which was bestowed upon it, than to any thing so very superior in the potatoe itself. Our Correspondent H. Prince, Esq. of Thomaston, demonstrated, not long since, by actual experiments, that the Rohan has not yielded in the hands of others more than the Quoddy blues did in his. But what we were going to observe was this—The Rohans, in every instance that we have seen, were cut and each eye planted by itself.

Although many experiments have heretofore been tried, in regard to this question, yet the facts are not generally known, if so well established as they ought to be. Our readers will find some experiments on this subject in Vols. 2d and 3d of the Maine Farmer, by "N." "Ploughboy," and "S. F. B." which throw much light upon it. By these experiments the cuttings are not so much behind the whole potatoes in yield as to make it much of an object to plant whole potatoes when seed is scarce.

Maine Farmer.

A GOOD ANECDOTE, WELL TOLD.—Among the many good Whigs of the Legislature of the last House of Commons of North Carolina, was Mr. H. C. Jones, editor of the Salisbury Watchman. During the debate on Mr. Raynor's resolutions, which our readers will recollect, expressed the opinions of the Legislature against 'the Expunge,' Sub Treasury, &c., Mr. Jones delivered two speeches in their favor, well seasoned, as the Raleigh Register says with genuine Attic. It was contended by the Loco focos that the Whigs could not, without an abandonment of their principles, support the resolutions as they favored the doctrine of 'instructions' to which, as a party, they were opposed. The answer to this argument spoke as follows:—

Mr. Speaker, I must illustrate our positions on this subject by relating an incident that occurred in the Tory war of the Revolution. You have heard of the celebrated John Cleveland. North Carolina has never done justice to that man's fame. He was one of those gallant spirits that first turned back the tide of British domination by the battle of King's Mountain. He had an impediment in his Speech, and, like all stutterers, that ever I have known, he was hasty in temper and violent—

'Impiger, iracundus, inexorbilis, acer.'

If I may be permitted to quote a free translation Sir, I think it will as well bespeak our Hero as the original.—(Cheers, leave, having resounded through the Hall)

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