



FROM THE PORT FOLIO.

Mr. Debehead.—The following elegant, erudite and sublime poem, equally destitute of hyperbole and bombast, was composed under the full inspiration of a long beard and the inspired bill of my tail.

"The Tonsorial," with which we have taken a few editorial liberties, for which you hope to receive the author's pardon, is a happy imitation of the Darwinian style, and will readily remind the polite reader of the Loves of Triangles, than which a more numerous baricope cannot be discovered in the regions of wit. Our arch American has succeeded very happily in his lucky similitude in the fourth paragraph of his poem, and has been still more fortunate in his allusion to a well known nursery tale in the fifth. We think that the fame of the sovereign of shavers is now perennial; and that Partridge and Hugh Sharp, and even the barber of Bagdad himself, are only qualified, in comparison with him, to cut razors, cut, and cut black with a razor.—Ed. Port Folio.]

THE TONSORIAL.

O, for a quill from Python's dragon wings,
Fledged with his scales, and pointed with his sting;
O, for an ink-horn of Ercan height,
Whose crater's depth should mock an ocean's right;
O, for a Styrian stream of ink so black,
Than soul of Satan, or than Cackles' clack;
O, for a page of lamellated snow,
Whose transparent plain might hide the world below;
O, for an arm, with giant's sinews wound,
To drive this pen and ink this page around;
To frank at once to everlasting fame
Imperial Huggins' death-defying name;
Syllips, ye that lead, the salient hairs among,
In steen array, your tardy marching throng,
Pierce, with keen nibs, the prurient folds of skin,
And suck your gory nurture from within!
You abrupt anaxoid, and trembled at the sight,
When, enob in hand, stern Huggins' rick'd to light—
Beh'd the long nose, the trembling whiskers snout,
Strapped his keen blade, and shav'd the subject throat.
Lo, in hi' hall the matchless shaver stands,
The keen steel glistering in his technic hands;
High round his head the fragrant vapours bend,
And hills of soap in airy froth ascend,
John Bids and Emperours grip upon the wall,
Dogs war with cats, and wives with husbands brawl,
Thick round the room expectant phizzes wait,
Shake the long head, or mourn the naked pate,
Then back near wife, than Jove's fulminous flame,
The well strap'd edge, with beard-subduing aim,
The pilose ranks unflinching seek the ground,
And beard and father snobe confus'd around.
So when ten pins in dazzling order bend,
A chief in front, in rear a marshal'd band;
The well-form'd phalanx spreads its angles wide,
And stern defiance scowls on every side,
Then urged with skill, the bounding boards along,
The rotund Buns rushes on the Throng,
The staggering Banks confess unknown alarms,
While Gravitation drags them to his arms,
Each pin expiring gives his friend a launch,
And men and generals tumble in a lurch!
So erst two brethren climb'd the cloud-capp'd hill,
Blindfold Jack and long-lamented Jill,
Snatched from the lead found his crystal store,
And the full pail with hearts exuding bore.
No grog was there their senses to assail,
Pure was the wine and pure the painted pail—
But, ah, no lack of grog, no pail so neat,
Could hold their heads, or fix their faulting feet—
Pate broken Jack came blundering down the hill,
And, blundering after, came the pail and Jill.
O'er Beauty's tresses next the shaver rears
His high imperial tongue, and glittering shears,
Winds, with nice kink, the convoluted curl,
The tain hairs yielding to his fearful twirl,
Waves his bright blades, and leads with airy grace,
The spiral ringlets down the lovely face;
Scissors and comb in rival radiance seen,
Dispense o'erpow'ring lustre round the scene.
Should some huge lens from northern legs descend,
Polar hell's hot focus on the orb of noon,
Not half so bright the encountering blaze would rise,
As springs from Huggins' shears, and Della's eyes.
Imperial Shaver! on thy laurel'd brow
Roses shall bloom, and wigs spontaneous grow,
On slaughter'd beads thy airy Throne shall rise,
And piles of whiskers lift thee to the skies;
There as thou sit'st in Fashion's cause sublime,
Shaking thy razor-strap o'er many a clime,
Each rival barber at thy shrine shall bow,
Till Time expire, and beads forget to grow.

CRITICISM.

FROM THE PORT FOLIO.

"SPAIN COMMERCE AND FREEDOM."

A NATIONAL ODE,

Sung by Mr. Cavendish, at the new Exchange Coffee-house, Boston, at a public festival given in honour of the Spanish patriots, by the citizens of Boston, January, 24, 1809.

Written by ROBERT TREAT PAINE, JUN.

"ARMI VIROQUE CANTO."

"What a plague ails the man," quoth friar John,
Start, staring mad, or bewitched on my word. What
O'er his has he swallowed, that he thus peppers it
away in this maggoty cranio vein?
"Then Pantagruel chid friar John and said,
"B. Ad monk, forbear, this I'll assure ye,
"Proceeds all from poetic fury," &c.

When the sage Pantagruel and his merry companions, after touching at Pope Figine Land, the Isle of Odds, and divers other places, not laid down in the maps, came at last to the oracle of the Holy Bottle; they forthwith became grievously possessed with the spirit of fustian, and began to rhyme inconsequently out of all reason.

Whoever reads the colossal ode, which, for our sins, or rather the sins of the author, we have undertaken to dissect, will naturally conclude that our gigantic poet had just returned from a visit to this same oracle, and became in like manner, to use the words of the renowned Pantagruel, inspired with poetic fury. The poem is undoubtedly written in the true spirit of an oracle, tho' not that of the Delphic God, for it is sublime, prophetic, and unimpeachable.

The author bounces in upon us like a doughy stage king, with a most alarming blast of trumpets,
"Sound the trumpet of fame!"

A man whose imagination was apt to gambol a little, might here fancy he saw the poet pushing in a queer, bewiskered, little High-Dutch trumpeter before him, mounted on a Canada poney, and ordering him, under pain of losing his long queue, to "sound the trumpet of fame," and demand the attention of the whole universe to what he is going to say or sing. Let us hear what they have got to say, for

truly such poet and trumpeter seem to be set up to the music, with combats and inspiration.

Sound the trumpet of Fame! small that "satan scorn"
Bullies a war against Terence's war;
From her couch springs in almost regenerate Spain,
Like a Giant refresh'd by the shower of Ages!
From the call where she lay,
She leaps in array,
Like Ajax to die in the "Sea of the day!"

And swears from pollution her empire to save,
Her flag and her Altars, her home and her grave!

Well blown little trumpeter! or rather well-sung great poet—great let us call him, for he conquered us—we mean our groggers. In this verse we are informed that Spain is regenerated, like a hope-giant, who being overtaken in liquor perhaps, (for your giants were huge drinkers) fell asleep some hundred years ago, and not having the good fortune to be awakened, like Polyphemus, with a red-hot poker, continued to snore away most lustily till the other day. Being at length, however awakened, he starts up, rubs his eyes, or rather his eye—your genuine giants having but one peep—yawns, stretches, and stares with gigantic astonishment, on being solemnly assured by his poet Laureat that he has "slumbered for ages." But before we can well digest this giant story, up rides the little trumpeter, who flatly contradicts the poet, maintaining that Spain is not like a giant, but like Ajax, who being a brave man, and true-muddy-sorained hero, desperately rushes forth from his cell—(how he got thara the Lord knows)—determined to "die in the face of the day," on purpose, that people might see what a handsome corpse he would make. We were at first in pain lest this dispute might occasion a breach between the poet and the trumpeter; but our fears soon subsided on seeing the former fly off at a tangent, in pursuit of a "standard," which "like a comet," is to "consume while it lightens the neighbouring sky." Candour, however, and a high respect for well-born and legitimate comparison, oblige us to declare, that both the trumpeter and poet are mistaken in supposing that Spain is either "like a giant" or "like Ajax." We think we see her rise up indignant at this disgraceful charge, and exclaim in the language of Giuntdalca, "We are no giants, we are GIANTERS!" As to her being like Ajax, the resemblance is nought, unless it can be proved that in imitation of that valiant blockhead, she has exchanged garments with the redoubted Hector Bonaparte, and is now vapouring about in a pair of his breeches—a thing as impossible as for the aforesaid Giuntdalca to wear the breeches of Tommy Thumb.

The poet, it would seem, having drawn a little more inspiration from the oracular bottle, seizes the little trumpeter by the leg, and probably in revenge for daring to differ with him, fairly oversets him in the dirt, so that we hear no more of him, through the whole course of the poem. The poet then mounts the Canada poney, buries his spurs in his side, and scurries to the very crack-scull'd top of Parnassus, where he beholds such sights as baffle all the wonders of Mahomet's dream, or the vision of Don Quixote in Montesino's cave.

"O'er her hills shee the daystar of glory advance!
Its beams warn her cliffs, and unfetter her fountains!
But a pestilent Planet it blazes on France!
A meteor of blood, thro' the mist of the mountains!
Like a dream in the air,
See the Pyrenees glare!
A castle of Fire—on a rock bleak and bare!"

As we never yet suspected Mr. Paine, or indeed any other Eastern luminary, of writing what neither he, or any body else, could possibly understand, we took uncommon pains to discover the mystic meaning of this alarming verse. But alas! for us, it was a perfect terra incognita, that eluded all our circumnavigations and we resigned it with a sigh of bitter despondency to the unconquerable industry of some future Dutch commentator, who being born in the region of fogs, may perhaps be able to grope thro' a mist, that to us is impenetrable. Such a medley of metaphorical confusion—such a desperate conflict of "stars," "planets," "meteors," and "castles of fire," each striving for the mastery of the poet's imagination, doubtless never yet was seen in literary warfare. Would that he had contented himself with his single "DAYSTAR," which is as much as one man can cleverly manage. He might then perhaps have kept his sanity a little longer, & saved us all the bitter yearnings we felt, on beholding the desolation of his brain by this intestine commotion of rebellious metaphors.

Notwithstanding the ever to be lamented obscurity that pervades this gigantic, and enormous little ode, we do the author the justice to believe he would have made it more clear if he could. Indeed he has spared no pains to oke out his struggling meaning, with dashes, pauses, italics, black-letter & capitals of all dimensions; not to mention a profusion of upstart notes of admiration, that like little militia corporals, flank his lines, and strut about with enormous feathers in their hats. We are always sad, when we see a hapless author under the necessity of dizening out his Muse with such vulgar ornaments; and when we first beheld the multitude of these sights thrown out to illuminate or to allure, we could not help arguing that the reader would fare like the traveller who is chegerd with the sight of a house of entertainment at a distance, but approaching, finds it empty & unfurnished, as the poet's lodging or the politicians' brain.

We shall quote one more specimen, not because it is much more unintelligible than the rest, but merely to show that what has been already selected, is not the accidental nodding of Homer, or the sudden frenzy of a combustible imagination, hurried for a moment by uncontrollable impulse beyond the sober meridian of reason, but the regular flow of the poet's genius, running through and pervading the whole poem.

"Bright Day of the World—dart thy lustre afar!
Free the SOUTH with thy heat—gild the SOUTH with thy splendour!
With thy glance light the TOUCH of REGENERATE WAR,
Till the dæmon'd EARTH effervesce and RE-GENERATE!
Through each zone may it thou roll,
Till thy beams at the pole,
Melt PHILOSOPHY'S ICE in the SEA of the SOUL!"

Bless us—what a volcanic verse we have here! and what a quantity of ashes, and pumice-stones, our poet heaves out of the crater of his imagination! Who, but fancies he beholds Mount Etna vomiting fire, and pouring from a dozen new openings, as ma-

traces of a new world, but indeed at that point a broad sea of the world, which among other words of atchievements, is a great Philosophy, in the Sea of the Soul." Heaven preserve the well-wounded poet's diaphragm of our good housewives—we fear many a one will rue that day! Whether there is any connection between the volcanic eruption of the poet, and that which happened at Mount Etna, we cannot say in March last, must be left to the curious in these matters; for our parts, we seriously advise Mr. Paine, who seems to contain a prodigious quantity of positive electricity, never in summer time, to be without a lightning rod fastened to his cap—& if it happens that he wears a cocked hat, by all means to have one erected on each corner.

The poet, as might reasonably be expected, goes out almost immediately after this tremendous explosion, sufficient in all conscience to exhaust the bowels of any volcano in the whole world, not excepting Etna, Hecla, or Robert Treat Paine. He writes but one more verse, at the end of which, being quite consumed, he quietly ascends to the clouds, like the caput mortuum of an old newspaper, or a dry leaf in a whirlwind.

Several reasons have prompted us to pay more than ordinary attention to this little production, which is secured to the author by copyright. Of course he has a right to all we can say on the subject. In addition to this, Mr. Paine is a gentleman of considerable reputation, at least in the enlightened part, which being the quarter whence the sun rises, is certainly a very respectable portion of the Union. His example, may therefore be in the highest degree dangerous to the youth of America, and his volcanic explosion, occasion many mischievous imitations, to the great annoyance of the good citizens of the U. States. In the happy and most enlightened city of New York, there is a law, which is however, never enforced, preventing the letting off of all manner of fireworks, the explosion of powder, and the firing of pop-guns; yet no sooner doth the famous Mr. De La Croix, exhibit at Vauxhall Garden his burning suns, bristling stars, hissing serpents, and crackling skyrockets, but all the little urchins in the town, straightway expend their pocket money in powder, and what with blowing up of hats, and other scurvy devices, occasion much mischief by frightening old women, horses, and militia officers. Thus, peradventure, might it have fared with the good citizens of Boston, who, seduced into an imitation of Mr. Paine's sublime eruptions of fancy, and fireworks, would henceforward have groined under the dominion of those direful evils which desolate the fertile fields of classic Italy, & at length been buried like Herculesuleum, under the burning lava of his brain, had we not thus opportunely stepped forward to warn them against so dire a misfortune.

Thus far, with the greatest good humour, and without a particle of prejudice against our poet, have we made ourselves merry with the tumid style of one of his most hasty effusions, which, we are confident, Mr. P. by no means considers as the only pledge of his power. He has written variously, & he has often written well, with much of the ardour of patriotism, and much of the enthusiasm of poetry. Our object is to warn him against the liberal use of that style, which, unhappily, is too fashionable among our brethren of New England—Let him invest some of his bold conceptions in the language of simplicity, perspicuity and grace, and he need not shrink from the scrutiny of Criticism.

STATE LEGISLATURE.

DEBATE

In the House of Commons of North-Carolina, on the second reading of a bill to provide for sinking the Paper Currency of this State. [The bill proposes to tax the Banks of Newbern and Cape-Fear two per cent per annum on their capital, to form a sinking fund, &c.]

[REPORTED FOR THE STAR.]
(Continued from page 3.)

MR. GASTON said when he first heard the motion of the gentleman from Wilmington, which he had no expectation of hearing made, he felt doubtful how to vote. He could see no reason why the Bank of Cape Fear should enjoy any exemption which was not permitted to the Bank of Newbern. The clamours which had originated in ignorance and malignity had assailed with equal virulence both institutions; and since they were alike objects of the same hate, they should oppose their united front to breast the storm. But when he considered the unconstitutionality of the clause proposed to be stricken out (though this objection was by no means confined to that part of the bill) he felt willing, he thought it only liberal and just that it should obtain an exemption from the impending evils of persecution.

He had the honour to represent a commercial place. Many of the inhabitants of the town were interested in the Bank—they had delegated him to defend its and their interests. Some of them were Directors of this Bank, but he knew them so well for their strict honour, unimpeachable integrity, and undeviating candour, that he was willing they should stand alone in the enquiry, knowing that after the severest scrutiny they would come out whitened by the investigation. He had no wish that Cape Fear should lessen the force of the attack, by compelling it to participate in the enquiry; as it wishes it, let it be dismissed.

[Here Mr. Gaston expatiated at considerable length in a style of severity towards Mr. Drew, which, as satisfactory explanations have taken place, we deem it improper to publish. He concluded the remarks which we omit by saying, that he should vindicate the Banks by exposing the want of accuracy in the charges which had been made against them. Mr. G. then proceeded.]

The first fact in which the gentleman is so totally mistaken is the amount of capital of the two Banks. He asserted the stock of the Bank of Cape Fear to be greater than that of Newbern by fifty thousand dollars. Now he would

think it upon him to answer, without fear of contradiction, for it was notoriously true, that the stock of the Bank of Cape Fear was only one hundred thousand dollars, while that of Newbern was 200,000.—I must, said Mr. G., confess my astonishment that the gentleman who introduced the Bill into the House, who ought to be possessed of some information, and who indeed gave the House reason to expect that he was preparing to illumine it by the display of his knowledge, should have manifested such an entire want of information on the three points upon which he has spoken; and if it is a curious coincidence of blunders, that while he is representing the Cape Fear Bank to have a capital of fifty per cent greater than the Newbern Bank, it has in reality a capital of one hundred per cent less.

The second fact upon which the gentleman has undertaken to speak is, what there once existed an agreement between the Banks of Newbern and Cape Fear to discount each other's notes, but that lately the Bank of Cape Fear, greatly to its honour, had refused to do so.—Now, sir, said Mr. G. I take it upon me to assert that this is not the fact. I know it to be otherwise; and I speak with perfect confidence, as I speak with a full knowledge of the subject. I may say, however it may prejudice the cause I have undertaken to defend, that I am one of the Directors of the Newbern Bank. Mr. G. said though his interest in it was but small, yet the partialities of many of the Stockholders induced them to wish he would take upon himself that trust; that he had done so, & he had one cause to rejoice at the circumstance, as it enabled him to repel the slanders with which it had been assailed, from his own personal knowledge of its transactions. How the gentleman picked up his information, he would not pretend to say, but he supposed it must have been in his eccentric wanderings in the regions of fancy, or, as the gentleman himself would say, in his zig zag and devious track among the stars. But Mr. G. could easily explain the nature and extent of this understanding. It has, for mutual convenience and accommodation, been agreed and practised to discount each other's notes, and at certain stated periods to render to the other an account of the notes each had on hand, to exchange, and pay the balance in specie. This arrangement was made three years ago, and it exists still.—As to the disagreement of which the gentleman speaks, no such disagreement has ever taken place.

Another charge which the gentleman has thought proper to make is of such a nature that it really merits no reply; but as I have noticed two of his assertions, some few were I to pass this over unnoticed, might, possibly, however improbable, deem my silence an admission of the fact.

It is unfortunately the case, and this House have but too often witnessed it, that some men's understandings are so fashioned that they will not only believe without reason, but go further and believe what is absolutely repugnant to reason. It requires no ordinary stretch of credulity to believe in a rumour so utterly improbable, as that men of such distinguished character and standing in society, should stoop to the low and pitiful practice of shaving their own notes. It is, however, an assertion bottomed on rumour, and never has and never can receive even a colour of probability or proof. But since the assertion has been made, it may be required to oppose to it the assertion of one intimately acquainted with the transactions of the Bank, that no such thing ever has been practised by the Bank, or by any of the Directors of it, or by any other person by its direction, for its benefit; and I here pawn my honour that my assertion is correct. I will go further, and without hazarding the imputation of being an egotist, for I desire to be particularly understood as excepting myself altogether from the application of the least share of the observations that I am about to make, that the characters of the Directors are altogether above suspicion of the least deviation from the strict line of propriety or honour. You have among them aged veterans of the Revolution, whose wounds and scars bear lasting testimony of their devotion to their country.—You have merchants who have grown into wealth by the same means with which they have diffused wealth over your country, and whose high reputation has been consolidated by the test of years, and whose interests are now identified with your soil. You have planters who do honour to their high station in society, and whose reputation it would be in the highest degree uncharitable for a moment to doubt. You have Directors selected by yourselves, by your agents, who deservedly rank among your best and worthiest citizens. Shall we for an instant indulge a suspicion that would deteriorate from their well-earned fame. No—every honest feeling of the heart revolts indignant at the idea. But I cannot dismiss the subject without once more repeating that my own knowledge, enables me positively to contradict the assertion that has been made.—It is not so.

[Here a member interrupted Mr. G. and observed that it was not in order to speak of the Newbern Bank, when the question before the House was relative to the Bank of Cape Fear.

MR. GASTON was aware that it was out of order, provided those who had gone before him had been confined to their proper limits; but he was led from the question immediately before the House by following the course which others had thought proper to pursue. He merely combated their assertions, and having done that he had now nothing more to add.

Debate to be continued.