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From the Knickerbocker. A PEEP AT WASHINGTON. A LEAF FROM THE JOURNAL OF AN AMERICAN TOURIST.

"I come to fetch you to the capitol." Undoubtedly, the point to which all eyes are turned, during a certain portion of the year, is the city of Washington. The big guns of the nation are there; and there we have batteries of eloquence, and oratorical thunder, and, in these high times, flashes of lightning.

I was dropped at Gadsby's. It was yet morning; and the flags, with their stars, were waving over both wings of the majestic capitol, indicating that Congress was now under full way. I ascended the hill, whence proceeds so much noise, and smoke, and confusion, and law.

My heart beat high at the prospect of beholding the assembled wisdom of the nation; and I did not long pause to look at the magnificent grounds around the capitol; the strong built terrace; nor the naval monument, floating, as it were, in an artificial reservoir, supplied by an ever-running fountain.

"And is this," said I, "the House of Representatives? Those men, there, with hats on, buzzing and chatting, whispering and laughing, reading newspapers, hemming and coughing—are they the law makers of our twenty four States?"

"Sir," said I, "and now in a voice, like the wry-necked life." The Speaker pricks up and yields his ears: "Sir, I call the attention of the House to the important fact." By this time, unless the orator is a favorite, the Speaker's head is again dropped, and the yawning members, it may be, have fallen into a quiet sleep.

M'Duffie, with a snowy head and a Roman nose, is Burgess, the 'bald eagle of the House,' as he has been called; a man adroit at all sorts of weapons. He resembles one of the old soldiers; he fights on foot or on horse, with heavy or light arms, a battle-axe or a spear.

But I must pause—for what a mass of representatives are here! What singular samples of our vast country! Here sits a Pennsylvanian, and there a Missourian, educated among buffaloes and nurtured in the forest, as intimate with the passes of the Rocky Mountains, as the cit with Broadway;

What a people we are! What a country is this of ours! How wide in extent—how rich in production—how various in beauty! I have asked in my travels for the West, in the streets of the Queen of the West—a fairy city, which but as yesterday was a wilderness.

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He lives in the Senate like an embodied abstraction. He takes Clay's jibes, and Webster's thrusts; as the ghost of Cressie received the embraces of Aeneas. He heeds them not. He leans back his head—piles one leg upon the other—and sits as if he were a pleasant sculptured image, destined for that niche all his life.

That massive forehead—those prodigious eyes—those heavy shoulders—that iron-bow frame, point out Webster. How like Satan himself he can look, and what a malicious smile! He talks as if he were telling a plain story; not enthusiastic, but concise and clear.

That slender-built man, apparently about fifty years of age, in a blue coat, with bright buttons, a frizzly head, and an eye like a hawk, erect and earnest, with mouth partly open—that is Calhoun. He is not an orator—yet few command so much attention—none more. His voice is bad. His gesticulation is without grace.

And here let me remark, that I should like the Senate better, if it were not such a prodigious snuff-box, and the snuff-takers were less numerous. "Give me your snuff-box," says Clay to Prentiss;—and "yours" and "yours,"—and thus a snuff-box runs a journey for a day, from Senator to Senator, without ten minutes' rest.

He gesticulates all over. The nodding of his head, hung on a long neck, his arms, hands, fingers, feet, and even his spectacles and pocket-handkerchief, aid him in debate.

That is Forsyth, with his arms a-kimbo, head thrown back, spectacles on, laughing at what somebody has to say, who is speaking over the way. I cannot describe his figure, but it is a handsome one. He is all ease and composure; is never thrown off his guard.

That tall, red-headed man, with a large, manly figure, and full face, is Preston, the new member from South Carolina. He looks as if he had long lived under the rays of a Southern sun. Preston is sui generis. He talks poetry—all in rich array, and gorgeous sentences.

Felix Grundy is a happy man. There is not a more jovial, benevolent face in Christendom, than he wears. He was an actor upon the stage of public life, long before my remembrance.

Leigh is a new-comer from Virginia; a round, thick-built man, with a little sharp eye, that snaps at times like a spark of fire. He is something of a lion in the National Menagerie.

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And I would teach the Southron, likewise, some of them, that stairs were not stars, and clear weather not clar weather. And I would say too, that although mighty smart, and a mighty smart chance, mighty big, and mighty little, was excellent "nigger" dialect, yet it was not so refined, as an orator might use.

Go with me, for a single moment, into Washington society. I can discourse little about splendor, magnificent suites of rooms, and gorgeous furniture; but if I had a woman's eye, which sees every thing, and marks every thing, I could make out quite a picture. A President's Levee is a delicious affair. What odd amalgamation of character! What strange groups of men and women!

Master of a few Spanish phrases, I used them in addressing some words of comfort to the ill-starred girl. They were to her as the song of the summer bird, carried to despair. Her sole return was a faintly recurring plaint, that seemed to say, "Let my soul depart in peace."

The Horrors of War.—The harrowing incident related in the following extract, was but one of the multitude, which occurred at the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo. It is taken from "Recollections of the war in Spain," by Lieut. Kennedy.

Passing through a narrow street with two Scotch Sergeants, I heard the shriek of a female. Looking up we saw at an open lattice, by the light of a lamp she bore, a girl of about sixteen, her hair and dress disordered, the expression of her olive countenance marked by anguish and extreme terror.

them to the ground, and penetrated into the chamber.

The room wherein we stood, had been devoted to the festivities of a retired family, of moderate fortune. It contained the remains of those descent elegancies that properly appertained to the Strangers's apartment in a dwelling of the middle class.

On investigation, the sergeants found the dead body of a domestic, whose fusil and dagger, showed that he had fought for the roof which covered him. His beard had been burned in derision with gun-powder. One of his ears was cut off and thrust into his mouth.

Master of a few Spanish phrases, I used them in addressing some words of comfort to the ill-starred girl. They were to her as the song of the summer bird, carried to despair.

I mentioned to her attendants to separate her from the beloved source of her unutterable sorrow. They could not comply with the application of force bordering upon violence.

Affliction, thou hast long been my yoke fellow! Thou hast smitten to the core of my being with a frequent and a heavy hand; but I bless an all-wise and all-merciful God, who tries that he may temper us, that I have not a second time been doomed to witness aught so crushing to the soul, so overwhelming in woe, as the situation of the young creature over whom I watched on the baleful midnight of our victory.

She had battled with a might exceeding her sex's strength, against nameless indignities, and she bore the marks of the conflict. Her maiden attire was rent into shapeliness; her brow was bruised and swollen; her abundant hair, almost preternaturally black, streamed wildly over her bosom, revealing in its interstices fresh waning streaks of crimson, which confirmed the tale of the ultra-barbarian outrage; her cheek had borrowed the same fatal hue from the neck of her slaughtered parent, to whom, in her insensibility, she clung with "love strong as death."

Through the means adopted, she gave token of revival. Her hand had retained a small gold cross, and she raised it to her lips. The clouded lids were slowly expanded from her large dark eyes. A low agonizing moan followed. I hastened to present the wine. In the act, the mantilla fell from the arm which conveyed the glass.

Valuable discovery in the Fine Arts.—Mr. Mudie, well known as an able literary compiler, has brought out a popular work on "the feathered tribes of the British Island," in which amongst other attractive features, the Vignettes on the Title Pages are novelties, being the first successful specimen (says Mr. Mudie) of what may be called Polychromatic Printing, or printing in "many colors" from wooden blocks.