

The Asheville Messenger.

LIFE IS ONLY TO BE VALUED AS IT IS USEFULLY EMPLOYED.

VOLUME I.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

(From the Knickerbocker.)

Reminiscences of the late War.

About the middle of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fourteen, the inhabitants of a little village, not far from the mouth of the Genesee river, were thrown into a tumult of alarm, by the appearance of a British fleet under Sir J. L. Yoo, off their shores. In the general consternation and confusion, various expeditions were "proposed, rejected, suggested again," for ridding themselves of their unwelcome visitor; some were in favor of immediate fortification of their dwellings; others thought it more easy to prevent their landing, than to defend their families after they had landed. The proposition was at last suggested by a timid citizen, "to retire," and save what they could by hurried flight. But stoutly and manfully the good people rejected this shameful proposition, and put their heads together to concert a plan more agreeable to their sturdy patriotism.

During this time of doubt and uncertainty, it was a moving spectacle to see the "tremblings of distress" which many of the good people exhibited, as the ships of the fleet slowly neared the shore. Mothers shrieked and clasped their infants to their bosoms in fearful anxiety; the little girls cried, while the larger ones looked to their sweethearts for protection in this hour of peril. These latter again bluntly declared that they would not run, but would "stick by and see fair play." "Let the redcoats come on, we'll meet 'em!" One gallant, exasperated at seeing the affliction of his lady-love, swore that the British were a "set of rascally, heathenish, ruffianish, good for nothing under God's heavens but to scare women and children." The more sagacious saw in this move the destruction of their stores, and feared the result.

Determined at last not to yield without a show of fight, the militia were assembled, men and boys, in all three hundred strong, and occupied an elegant position near the lake where they could see all the manœuvres of the fleet. Presently a boat was seen to put off from the commodore's ship. Now let the valiant soldiers nerve themselves for the contest! But stop!—It is a flag of truce! Now our friends are in a worse dilemma than before, being entirely guiltless of any knowledge of military or naval etiquette, or indeed of military affairs in general, save the regular militia drill. What a predicament! Nobody seemed to know what to do, but every body was of opinion, that something must be done. After some deliberation, hastened undoubtedly by the rapid approach of the boat, Lieutenant B. was delighted to lead a file of men down to the water's edge, and find out what was wanted.

As this lieutenant is a conspicuous character in this reminiscence, it may not be amiss to give the reader a description of his person, in the words of a backwoodsman: "He was a great favorite among the girls in the village, and had enjoyed a name in the military line, having commanded a company of volunteers in New Hampshire, before he emigrated to the West. A shrewd yet reckless disposition marked all his actions. A man couldn't get round him, no more than he could choke a lion, and yet he was as free, open-hearted a chap as ever kissed a pretty girl afore she knew it. I've seen him manœuvring the soldiers too, when Captain Shute used to be at the widow's, a Saturday evening, and couldn't attend to the military exercises." In short, the gallant lieutenant was a universal favorite, particularly among the ladies, who regarded him as their especial guardian and champion in these troublous times.

Putting himself at the head of his men, the worthy lieutenant marched rapidly down the hill, and forming near the water's edge, awaited the next movement in stern silence. Indeed, he afterwards said that he wasn't so very sure but the fellows in the boat wanted to play 'em a trick, and if ever there was a time when he felt great responsibility on him, it was then. He did not wait long before he was hailed by the British messenger: "Is that the way you receive a flag of truce? It is generally the custom to meet without arms on such occasions."

"Wal!" said the lieutenant, still maintaining his soldier-like position, without turning his head, "I didn't know but you might cut up some devilry or other with our people; howsundever, as you seem to be pretty peaceable, well-disposed, well-behaved sort of a fellow, my men may right about face a little ways. So turning on his heel a la militaire, he ordered his men to retire a few rods, and hold themselves in readiness for further action. By this time, the boat was close in shore, when the Yankee interrupted him:

"I say, hello, mister! you don't come on this ground, till I know what you're after! So, jest stay in the boat, and say your say out!"

The Englishman, perceiving that it would be useless to oppose this appeal, resumed his position in the boat, and declared his mission, which was to demand a surrender of the stores that were concealed there or thereabouts, on penalty of instant destruction in case of refusal. Our officer replied:

"I don't know about that are last part of the business; but I will consult my superiors, and get their opinion on the subject."

Turning to his men, he ordered them to wait, and not "let that chnp come ashore till he come back; when," added he, addressing the officer, "I'll report progress and let you know how we conclude to act. So saying, he marched up the hill, and disappeared among the crowd. After some minutes conversation with the older inhabitants, and a few young leaders in the little army, he resumed his march down the hill, and placing himself in front of his men who had awaited his return, agreeably to orders, he delivered himself of the following reply to the demand of the British:

"I am ordered by the General to tell you that we shall keep the stores, until the king shall send a force sufficient to take them away. So, if you want 'em badly, you must get 'em the best way you can." Some what astonished at the reception, he had met with, and seeing nothing very inviting in the countenance of the sturdy Yankee, the servant of the King gave the word to his men, and quickly returned to his ship.

While these occurrences were taking place, the crowd on the hill were suddenly dispersed, and the militia, in regular order, filed off into the brushwood, and marching around to the right, appeared on the hill, in sight of the fleet, but in a different order, so as to present the appearance of a new company just arrived from another quarter. These again in turn filed off, and immediately another body of men came directly in front, filed off and disappeared like the former. These manœuvres were repeated again and again; and the motley uniform of the citizens, with a noise of drum and fife, contributed not a little to the deception.

After this had contributed a considerable time, the lieutenant remarked, probably being somewhat fatigued with his arduous duties, that "the Britishers didn't seem in any hurry about their stores, and he reckoned that they would take time to consider the mattersome, afore they tried it!" And so it proved; for the British commander deliberated a long time before making any apparent movement; and after firing a few guns, with no other effect than to awaken the echoes of the dense forest, which skirted the lake, and elicited a few screams from the females, he sailed leisurely away, to the no small gratification of the Americans, who feared for the success of the fleet in the course of the afternoon quieted entirely the doubts of the most timorous, and they returned to their dwellings, sincerely thanking that Providence, which had protected them from the destruction that had threatened them.

The evening was spent in joyous festivity, and the agents of this great "family" were by no means forgotten in the general joy. Lieutenant B. was the hero of the day, and nobly bore his honors, gallantly repaying the reward of his labors in the smiles of the ladies whom he had protected. It is even asserted that he was seen to steal various kisses from the lips of these pretty charmers in the course of the evening. G. H. M.

ONE VERY FINE PASSAGE.—Disgusted on one occasion by the egotism and conceit of a preacher, who, with a mixture of self-complacency and impudence, challenged his admiration of a sermon, Mr. Hall, who possessed strong powers of satire which he early learned to repress, was provoked to say: "Yes, there was one very fine passage sir." "I am rejoiced to hear you say so; which was it?" "Why, sir, it was the passage from the pulpit into the vestry."—Evening Post.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR MARRIAGE.—No woman ought to be permitted to enter upon the duties of matrimony without being able to make a shirt, mend a coat, bake a loaf of bread, roast a joint of meat, broil a steak, make a pudding, and manufacture frocks and et ceteras for little responsibilities. If only those possessed of these qualifications were permitted to become wives, how many years do you think reader, it would take a good arithmetician to calculate the number of old maids.

INGENUOUS EXCUSE OF A SCHOOL-BOY.—A country school master once having the misfortune to have his school house burnt down, was obliged to remove to a new one, when he reprimanded one of his boys, who misspelled a number of words, by telling him he did not spell as well as when he was in the old school house. "Well, thome how or other," said the urchin with a smile, "I can't etackly git the name of that new thook-houth."

COULDN'T SPELL IT.—At a coroner's inquest, the coroner signed his name, and then handed the paper to the jury to do the same. "Observing that one of the gentlemen detained it longer than he judged necessary, he inquired the reason, when the foreman exclaimed, "Dang it, I've done it at last, but I've been so long used to sign my name, which is Benjamin, Ben, that I have forgot how to go through with it." All the jurymen having signed, the coroner on looking over their names, discovered that the person who had expressed himself puzzled had "done it at last," as he said, by writing "Benjamin."

(From the New York Times and Star.)

A Dialogue. Between a Debtor and his Creditors.—Sympathy, Justice, Revengful, Hard Heart, and Small Soul.

Debtor. Gentlemen, I suppose you are all aware of the nature of the business which has induced me to call you together at this time. It is one of the most trying events of my life; and, until very recently, one which I had the least reason to fear ever being called upon to experience. But, mortifying and deeply to be regretted as it is, I have found myself utterly unable to prevent it. I have prepared a statement of my situation for your examination. You will perceive that I have a surplus of \$10,000. I have a good set of customers, and, I believe, with a little indulgence, I can pay all I owe, and still keep along in my business. It is for you, however, to say what my fate shall be. Here is a statement of my affairs.

ASSETS.	
Cash	\$30,500
Goods	15,000
Bills receivable (good)	56,000
Do. (suspended and doubtful)	26,000
Do. (bad)	2,000
Store, furniture and fixtures	0,500
	\$100,000

Liabilities, \$90,000
Of which \$50,000 will fall due within sixty days.

Sympathy. We have examined your statement, and shall be pleased to hear any proposition you have to make.

Debtor. I think if I could have an extension of six, twelve or eighteen months, I could continue my business, and collect enough to meet all my payments promptly at maturity. This course I prefer; but if not acceptable to you, then I will surrender all my property to you, or I will pay you fifty cents on the dollar, cash, and secure to be paid twenty five cents on the dollar more, at the end of twelve months; these two last propositions are upon the condition that you give me a full discharge.

Hard heart. I do not know how other gentlemen feel in this matter, but for myself, I am not going to be humbugged in this way at all; I pay for the goods I buy, and I am determined to be paid for those I sell.

Revengful. That is right. I have worked for other people long enough, and I will do it no longer. This debt shall be paid in full, and that, too, at maturity, or I will "put on the screws" to the full extent of the law—yes, and until paid, I will keep them on, and will make it a condition of my Will, that my heirs shall do the same, until the latest generation.

Justice. I cannot see any occasion for the indulgence of so much bitterness of feeling towards this man. His previous character and business habits are too well known to all, to justify such treatment; either of his propositions is sufficient to satisfy me of his disposition to do all he can to promote our interests; and I am confident that in endeavoring to carry out the latter one, he will even involve his friends by so doing.

Sympathy. No doubt of that at all. I am sure his offers are better than his estate will justify him in making. At all events, I am willing to accept of either of them; yes, I will do even better—I will take fifty cents on the dollar for my claim, and give a full and final discharge. I feel that the times through which we have recently passed, should admonish us to be liberal—one towards another; the proper enquiry is not who has failed? but it is, who has been so fortunate as to escape the general calamity.

Small Soul. I don't want to be side with the man. (Takes the debtor behind.) Now if I will agree to come into the measures, won't you try to secure the balance some way? You can do it secretly you know, eh? There is Hard heart and Revengful, are old acquaintances of mine, and I think I can influence them to come into the arrangement; only see how much to your interest it will be.

Debtor. Am I to infer then, from what has been said, that no settlement can be effected? I feel very anxious that something definite should be done; I am too young to give up all hopes of ever bettering my condition; the misfortune which has overtaken me has not been brought about by extravagance, speculation and neglect of business; I have indulged in none of these. It is owing only to those disappointments in business to which all who give credit are liable, and against which the most prudent cannot wholly guard.

Revengful. If you are so very anxious to settle, let your friends come forward and assist you.

Debtor. My father gave me \$20,000 with which I commenced business. That he will lose rather than my creditors shall suffer; but he is unable to do more. My only brother will have to mortgage his property to enable me to fulfil the proposition made to you this day; and will have to rely solely on my future success in business for his recompense and reward. Can you ask more?

Hard heart. Well, Sympathy and Justice are willing to compromise their claims, why not do so? You and your friends can then pay us in full.

Debtor. No! sir. What I do for one, I do for all. Cruelty shall never have occasion through me to triumph over kindness. "Dear as freedom is, and in my heart's just estimation prized above all price, I had rather be myself the slave, and wear the bonds," than be guilty of wilful crime and base ingratitude.

Justice. We may as well adjourn first at last. It is evident that we can come to no agreement in this matter, by longer deliberation. When gentlemen receive their dividends, by the slow and ruinous process of settlement under an assignment, I trust they will be convinced of their folly and injustice this day. But, however much I may regret the result of our deliberations, I am free to confess, that I am not in the least disappointed. I have been in business in this city for many years, and during that time have attended many meetings of creditors; and the instances have been very rare, where any agreement has been entered into between creditors, unless the debtor was known or believed to be a dishonest or profligate man. The result of this meeting has confirmed more fully, the opinions I have for some time entertained of the necessity and importance of a national Bankrupt Law. I am more than ever persuaded, that it is by this means alone, that justice will be done to an honest but unfortunate debtor, and the interest and wishes of one creditor be not sacrificed, by the avaricious desires or personal pique of another; I am far from believing that any man's blood and bones should be made liable for the payment of his debts. I look upon a debtor somewhat in character of an agent. To the debtor the creditor entrusts the care and management of his property. The inducement to do this (aside from gain) is predicted upon his responsibility of character or property; and instead of fixed salary for his services, (in which case the whole profits of the business transaction would belong to the employer) he is charged with an advance on the original cost of the goods, and has full liberty to devote to his own use and benefit, the profits arising from such traffic, and is accountable to the creditor, only for the amount of his invoice. And the fact, that his own personal interest depends upon his success, is supposed to be so far a guarantee for good conduct, that a discretionary management is allowed him, to act according to the dictates of his own judgment.

As agent, with stipulated compensation, and having no direct interest in the matter, he acts under the instructions of his employer, and is only made liable, and subject to penalty by disobedience to his instructions. So, also, the debtor, if he be unfortunate, and guilty of no fraud or dishonesty, should only be liable for a faithful surrender of all his effects into the hands of his creditor. In either case, the creditor, or employer, takes the risk of business; and strict justice and humanity, give power over the person or liberties of the debtor, or agent, only for a dereliction of duty.

Hard heart. Yes, if you was law-maker, we should have fine times. Every scamp in christendom would get our goods, "burst up," when it suited his convenience, and after placing his property in the hands of some kind friends for safe-keeping, take the advantages of your bankrupt law, and then tell his creditors to "whistle for their pay."

Justice. No, my friends; you wrong me, and do injustice to your own understanding. I would regret extremely, to advocate any measures that would induce our shrewd merchants to trust "every scamp in christendom with their goods," and equally so, any measures that might enable such men to escape the penalties due to their crimes. Such, however, are not the consequences which would result from a bankrupt law. On the contrary, it would protect us from both these evils. It would inspire in creditors greater caution in relation to whom they trusted. More regard would then be had to the personal worth and qualifications of those who might apply for credit, and less dependence upon the names of endorsers and other friends.

The effect of this plainly would be a salutary restraint, and the community at large would be less often afflicted by a series of disastrous failures. By the passage of this benevolent law, the general welfare of our country would be greatly enhanced, calling into lively exercise the services of more than half a million of her most talented and energetic citizens, and still vaster amount of auxiliaries, dependent upon them; by it, the interests of religion and morality would be promoted,—enabling these hundreds and thousands of their best friends and most liberal supporters, to come to the aid of the church, and the various Public Societies and Institutions, whose works of love and charity are known and felt throughout the land, and which serve to elevate us in the estimation of all foreign nations; it would exercise a powerful moral influence upon the community by destroying the necessity for resorting to those unworthy shifts and expedients for a living, to which, in the present emergency, this host of unfortunate men are driven; it would afford to all, that personal liberty—the freedom of intercourse between the States, which the fathers of our constitution saw to be so necessary in their day, and of which so many are now deprived; it would obliterate the stain upon our nation's honor, by aiding to remove the imputation of using less humanity towards her honest insolvents, than many countries in monarchical Europe,—in fine, who can estimate the advantages, both public and private, which would result from the passage of a judicious bankrupt law? Like a thing of magic, it works a thousand ways unseen, the good of its possessor.

Revengful. I feel the force of your words. But though compelled to admit their truth, and desirous of securing to the

country the many benefits which would result from such a measure, I could not consent that those men, who have forfeited their obligations to me, shall ever be discharged, and allowed to run another race of imposition and fraud.

Sympathy. I envy not the happiness of any man whose heart is the abode of such feelings as dictated your last expressions. Searched his conscience, blind his judgment, hard his heart, who is willing to appear before the world in the character of an oppressor. You are willing by your own admission, to forego all hopes of remuneration for your losses, deprive your friends and the country of the same, and all for what? Why, merely to gratify a vindictive and unfeeling disposition. When I look around upon the hundreds and thousands of our unfortunate citizens who commenced their career in life with equal prospects of success as ourselves, and behold them now bowed down to the very dust under a load of misfortune, from which they can never hope to escape, except through the provisions of a national bankrupt law, I feel that their lots have fallen them in unhappy places, and that the inheritance of those who seek to deprive them of relief, will be far different from that which results from doing unto others as they would that others should do unto them. FAIR PLAY.

Fair Play.

Parental Duties.

Scarcely a day passes over our heads without bringing to notice some circumstance, calculated to remind us of the incalculable importance of parental duties, and however much some persons may seem disposed to cavil about what those duties consist in, there are some so prominent and undeniable, as to strike at once, the mind of the most stolid observer. It may be considered by some as a subject out of place in the columns of a newspaper, but such will find an ample apology in the evidences of parental neglect which our streets daily and nightly present, where the most distressing instances of shamelessness are portrayed by the young. Depravity is hideous and distressing, let it be evidenced where it may, but hardened juvenile depravity is lamentable beyond description.

At some particular periods, among the Romans and Grecians, the duties of parents to their offspring was made a legal obligation; but with us it is simply a moral one. Yet the consequences of gross negligence are none the less to be dreaded upon that account; and what a load of moral responsibility is resting upon the heads of many parents in this community! Such of our highways and bye ways as are reeking with wickedness, and abounding with the consequences of despised restraint on the one hand, and undecided government on the other, evidence the large proportion which the young bear to the aggregate. There must be a cause for this lamentable fact, and one which should be sought out in time to counteract. The cause, in nine cases out of ten, is with the parent, upon whose care or negligence the temporal and eternal interests of his offspring depends, and were the cases to which we have incidentally referred traced to their beginning, we feel convinced that our assertion as to the cause, would be found to be correct.

Parents are too apt to let their children have their own way, and mingle with society promiscuously, and frequently to form associations that are alike imprudent and dangerous. The good old fashioned habit of parents knowing what associations their children formed, and giving such advice upon them as they deemed necessary, and of youth consulting their parents freely upon such topics, much as it is now out of use, is an excellent one, and should be generally observed. So long as youth are under the parental roof, and within that period which both law and custom has marked out as the beginning of "years of discretion," the responsibilities of parents are pending, and filial obedience is obligatory; and those who so far forget this fact as to let the young under their care run loose, where so ever an unrestrained inclination may lead them, and act just as they choose, are by their negligence none less hastening them into evil—perhaps to destruction.

What a fertile source of ruin too is idleness, and yet how little attention is paid in many instances to the habits of the young in this particular. Unemployed thoughts and indolent habits have been the ruin of hundreds who otherwise might have been valuable members of society; it is often the first step in vice, and not unfrequently terminates in the dungeon. We have often thought how many children might have been saved from a dissolute and perhaps criminal life, had their parents but paid proper attention to them while young; and nipped in the bud every propensity to loose or evil habit as it appeared, and by themselves setting a worthy and exemplary example. If this matter was more thoroughly taken into consideration and properly estimated, the habits of infamy in our city would be thinned of their victims, while the alms houses, criminal courts, and prisons, would have fewer subjects, and the people fewer paupers to support.

Habits contracted in youth are rarely eradicated in after life, and bad habits nursed under parental care are sure to bloom and flourish early, and bear their fruit long before the autumn of life. It is frequently remarked, however, that kind and indulgent parents are very liable to have wild and unruly children, even while every care has been taken to bring them up in an ex-

emplary manner. True, they may have wild and even worthless children, but it evidences nothing against the importance of care, for it mostly happens that it is the result of indulgence, and want of sufficient regularity and positiveness in their government, and we must be permitted to say, that it is contrary to the nature of causes and effects that judiciously cultivated good should produce evil.

Thousands have grown up under the care of neglectful parents, who have looked back with mingled feelings of regret and anger upon the guardians of their childhood, that so little care should have been taken to instil proper habits. Among them are those who were left to choose their own path, and in many they have chosen the right one through chance; others have been ruined by indulgences and mistaken kindness, and yet others by habits of indolence. What possible satisfaction then can either parent or child, who has reared or been reared thus, enjoy in a retrospect, when the after years of the latter have been embittered by the want of a right understanding, or negligent performing of duty on the part of the former? None, we fear.—Alex. Messenger.

Origin of Gunpowder.

The greatest improvement which the military service ever received, was in the invention of gunpowder, which as Polydote Virgil relates, was about the year 1430 of Christ, by Bartholodius Schwartz, a learned Franciscan monk, who having applied himself to chemical investigations, happened to mix together for some particular purpose, such ingredients as form the constituent part of gunpowder, viz: saltpetre, sulphur and charcoal. This composition, being put into a mortar, and covered with stone, happened to take fire, and blew off the stone at a considerable distance. The monk was a great surprisid and frightened; he recoiled himself, he soon discovered the particular uses to which it was so successfully applied. Schwarz first taught the use of it to the Venetians, in the year 1430, during the war with the Genoese; and it was employed by them in a piece called Fossin Clodiy, against Lawrence de Medicis; and all Italy complained of it as a manifest innovation on the rules of war.

But what contradicts this account, and shows gunpowder to be of an older date, is the fact mentioned by Peter Mexia, that the Moors being besieged in 1343 by Alphonus XI, king of Castile, he discharged a sort of iron mortar upon them, which made a noise like thunder. And this is seconded by Don Pedro; Bishop of Leon, who relates in his Chronicle of King Alphonus, that in a sea combat between the King of Tunis and the Moorish King of Seville, about five hundred years ago, those of Tunis had certain iron tubes, or barrels, with which they threw thunderbolts of fire. Du Cange adds, that there is a mention made of gunpowder in the Chambers of Accounts in France, as early as in the year 1358.

It appears that Roger Bacon knew the ingredients of which gunpowder is compounded one hundred years before Schwarz was born. That philosopher mentions the composition in express terms, in his treatise "De Nullitate Magin," published in 1316, about twenty-four years after the author's death. "You may," says he, "raise thunder and lightning at pleasure, by only taking sulphur, fire and charcoal; which singly have no effect, but mixed together, and confined in a close place, cause a noise and explosion greater than a clap of thunder."

THE UMBRELLA FIGHT.—It is quite natural for every one that carries a begged, borrowed, bought, or stolen umbrella in the streets, when the snow flakes are being whisked by the high wind in every direction, to hold it at an angle of about forty-five degrees, by which means he is unable to see what is approaching. It was quite amusing to observe two corpulent gentlemen, yesterday, during the storm, each of whom sported a large silk umbrella, come into violent contact at the corner of Fifth and Chestnut streets. It reminded us of "charging bayonet" by a squad of militia.

"What do you mean by running against me in such a manner?" said him from up street.

"What do you mean by smashing my umbrella, and knocking it into the shape of a cocked hat?" said him from down street.

"And what do you both mean by blocking up the gangway with your lubberly bud-rig," bellowed a couple of jack tars who were on a cruise, and did not well relish the idea of being forced to leave the sidewalk to pass. "Brail up your sky scrapers and give us a wide berth."

Another furious lunge at each other by the gentlemen with umbrellas.

"Beg pardon, but will you be kind enough to let me pass?" spoke a lady who appeared to be one of the fashionables, and withal was very pretty.

No signs of the umbrellas being removed, the sailors interfered and wrested them from the hands of the belligerents, to make a clear passage for the lady, and the "thank you, sirs," that she uttered as she cast one of her sweetest smiles upon them, was an ample reward for their interference.

The sailors gave another hitch to their trousers, took an extra quid of tobacco, and moved up street, while we, taking advantage of the opening that had been made, walked down quietly to our sanctum.