

Highland Messenger.

"Life is only to be valued as it is usefully employed."

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MISCELLANEOUS.

An hour in a powder-mill.

The Pittsburg Powder-mills are situated on the North bank of the Monongahela, about two and a half miles from the city. For the purpose of lessening the disasters attending explosions, the buildings cover a large extent of ground, and each of the many processes to which the material is subject before it is turned into the form with which the world is but too familiar, is performed in a separate building. These buildings are of stone, and are connected together by a railway.

But to begin at the beginning. Good gunpowder, such as Mr. Watson makes, requires good charcoal; young and sound wood is required; the water maple being the most desirable. Of these Mr. Watson has large plantations which yield what wood he requires, besides furnishing a considerable number of young trees to the citizens for ornamental purposes. There are also on the premises plantations for sycamore for hoop-poles, which yield at about 5,000 per year per quarter of an acre. From the plantations we went to the steam engine. And here the dread of fire, which habit has made a second nature to the powder maker, has suggested a number of ingenious contrivances to prevent its coming in contact with the "villainous saltpetre."

The smoke from the fires under the boilers is conveyed under ground some 3000 feet, and then by a chimney 60 feet high it is carried off, at a supposed safe distance. In directly the opposite direction the steam is carried a considerable distance under ground to the engine, which is distant from the place where the last processes—which by its aid the powder undergoes, some 7000 feet. The engine has 6 boilers attached to it, each 30 inches in diameter, and 22 feet 8 inches long, and consumes about 45 bushels of coal per day.

The wood is converted into charcoal by being burned in large cast iron retorts, and the gas that is evolved is conveyed by pipes into the fire under the retort by which one third of the fuel which would otherwise be necessary, is saved. The pyrologuous acid which the wood contains, and which this process evolves, it is the purpose of Mr. Watson to distil it into vinegar, as soon as his arrangements for that purpose can be effected.

We followed the charcoal into the "compounding house." Here, after having been crushed between rollers, it is placed in a large hollow cast iron globe, in which are a considerable number of small brass balls; these globes are made to revolve rapidly, which speedily reduces it to an impalpable powder. It is then put with the other ingredients, in the proportion of 15 of charcoal, 10 of sulphur, and 75 of nitre, into a "mixing barrel," which is made to revolve 36 times per minute.

From the mixing barrel it is taken to the "millhouse," where 4 large rollers of cast iron, weighing 240 lbs. each, of the shape of mill-stones, placed on end, chase each other round a cast iron circle weighing 70,000 lbs. Under these rollers it is crushed for about five hours, and then it is taken to the "press-room." In the press-room it is put in layers between cloths and boards alternately, and subjected to the immense pressure of a hydraulic press. This is done to condense the powder into a solid substance. The cakes or slabs are then taken to another building and passed through a pair of coarsely grooved rollers, which breaks it into small lumps. This is the first process of "graining."

These lumps are then placed upon shelves in a room heated by steam for the purpose of being partially dried, when they are again passed through various rollers, until the desired "grain" is obtained. From the rollers the gunpowder, as it may now be termed, passes through a hopper in a revolving wire cylinder, the different degrees of fineness in the length of which, screen it into as many kinds of powder; the finest, which is mere dust, is taken back to be re-worked.

The remainder is placed in barrels, about 250 lbs. in each, which are made rapidly to revolve for the purpose of "glazing" it. But one operation now remains, and that is the final drying, which is effected in the manner which we have before described. It is then taken to the packing-house, and from that to the "magazine," which is a fire-proof building at a long distance from the rest of the works.

BOYS, DO YOU HEAR THAT.—There is a society of young ladies in Hartford, who pledge themselves not to receive the addresses of any young man who has not signed the tea-total pledge. At a temperance meeting not long since, a fair one offered the pledge to her friend, saying, "John will you sign that?" He hesitated, and finally declined. "Then," said she, "you will understand, I shall not be at home next Sunday evening."

Anecdote of Dr. Franklin.

The Doctor was walking one day on Front street, near Cheanut street, in the city of Philadelphia, at the dawn of the Revolution, when he was thus accosted by a tar:
'Is your name Ben Franklin?'
'Yes.'
'Are you the man who invented the saw-dust pudding?'

'Yes,' replied the Doctor.
'Then,' said the sailor, 'don't give the recipe to make it to old F——, our merchant, as he will feed all his crew on it.'
The story of the 'saw-dust pudding,' as it was called, arose in this manner:—The Doctor had conducted an independent paper in Philadelphia, which gave offence to a class who wanted to rule every body in their own way; and the heads of this party, some fifteen or twenty, informed the Doctor that they would frown him down unless he would submit to the curb. The Doctor proposed to explain, and fixed the time at his own house, where the gentlemen were invited to dine. He requested his lady to employ two pence in the purchase of a peck of wheat bran, and to make two puddings of it—one for each end of the table, as he was to have fifteen or twenty friends to dine with him. The company met—the two puddings were served on the table, without any other dishes—the company sat down, and each friend was served with his slice of pudding. Their curiosity led them to try it—they examined each others' countenances, and at length were satisfied with the pudding.

'Friends,' said the Doctor, 'will you be helped to more?'
'No,' they all replied, 'we have enough of your pudding. But what does this mean?'
'Why,' replied the Doctor, 'it means to tell you that these two puddings cost two pence, and fifteen friends say they have had enough. Know, then, as long as Benjamin Franklin can satisfy fifteen friends with two pence, he never will sacrifice the independence of his paper.'

COLORING WALLS.—It may not be generally known, particularly in the country, that blue vitriol, when mixed with lime, forms a very beautiful as well as exceedingly cheap coloring matter for walls. Take good lime and slack it as usual, one and a half pounds of blue vitriol, dissolve the chalybeate with boiling water, when dissolved mix it with the white-wash, and add one pound of glue well dissolved. This should be prepared in a glue pot if possible, to prevent its being burned or scorched. When well mixed the first coat must be put on horizontally, or from side to side, and the second coat vertically or up and down. The wall will be a bright color resembling the bottles some times seen in apothecary shops. By following the directions, women can put on the coloring as smoothly and as well, generally, as men.

[From the Crescent City.]

A short time after the conflagration, on Sunday last, we entered the San Carlos, which had been especially opened for the accommodation of such Washingtonians as believed in the sovereign virtues of anchor brand Cogniac. There was, of course, a tall gathering of patriots, who had distinguished themselves a short time previous by their herculean efforts to arrest the destroying element. Like mariners cast upon a friendly shore, the meeting was cordial, and all felt that a cordial was necessary to restore the usual flow of spirits, which had been dampened by the mournful occurrence of the past few hours.

The glass passed freely around—sentiments were given, and every one appeared as happy as a bank director on his way to Texas, when the hour for parting was announced. At this auspicious moment one of the party—a well known out and out—drew a bottle for the stairs which led to his room in the castle; but it was evident to all present that he was out of his reckoning, and was not exactly "in town." He floundered about like a dismasted flatboat in a gale, but finally brought up at the foot of the stairs, the banner of which he grasped with the tenacity of an Arkansas bear.

"Tom, you're as fuddled as a sailor in port," said a friend, who had watched his gyrations.
'Po-r-r—not a—drop—(hiccup)—I—I hav'nt—(hiccup)—dr-and port—brandy, pon honor!'

The exertion to wheel about was too much for Tom, and he made a pirouette towards the cigar shop adjacent, against which he brought up.
'Stand back sir—(hiccup)—who—who are you?' he thundered to the unconscious door, at the same time putting out his foot, with the evident intention of placing it on a step, judging all was right in that quarter, and that he was on his way to his bed-room. Again and again he raised his right treader, but it was no go—he could not make an ascent, any way it could be fixed.

'Who the —— moved the—the stairs (hiccup)—here, waiter (hiccup)—bring me a light,' bawled our roysterous blade.
'Show me up—what is your pleasure?'
'Aye, aye, sir,' and up went the bacchanalian under an escort of ten of Mudge & Watrign's body guard.

'What's the cause of that bell ringing?'

'It's my deliberate opinion that somebody is pulling at the rope,' replied John.

THE WIFE.—It needs no guilt to break a husband's heart; the absence of content, the mutterings of spleen; the untidy dress, and cheerless home; the forbidding scowl, and deserted hearth; these, and nameless neglects—without a crime among them—have harrowed to the quick the heart's core of many a man, and planted there, beyond the reach of care, the germ of dark despair.

Oh! may woman before that sad sight arrives, dwell on the recollections of her youth, and cherishing the dear idea of that tuneful time, awake and keep alive the promise she then so kindly gave; and though she may be injured, not the injuring one—the forgotten, not the forgetting wife—a happy allusion to that hour of peace and love—a kindly welcome to a comfortable home—a smile of love to banish hostile words—a kiss of peace to pardon all the past—and the hardest heart that ever locked itself within the breast of selfish man will soften to her charms, and bid her live as she had hoped, her years in matchless bliss—loved, loving and content—the soother of the sorrowing hour—the source of comfort, and the spring of joy.—*Chambers' London Journal.*

A HORSELAUGH.—This is the sorry hack upon which buffoons and jesters are fain to ride home, when they want to make a retreat, and are at a loss for any other conveyance.

Such Merry Andrews save their credit as the Romans did their Capitol, by the cackling of geese. To succeed in this object, all expedients are considered fair; to win the laugh, is to win the battle; if you cannot, therefore, check-mate your adversary by reasoning, dumb-found him by your superior learning, or surpass him by the brilliancy of your wit, knock him down by a poor pun, the worse the better; set the example of a hearty laugh, for this is catching, though wit is not, and make your escape while the company are exercising their risible muscles; they will generally be with you, for they like to see a conqueror capsize. The late Jack Taylor, of pleasant memory, who was no mean proficient in turning the tables upon his opponent, when he found himself losing, has recorded one of his exploits. He was rapidly losing ground in a literary discussion, when the opposite party exclaimed, "My good friend, you are not such a rare scholar as you imagine; you are an every day man."
'Well, you are a seek one,' replied Taylor, who instantly jumped upon the back of a horse, and rode victoriously over his prostrate conqueror.

THE RUMSELLERS EXCUSE.—One day a Quaker woman kindly asked a rumseller some questions about his whiskey business, which, disturbing his conscience a little, he eased himself with the oft repeated salvo, that he "sold to sober persons only."

'Ah,' said she, "and does that better the case? Is it better to make drunks out of sober men, than to kill the poor old broken down drunkards?" This came upon him like a thunder-bolt; it upset his best excuse, and he stopped the business of making drunkards.
'SAY—QUIT THAT.'—When you see your son making a bad trade, say—quit that.
When you see two urchins fighting in the street, say—quit that.
When you see your daughter casting sly glances at a fop or loafer, say—quit that.
When your little children make so much noise that you can't understand what you are reading, say—quit that.
When you see your wife buying lacing strings, say—quit that.
When you hear a politician say "I am going to a People's Meeting," say—quit that.
When you see a farmer buying lottery tickets, say—quit that.
When you see a person taking a newspaper from another man's door before day light, say—quit that.—*St. Louis Organ.*

A FACT.—A man from an adjoining county called at a store to trade a few days ago, and after purchasing one or two articles, pulled out a five dollar Monroe Railroad note to pay for them; but was surprised to be informed that it was only worth about 15 cents in the dollar. He put it up and took out three dollars in Kincannon Tickets, which he said he kept back as he might need change. To his utter astonishment he was told that those Tickets were not worth "shucks."—With a sigh, he said "well I reckon I can suit you," and handed out a ten dollar bill on the Bank of Columbus. This was his last, and that Bank also was broken! He trembled with rage to find all his money worthless. We inquired if he took the newspapers. He replied that he never had done so, although he had a large family and several of them could read. Thus for the small pittance of two or three dollars that might have known the worth of money every week and saved himself from being imposed upon by trash and broken Bank paper, besides having the news from all parts of the world for the edification of himself and family.—*Chattanooga Gazette.*

Cleaning Glass.—The French mode of cleaning fine glass utensils, etc., gives them great brilliancy.

It is done by finely powdered indigo, and dipping into it a moistened linen rag, with which the glass must be saturated and wiped off with a perfectly dry cloth. As a substitute for this, fine sifted ash, applied by a rag dipped in spirits will also answer very well; but Spanish white is apt to clog and injure the glass.

Corn-stalk Sugar.

The experiments of Mr. William Webb, of Wilmington, Delaware, prove the practicability of manufacturing sugar from the juice of the corn stalk, at a much cheaper rate than can be done from the cane. The machinery is of very simple construction and cheap. That used by Mr. Webb, is the cylinder, such as used for grinding apples, or three upright wooden rollers, from twenty to forty inches in length, turns to run true and put into a strong frame will answer. The power is applied to the middle roller by means of a sweep, as a cider mill. Mr. Webb describes a better machine, made entirely of iron, three horizontal rollers erected one above and two below, the stalk passes directly through, receiving two pressures before it escapes.

The lower cylinders are contained in a small cistern, which receives the juice. Mr. Webb thus describes his process of manufacturing the sugar after the juice is expressed:—
The process which has been employed in the manufacture of Maize sugar, is as follows: The juice, after coming from the mill, stood for a short time, to deposit some of its coarser purities; it was then poured off, and passed through a flannel strainer, in order to get rid of such matters as could be separated in this way. Lime water, called milk of lime, was then added, in the proportion of one or two table spoons full to the gallon. It is said by sugar manufacturers, that knowledge on this point can only be acquired by experience; but I have never failed in making sugar from employing too much or too little of the lime. A certain portion of this substance, however, is undoubtedly, necessary, and more or less than this will be injurious; but no precise directions can be given about it. The juice was then placed over the fire, and brought nearly to the boiling point, when it was carefully skimmed, taking care to complete this operation before ebullition commenced. It was then boiled down rapidly, removing the scum as it rose. The juice was examined from time to time, and if there was an appearance of feculent particles which would not rise to the surface, it was again passed through a flannel strainer. In judging when the syrup was sufficiently boiled, a portion was taken between the thumb and finger, and if, when moderately cool, a thread half an inch long could be drawn, it was considered to be done, and was poured into broad shallow vessels to crystallize. In some cases, crystallization commenced in 12 hours; in others, not till several days! and in no case was this process so far completed as to allow the sugar to be drained, in less than 3 weeks from time of boiling. The reason why so great a length of time was required I have not yet been able to discover. There is no doubt but that an improved process of manufacture will cause it to granulate as quickly as any other.

[From the Farmer's Monthly Visitor.]

'Weeds, leaves of trees, and all the succulent plants which grow so abundantly in ditches and waste lands, under hedges, and by the road side, if cut or pulled when in flower, and slightly fermented, furnish from twenty to twenty-five times more manure than straw does. These plants, carefully collected, furnish to the agriculturist an immense resource for enriching his lands. Besides the advantage arising from the manure furnished by these plants, the agriculturist will find his account in preventing the dissemination of their seeds, which, by propagating in the fields, deprive the crops of the nourishment of the soil. The turf that borders fields and highways, may be made to answer the same purpose by cutting it up with all the roots and the earth adhering to them, rooting the whole in a heap and afterwards carrying the mass upon the fields, or what is still better, by burning it, and dressing the land with the products of the combustion.
'If straw did not serve as beds for animals, and did not contribute, at the same time to their health and cleanliness, it would be better to cut the ears of corn and leave the stalks in the field, since they serve only as absorbent of the true manures.'

If farmers in New England would set their boys to bringing leaves from the roads and by the sides of their fences, they would get as good beds for their stock as they have in their straw and refuse hay, and would make much better and more manure. It may be done in the fall, after harvesting, at a very little trouble and expense. Make a light rack with stakes close together, and weave in poles in a sort of wicker work, put this upon wagon wheels, and a boy or two, and a horse, would get up several loads in a day, where leaves are not at a great distance from home.

An exchange paper has these pertinent remarks:

"Many a man sees the poor starving around him without a sigh; and when his day of departure draws near, gives his whole substance to some foreign charity, which to say the best of it is calculated to lay the foundation for knowledge among a bloody, bigoted and unthankful race. Give us the living, every-day charity; that springeth from the well of the soul, and not that mean, miserable, deferred charity, which comes from the chamber of death in weeds of mourning, and causes the heir to curse the parent for his liberality ere he is laid in his narrow chamber forever.

Among the lions which have recently arrived in New York is a dog with six legs and two tails.

Speech of Mr. Preston.

On the Loan Bill, delivered in the Senate of the United States, April, 1842.

Mr. Preston said that, in the course of the discussion on the loan bill, he did not think that the facts which occasioned its introduction, and made its passage necessary, were sufficiently borne in mind. They were of a very important and imperious character, and could not be put, with too much emphasis. The Government is out of money and out of credit: it is in a bankrupt condition. Its paper has been protested, and its endorsers held responsible for ruinous liabilities. Treasury notes are at a discount of five per cent; and the creditors of the Government are thus paid in a depreciated paper a less amount than they have earned and we have stipulated to pay. It is at once tyranny and fraud—a violation of contract by the force of power. We should understand our position, and not mince words in stating it.

The Government stands discredited and dishonored. The person and the property of an individual, under such circumstances, would be seized by the minions of the law. This disgrace has penetrated, and is felt throughout all the ramifications of the Government, and taints every agent of it even in foreign countries; for drafts of our functionaries abroad have gone back protested, proclaiming to the world our shameful condition. This is a serious injury to our country. We all—every one of us is soiled by it, and feel our citizenship with a less proud and lofty sentiment of patriotism. The pride of country is a main pillar of republics. National honor is a very substantial thing, and ought to be cherished and preserved not less scrupulously in discharging the homely duties of good faith and honesty, than in the presence of foreign nations, or on the battle field. From some cause or other we have permitted it to be touched, and we should hasten, with eager solicitude, to redeem it. I could have hoped, sir, that, in this acknowledged condition of things, under the pressure of a disastrous emergency, we should have addressed ourselves, with one consent, to the application of the remedy, without wasting time in ascertaining the cause or denouncing the authors of the evil in bitter and unavailing recriminations, when it is manifest that, whoever bears the blame, it is a common calamity of our common country, which should be redressed by a united and vigorous effort of all who love that country or value its honor.

The case is hardly less pressing than if our flag was borne down in the tide of battle, and we passed in the rescue to settle some personal differences. I am sorry to see this, like every other occasion, seized upon to indulge in partisan assaults and common strifes, and that the gentlemen of the opposition should think proper to assail us, and throw themselves upon us, and encumber us with difficulties, and call off our attention by taunts and revilings, at the instant that we are advancing with all possible speed to so sacred an object. I will pause a moment, and but a moment, to dispose of these assailants, so much more intent on attacking us than relieving the country. They say that all this is our doing; that our prodigality has created the debt; that our want of forecast has failed to provide for it; and that it is we who have destroyed the public credit. If it were so—if our folly or our crime has brought on this state of things—can the Senators of the opposition find, in reason, humanity, or patriotism, an excuse for their lethargy or their active hindrance of our exertions?

But what shall be said or thought of their conduct, when it is known, as every body does know, that the country is brought to this pass by their own mismanagement, by years and years of misgovernment, prodigality, and recklessness, and that we, the Whigs, have been but this moment sent, by an indignant and suffering people, to relieve the body politic from the ruinous course of their empiricism? Both the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. Buchanan) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. Woodbury) charge on us the mighty evils which oppress the people, and that we, in thirteen months, and not yet at the end of the first constitutional Congress, have done all this. Sir, this vigorous and young republic could not be thus struck down at one blow; these grey hairs are not of one night's growth; this decrepitude is not of paralysis, but of long and wasting disease, aggravated by unskillful treatment and deleterious drugs, requiring time as well as potent remedies to effect a cure. Where is that country which the mistaken confidence of the people intrusted to them five years ago? Where that overflowing Treasury, that cornucopia of commerce, that abounding agriculture? Did you give them back to us as you received them, or in their stead chaff and husks?

One thing at least is clear, that the wretched system of Government paper, which has now terminated, as all systems of Government paper must terminate inevitably, in depreciation and bankruptcy, was of their begetting and nourishing. They began it—they instituted the system of Treasury notes. The late Administration is the first in the history of our Government that in time of profound peace, was compelled to resort to borrowing, and chose that most fallacious, dangerous, and ruinous mode of borrowing by the issue of Treasury notes. They destroyed the equilibrium between expenditures and income, and thus deranged the whole financial order. From the beginning, they have lived and had their being on Treasury notes. To use the

word of the Senator from New Hampshire, more expressive perhaps than pure, they fed their spendthriftness throughout on this paper. Session after session they rushed into this hall, proclaiming that the country was in danger, that the Treasury was empty, that credit would fail, and begging and supplicating for a few more Treasury notes.—They were always in debt, and paid by giving their notes.

After the first terrific explosion in 1837, the Treasury was a mere crater, which no man might look into, throwing up at irregular periods masses of Treasury notes, with flashes of vivid light from the agonized Secretary, who writhed below like the giant under Aëna.

This crippled, broken down, and now utterly discredited paper, was the financial wisdom and the sole financial policy of our predecessors, and is an evil which we have inherited from them. But Senators say that they were frugal and we have been prodigal. There is something grand in this contempt of history—in this reversing of the inexorable past. They frugal!—There is not one who has denied that they spent every year more than they received; that every year they borrowed to pay the debt of the preceding; and at length that they went out, leaving, by their own acknowledgment, five millions of debt, with no provision made to meet it, and no recommendation but that it should be paid by the economy of their successors—a novel mode of payment—one which certainly they had never tried. The sum stated is unquestionably far short of their indebtedness; but the five millions they plead guilty to.

But, Mr. President, I hold in my hand the official reports of his frugality, made by the Senator from New Hampshire when he was Secretary. I read from it the aggregate amounts—

1837	:	:	:	:	:	\$37,265,037
1838	:	:	:	:	:	30,455,438
1839	:	:	:	:	:	37,129,396
1840	:	:	:	:	:	28,226,533

4) 152,076,394

Giving an average of \$38,019,000

From this aggregate, I know it is said, in the first place, the public debt is to be deducted. What public debt? It was the boast and glory of Gen. Jackson's Administration that the public debt was entirely discharged by him, and that he turned over to his successor an ample revenue and a Treasury absolutely disencumbered. With the payment of what public debt, then, does the Secretary credit himself? Why, with the debt of his own creation, and expects, by the financial ledgerman of giving the year 1840 credit for the debt of 1839, and throwing the debt of 1840 upon 1841, not only to keep a clear balance sheet for his own term, but to throw an accumulated burden upon his successors, which he charges upon them as extravagance.

That I may not fail to do justice to the frugality of the late Administration, and the equally conspicuous financial abilities of the then Secretary and now honorable Senator, it is proper to state that, in the report from which I read, he sets forth that, for the permanent and ordinary purposes of Government, the annual average expenditures were between thirteen and fourteen millions, while the large difference is made up of extraordinary expenses. Extraordinary expenses, indeed, they are! [Here Mr. Woodbury said the distinction was called for by the Senate.] To be sure it was by a resolution drawn by a confidential friend of the Secretary and of the Administration, and with a view to explain away, and justify, and mystify, at an approaching trial before the people: a bill of particulars is drawn up, which the Secretary himself designated as other than ordinary and permanent expenses. A shorter and more appropriate designation might have been found in the word jobs, and the account, properly stated, would then be thirteen millions for the Government and twenty-eight for jobs.

The report was fashioned with the sole purpose of putting the frugality of the administration in the most favorable point of view before the public. It was the best that the hard-taxed ingenuity of the Secretary and his friends could devise at that time.—It has since been explained and re-explained by a multitude of glosses, serving only to illustrate the obscure by the obscurer, until the Secretary is like to escape, like the ink-fish, in a darkness of his own creation.

The obvious intention of the account, as stated, was to show that the necessary expenses had not increased; and, intent upon this great object, it did not occur to the sagacious maker of the report that he must unavoidably at the same time show that the unnecessary expenses had increased. The only disguise attempted (more simple than that of the ostrich) was to classify the great mass of expenditure under the vague and, as I will show presently, inappropriate designation of temporary and extraordinary. At the time this memorable document was called for and heralded as the extinguisher of all charges of extravagance against the Administration, we were bringing the authors of it to a fearful reckoning. The voice of the people demanded an account, and the Executive came up to the examination with the affected swagger and frightened effrontery of a prodigal youth, catechised by his irritated father. "How is this, young gentlemen? what means this extravagance? how dare you waste my money in such enormous sums?" "Good father," says the youth, "be not in a passion; you are altogether mistaken; you