

It is even wise to abstain from laws, which, however wise and good in themselves, have the semblance of inequality, which find no response in the hearts of the citizens, and which will be evaded with little remorse. The wisdom of legislation is especially seen in grafting laws on customs.

Dr. Channing.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

THE BRAVO—A tale by the author of "The Spy," "The Red Rover," "The Water Witch," &c. CARR & LINA, Philadelphia, 1831.—This new novel from the pen of our countryman—Cooper—will win new laurels for him. It is full of dramatic interest—"hair breadth escapes"—animated and bustling scenes on the ocean, in the prisons, on the Rialto, in the Adriatic, and in the streets of Venice. The plots of the secret Tribunal, the counterplots of Don Camillo, the singular acts of Jacopo the Bravo, his success in rescuing Donna Violetta, are all described in that dashing style and language for which Cooper is characterized. In picturing the movements of the Gondolas, the author is popularly felicitous. Whenever he dispenses scenes on the water, he is perfectly at home. The character of the Bravo is a singular compound of fatuity and art—of recklessness and sagacity—of generosity and fully—of bravery and weakness. The great aim of the author is to give a picture of the Venetian oligarchy—their selfishness—their cruelty—their art—their cold blooded inhumanity, and their refined species of Machiavelism. The scene in which Jacopo undergoes an examination before the three Grand Inquisitors, is extremely well managed. The manner in which the characters are drawn out, keeps up an intense interest. The termination however, of the plot, is altogether unsatisfactory. The notion of "poetical justice" as it is called by the critics, is entirely violated.—After being entertained with the efforts and energy and arts of a hero—after keeping his company in various hard rubs and hazardous adventures, it is quite melancholy to find him coolly beheaded while the less interesting personages of the tale are happily disposed of.

This novel of "The Bravo" is Cooper's first born in a new class. Paul Clifford was among the first of this kind which attracted great attention. The Bravo—as does Paul Clifford—contains fearful pictures of the destruction of human rights and human happiness, by vicious systems of government and laws. The effects of bad laws and aristocratic authority, are shown to lead to private crime—public robbery—and violent ends. Cooper has made an admirable selection of his topics, his plots, his characters, &c. to catch the popular feeling at present existing in England; and the Bravo will undoubtedly be very popular across the water,—here it only requires to be known to be read with the utmost avidity.

In vivid description of places, embracing alike nature and art, Cooper is inimitable. We find in the "Bravo" many of his most exquisite touches. For ourselves, we never formed a clear, distinct judgment of the locality of Venice and canals, until we read the following description; and we give it to our readers under a full conviction that all who have not visited the "Island City" will derive both pleasure and instruction from the perusal of it: *Cour. & Eng.*

The city of Venice stands on a cluster of low, sandy islands. It is probable that the country which was nearest to the gulf, if not the whole of the immense plain of Lombardy itself is of alluvial formation. Whatever may have been the origin of that wide and fertile kingdom, the causes which have given to the Lagoon their existence, and to Venice a unique and picturesque foundation, are too apparent to be mistaken. Several torrents, which flow from the valleys of the Alps, pour their tribute into the Adriatic at this point. Their waters come charged with the debris of the mountains, pulverized nearly to their original elements. Released from the violence of the stream, these particles have necessarily been deposited in the gulf, at the spot where they have first become subjected to the power of the sea. Under the influence of counteracting currents, eddies, and waves, the sands have been thrown into submarine piles, until some of the banks have arisen above the surface, forming islands, whose elevation has been gradually augmented by the decay of vegetation. A glance at the map will show that, while the Gulf of Venice is not literally, it is, practically, considered with reference to the effect produced by the southeast wind called the Sirocco, at the head of the Adriatic. This accidental circumstance is

probably the reason why the Lagoon have a more determined character at the mouths of the minor streams that empty themselves here, than at the mouths of most of the other rivers, which equally flow from the Alps or the Apennines, into the same shallow sea.

The natural consequence of a current of a river meeting the water of any broad basin, and where there is no base of rock, is the formation, at or near the spot where the opposing actions are neutralized, of a bank, which is technically called a bar.—The coast of the union furnishes constant evidence of the truth of this theory, every river having its bar, with channels that are often shifted, or cleared, by the freshets; the gales, or the tides. The constant and powerful operation of the southeastern winds on one side with the periodical increase of the Alpine streams on the other, have converted this bar at the entrance of the Venetian Lagoon, into a cession of long, low, sandy islands, which extended in a direct line, nearly across the mouth of the gulf. The waters of the rivers have necessarily cut a few channels for their passage, or what is now a lagoon, would long since have become a lake. Another thousand years may so far change the character of this extraordinary estuary, as to convert the channels of the bay into rivers and the muddy banks into marshes and meadows, resembling those that are now seen for so many leagues inland.

The low margin of sand, that in truth, gives all its maritime security to the port of Venice and the Lagoon, is called the Lido di Palestrino. It has been artificially connected and secured, in many places, and the wall of the Lido, (literally the beach), though incomplete, like most of the great and vaunted works of the other hemisphere, and more particularly of Italy, ranks with the mole of Ancona, and the sea-wall of Cherbourg. The hundred little islands which now contain the ruins of what, during the middle ages, was the mart of the Mediterranean, are grouped together within cannon-shot of natural barrier. Art has united with nature to turn the whole to good account; and, apart from the influence of moral causes, the rivalry of a neighboring town, which has been fostered by political care, and the gradual filling up of the waters, by the constant deposit of the streams, it would be difficult to imagine a more commodious, or a safer haven when entered, than that which Venice affords, even to this hour.

As all the deeper channels of the Lagoon have been preserved, the city is intersected, in every direction, by passages, which, from their appearance, are called canals, but which, in truth, are no more than so many small natural branches of the sea. On the margin of these passages, the walls of the dwellings arise literally from out of the water, since economy of room has caused their owners to extend their possessions to the very verge of the channel, in the manner that quays and wharves are pushed into the streams in our own country. In many instances the islands themselves were no more than banks, which were periodically bare, and on all, the use of piles has been necessary to support the superincumbent loads of palaces, churches, and public monuments, under which, in the course of ages, the humble spirits of sand have been made to groan.

The great frequency of the canals, and perhaps some attention to economy of labor, has given to by far the greater part of the buildings the facility of a approach by water. But, while nearly every dwelling has one of its fronts on a canal, there are all ways communications by the rear with the interior passages of the town. It is fault in most descriptions, that while the stranger hears so much of the canals of Venice, but little is said of her streets; still, narrow, paved commodious, and noiseless passages, of this description, intersect all the islands, which communicate with each other by means of a countless number of bridges. Though the hoof of a horse, or the rumbling of a wheel

is never heard in these straight avenues, they are of great resort for all the purposes of ordinary intercourse.

FROM THE OLD PRESS.

The following has been communicated to us as a "fact matter," In a neighboring county, a widower who had acted the part of the brute and a tyrant to his wife, went shortly after the demise of his spouse, to pay his respects to a buxom widow, who, like the suitor, had not the best reputation for suavity of manner and meekness of temper. The following dialogue ensued:

He—Well, Madam, I am come to see you.

He—Well, you may just clear out again, for I'll have nothing to do with you. You needn't think to get me.—You abused and whipped your first wife—and I know what kind of a fellow you are.

He—Yes I did, and if I had you, I'd make you toe the trig—I'd give you a d—d good thrashing every time you deserved it.

Strange as it may appear, they were united in the blissful bands of matrimony in three days afterwards!

"Was ever woman in this humor won't! Was ever woman in this humor won't!"

GOOD.

In a county somewhere in North Carolina, about the finishing time of the session of the Court of Pleas, &c. a limb of the law, who was as much noted for his wit as for the shortness of his stature, found much difficulty in getting a jury, to sit upon a case in which he was professionally concerned. In this dilemma, one of his professional brothers, pointed to a man lying on the floor at the back of the bar, who, if he had not tasted the cruet, had at least smelt of the cork, and informed him that his services could be procured by a "little help." Little leaped upon a seat, rejoiced at the prospect of getting a jury, and seeing the man's length measured on his mother earth, exclaimed, "The drunk 'or a juror, but [turning to their worship] perhaps he would do for one of the Court!"

ANECDOTE.

A certain Sheriff being "hard put to" to form a Court—for while he was seeking a third justice, one of the two would leave the bench—was advised by a lawyer to "tye fast the two he had until he could run down a third."

CONGRESS OF THE U. STATES.

Monday, Dec. 5.

At 12 o'clock, the first session of the 22d Congress, was opened at the capitol.

In the Senate, a quorum having assembled, the chair was taken at 12 o'clock, by Mr. SMITH, the President pro tem. After the presentation and reading of the credentials of the new Senators, the oath to support the Constitution of the U. States, was severally administered to them, and they took their seats. A committee, consisting of Messrs. KING and FOOT having been appointed to wait on the President, in conjunction with the committee of the House of Representatives, and inform him that a quorum of both Houses had assembled, and were ready to receive any communication he might make, the Senate adjourned.

In the House of Representatives upon the first call of the list, a very full attendance appeared, two hundred and one members answering to their names. Seven members only were absent—one from Massachusetts, one from R. Island, one from Pennsylvania, one from Virginia, one from N. Carolina, one from Ohio, and one from Alabama. The return from Missouri has not yet been made, and there are five vacant seats. The House being organized proceeded to the election of Speaker, when, on the first ballot, the Hon. Andrew Stevenson, of Va. Speaker of the House of Representatives for the two last Congresses, was re-elected to that office; for the Hon. J. R. Sutherland 93, the Hon. C. A. W. 15, the Hon. J. W. Taylor 18, and 10 scattering.

On the motion of the Hon. Jesse Speight, Mr. M. St. Clair Clark was unanimously re-elected Clerk of the House. A committee was appointed, on the motion of the Hon. Aaron Ward, to wait upon the President, in conjunction with a committee of the Senate, to inform him that the two Houses of Congress were assembled, and ready to proceed to business. The usual resolution respecting the supply of members with newspapers, was adopted; after which, the House adjourned.

SENATE.

Tuesday, Dec. 6.

Mr. King, from the Joint Committee appointed to wait on the President of the United States, reported that they had performed the duty enjoined them, and had received an intimation that the President would, at twelve o'clock, this day, make a written communication to both Houses of Congress.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

The communication promised by the President, was received by the hands of Mr. Donelson, his Private Secretary; which having been read.

On motion of Mr. King, it was ordered that 3000 copies of the Message, and 1500 copies of the accompanying documents, be printed for the use of the Senate.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. King moved that the 5th rule of the Senate be so far suspended as to authorize the Senate, in the absence of the Vice President, to appoint by ballot a Chairman of the Committee of Finance; which motion being agreed to.

The Senate proceeded to ballot for Chairman of that Committee, and Mr. Smith, of Maryland, was chosen.

The following standing Committees were then announced from the Chair: On Foreign Relations—Messrs. Tagwell, White, King, Forsyth, and Bell.

On Finance—Messrs. Smith, Tyler, M'Nair, Silsbee, and Johnston.

On Commerce—Messrs. Forsyth, Dudley, Silsbee, Johnston, Wilkins.

On Manufactures—Messrs. Dickerson, Clay, Knight, Miller, and Seymour.

On Agriculture—Messrs. Seymour, Brown, Moore, Hanna, Waggoner.

On Military Affairs—Messrs. Benton, Burnard, Troup, Clay and Kane.

On the Militia—Messrs. Barnard, Prelinghysen, Clayton, Prentiss, and Waggoner.

On Naval Affairs—Messrs. Hayne, Tappan, Robbins, Webster, and Bibb.

On Public Lands—Messrs. King, Ellis, Holmes, Robinson, and Hanna.

On Private Land Claims—Messrs. King, Naudin, Prentiss, Ruggles, and Hendricks.

On Indian Affairs—Messrs. White, Tappan, P. Indexter, Benton, and Wilkins.

On Claims—Messrs. Ruggles, Bell, Naudin, Brown, and Moore.

On the Judiciary—Messrs. Murcy, Hayne, Webster, Prelinghysen, and Grundy.

On the Post Office and Post Roads—Messrs. Grundy, Ellis, Hill, Ewing, and Tomlinson.

On Roads and Canals—Messrs. Hendricks, Poindexter, Hill, Mangum, and Sprague.

On Pensions—Messrs. Foot, Chambers, Mangum, Buckner, and Sprague.

On the District of Columbia—Messrs. Chambers, Tyler, Holmes, Clayton, and Miller.

On the Contingent Fund—Messrs. Knight, Dudley, and Tomlinson.

On Engrossed Bills—Messrs. Robinson, Ewing, and Buckner.

The Senate then adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

On motion of Mr. Taylor, it was Resolved, That two Chaplains, of different denominations, be elected by Congress, one by each House to serve during the present session, who shall interchange weekly.

Mr. Ward, from the Joint Committee appointed yesterday, to wait on the President of the United States, and inform him that Congress is assembled, and ready to receive any communication he may be pleased to make, reported that the Committee had performed the duties of its appointment, and that the President answered that he would make a communication to the two Houses of Congress to-day at 12 o'clock M.

Immediately after which, a communication in writing was received, from the President of the United States by Mr. Donelson, his private secretary, which was read.

On motion of Mr. Johnson, of Ky, the said Message was committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union; and ten thousand copies thereof with the Documents accompanying the same, were ordered to be printed, for the use of the members of this House.

And then the House adjourned.

Wednesday, Dec. 7.

In the Senate, Mr. Chambers, of Maryland, appeared, was qualified, and took his seat. Mr. Sprague submitted a resolution, calling on the President, for information in relation to the abduction and imprisonment of American citizens by the British authorities of New Brunswick. A message of a confidential nature having been received from the President of the United States, by Mr. Donelson, his Secretary, the Senate spent a short time in the consideration of Executive business.

In the House of Representatives, Mr. Coke, of Virginia, appeared and took his seat. A message was received from the President of the United States, transmitting a communication from the Secretary of State on the subject of the recent census; which was, on motion of Mr. Whittlesey of Ohio laid upon the table. The Speaker presented a communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, with the annual Report upon the Finance. The report with the accompanying documents, were, on motion of Mr. Polk, laid upon the table, and 10,000 copies ordered to be printed. The House then went into the election of its officers. For the office of Sergeant at Arms, Mr. Johnson, of Kentucky, nominated John Oswald Dunn, Sergeant at Arms of the late House of Representatives. Mr. Gilmore nominated William A. Gordon; Mr. Condict, David Brearley, and Mr. Jarvis, William Robinson. On a second ballot Mr. Dunn was elected. Mr. Overton Carr was elected Principal Door Keeper out of five candidates; and the House proceeded to the election of Assistant Doorkeeper. Thirteen candidates were put in nomination; and the House balloted once without arrival at a choice. An adjournment taken, at half past two, took place.

Thursday, Dec. 8.

In the Senate, Mr. Hayne, on leave, introduced a bill to provide for the settlement of the claims of S. Carolina for advances made to the U. States during the late war, which was read twice, and referred to the Committee on Military Affairs. The resolution submitted by Mr. Sprague, calling on the President for information as to the abduction and imprisonment of American citizens by the British authorities of New Brunswick, was considered and adopted. The resolution submitted by Mr. Holmes, requesting the President to inform the Senate whether any further negotiation is commenced, proposed, or intended, in regard to the North Eastern boundary of the U. States, was considered, and after a few observations from Messrs. Poindexter, Holmes and Hayne, laid on the table. The Senate after a short time spent in the consideration of Executive business, adjourned over to Monday.

In the House of Representatives, the business of the election of Assistant Doorkeeper was resumed, and after several ballots, Col. John W. Hunter was elected by a vote of 104 out 177. An order was taken upon the motion of Mr. Taylor for the appointment of the Standing Committee of the House. The annual report of the Treasurer of the United States, and of the Comptroller's unexpended balances for the last three years, were presented by the Speaker, and ordered to be laid on the table and printed. The usual communications on the subject of the Navy Hospital and the Navy Pension Fund, were also laid before the House, and disposed of in a similar manner. The Speaker announced his intention to call over the States in their order on Monday, for the presentations; and at 12 o'clock, the House adjourned on Monday.