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MISCELLANEOUS.

A TALE OF THE PASSIONS.

Antonio Jomelli was the best artisan of his profession in Naples. He was a worker in bronze, a department of the arts for which the Italians have been long celebrated. Antonio's skill had gained him reputation and abundant employment, and from his workshop had issued the greater number of the candlebrasses and other metallic ornaments to be found in the palaces of Naples. The bronze-worker had grown rich by his occupation, but the usual concomitant of riches, pride, he had ennobled. He still labored away at his trade, with his own hands, confining his personal attention chiefly to the finer and more difficult articles which he was required to fabricate, while even in his employ manufactured, in a large and separate workshop, the common articles of the trade.

One evening, as Antonio sat alone in the little apartment where he pursued his labor, he was informed that a lady wished to speak with him. He desired her to be admitted immediately. The visitor was a female of tall and stately form and carriage, with a dark thick veil thrown over her head and face, so as to prevent the bronze-worker from discerning the features beneath. The lady, for such her dress betokened her to be, did not speak until the servant who had admitted her had left the room for some moments. Turning then her glance from the door to Jomelli, and seating herself in the chair which he had placed for her, she said, in a voice which her hearer thought the most sweet and melodious that had ever fallen upon his ear, but which seemed strangely agitated, considering the common-place matter which it uttered, "You work in bronze—you can make bronze ornaments of all kinds! Is it so?" "It is, lady," replied the artist, "and I shall be proud to execute any thing of that nature for you." "Yes, yes," said the lady, "I wish a piece of work done. I have a statue of great value—the statue of a conqueror and king—done by the hand of a first-rate sculptor. It is perfect in every respect but one—it wants a chaplet of flowers to adorn its temples; and this is what I wish you to make for it." "In the statue of bronze, madam?" was the artist's question. "No," replied the lady, "it is white, of pure marble, and you must paint the chaplet of that color when you have made it." "What form, then, lady, do you choose it to be of?" said the artist; "what shape or pattern shall the ornaments have? But, perhaps, I had better see the statue, and measure the dimensions of the head?" "No, no," exclaimed the visitor hurriedly, "it will not be necessary. I have looked upon it so often that I can tell you perfectly well how large it is. Your own head is very near it; yes, you cannot go wrong, if you fit the chaplet to your own head." "And the fashion of the ornaments, madame?" "Let it be heavy, very heavy," replied the lady, sinking her voice to a concentrated whisper; "let it be very weighty, that it may not fall off easily; and make it jagged, and full of spikes inside, that it may adhere to the brows of the statue." "Still, lady, the band should be wrought in some ornamental fashion," said Antonio. "Do that as you please," was the lady's reply; "but remember, it is to be heavy and full of spikes, and forget not that it is to be painted white, so as to resemble flowers. And now, when will it be finished?" "Oh, in a few days, madame," said the artist. "A few days?" cried the lady vehemently, rising from her chair at the same time; "it must be ready to-morrow evening, sir! I must have it to-morrow!" "I cannot do justice to the chaplet, lady," said the bronze-worker, astonished at her violence of tone; "the ornamental part—" "I care not for any ornaments," was the lady's reply; "make it as I have directed; and to-morrow I must have it, because—because I am to have a party, and wish the statue to be then ornamented." "Well, madame," said the artist, resignedly, "I shall do my endeavor. And whether shall I have the honor of sending it?" "I shall call for it myself at this hour to-morrow, and shall pay you what you will for it. Remember what I have said, heavy and set with spikes." With these words the lady departed, leaving on Jomelli's mind the impression that, fateful as many of his former employers had been, this new one was the most frightful of all.

On the evening following that on which this singular order was given to the artist Jomelli, all the grandees and fashionable of Naples, and not a small part of the populace, were on the move towards the splendid theatre of San Carlo. A piece of great interest was to be performed, and the prima donna, who was young and beautiful, was the exquisite vocalist Signora Marina. The lady had but lately been appointed to take the part of chief singer, and had therefore superseded one who had formerly been her acknowledged superior—Madame Gambri. Considering the comparative humiliation which Madame Gambri had endured in the eyes of the Neapolitans, it was not to be supposed that she would on the present occasion make her appearance in the house. But few knew the real character of her former favorite. To the astonishment, and we should add, the delight of the audience, Gambri attended, as if for the purpose of acknowledging the merits and gracing the triumph of the inhospitable Marina. She appeared in one of the most conspicuous parts of the theatre—the front corner of the upper box overhanging the stage.

Before the opera commenced, the audience called out the name of their former favorite, Gambri, and cheered her for her winning freedom from jealousy, in being present on such an occasion. The object of their attention, however, appeared to be obscured by the plaudits she raised, and moved not a muscle in reply, but half covered by her veil, sat with her eyes fixed on the stage. The piece, at length commenced, the young prima donna appeared and the cheers were long and loud. Marina had not been over-praised, either as regarded her person or her performance. Every step which she took across the stage elicited admiration, for her movements were like those of a sylph, every note which she uttered drew forth applause, for her voice was sweet and strong as Philomela's. In every song of the piece she was successful, but attention and expectation were chiefly riveted upon one song, once Gambri's masterpiece, Marina at length reached this part of the opera, she sang then with all the force of her lungs, and her voice was heard upon the stage, while Gambri, who sat in the audience to applaud, she sang

the third and last, and, in doing so, changed to stand immediately below Gambri's box. To the delight of the spectators, Gambri rose at that moment with a large crown of flowers, and waving it in the air, threw it down on the young Marina's head. The crown bounded from the singer's brow and rolled along the stage, while Marina herself fell prostrate on the boards. She gave one scream, and neither spoke nor moved again. The flower-covered crown or chaplet was the heavy bronze one made by Jomelli, and one of the spikes had entered the victim's brain!

It would be impossible to describe the confusion, the horror, the exclamations that ensued. Gambri, having gratified her malignant revenge, seemed contented that she should pay for it with her life. She had slain her rival, the unfortunate Marina, and was satisfied. Dreadful must those passions have been which could prompt the execution of so unhalloved a deed. Looking around her with calm and reckless indifference, she did not make the slightest attempt to escape, and was forthwith seized and speedily brought to justice. Antonio Jomelli was confronted with her for form's sake, and avowed having made for her the fatal wreath. It has only to be added, that she did not die on the scaffold, but put an end to her existence by poison, in the prison where she was confined.

THE FIRST STATUE OF CANOVA.

Translated from the French for the "Southern Literary Messenger."

There are, doubtless, few of our readers who have not heard mentioned with honor the name of the great Canova, that skillful sculptor of modern times, whose admirable statues have almost taken rank amongst the master-pieces which Grecian antiquity has transmitted to us. Canova, like many other great men, owed his rise solely to himself. Diligent labor was the only source of his fortune, and the first attempts of his infancy presaged the success of his mature age.

Canova was an Italian, the son of a mason. All the education which he received from his father consisted in learning the business of his trade. As soon as his strength permitted, he learned to handle the trowel and the hammer, to mix the plaster and to place the gravel—occupations which he discharged with sufficient zeal and activity to be soon able to serve as the journeyman or rather the companion of his father, notwithstanding his youth. But in the frequent intervals of repose, which his weakness rendered indispensable, he amused himself by observing the different objects which he saw about him—with sketching them roughly with brick or hard stone upon the wall against which he leaned, or even with modelling their forms in the plaster and cement which he had just mixed. These constant exercises, practiced with as much perseverance as intelligence, soon rendered him familiar with the practice of drawing and of sculpture in relief. But his youthful talent was unknown to all, even to his father, who only concerned himself with his greater or less skill in passing the plaster to the sieve and in pouring enough water into the trough.

A whimsical event suddenly occurred to reveal it to all the world. His father had been summoned to make some repairs in the country house of a rich lord of the neighborhood. He had taken his son with him, according to custom, to act as his journeyman, and the gentle carriage of the little Canova soon procured him the affection of the chief cook and of all the scullions of the house, so that, the day's work being ended, Canova did not stir from the pantry, where he executed in crumbs of bread or in plaster grotesque figures and caricatures, which delighted the valets, and in return they fed him in the style of my lord.

One day there was an entertainment at the country house. Canova was in the kitchen, playing with the scullions, when they suddenly heard a cry of despair from the pantry, and saw the head cook coming out in alarm, throwing up his cap, striking his breast and tearing his hair. After the first moments of astonishment, they crowded round him. "I am lost," he cried, "I am lost! My magnificent master-piece! my palace, which I had built for the dinner! see in what a condition it is!" And with a pathetic gesture, he showed an edifice of pastry, which he had just drawn from the oven. Alas, it was burnt, covered with ashes, and half demolished. There was a general cry of surprise and grief.

"What is to be done?" demanded the chief cook; "here is the dinner hour. I have not time to make another. I am lost! My lord expects for the dessert something remarkable. He will turn me away!"

During these lamentations, Canova walked round the demolished palace and considered it with attention.

"Is this for eating?" he inquired.

"Oh! no, my little one," answered the chief cook, "it is only to look at."

"Ah well, all is safe. I promise you something better than that in an hour from now. Hand me that lump of butter."

The chief cook, astonished, but already half persuaded by his boldness, gave him all he wanted; and of this lump of butter, Canova made a superb lion, which he sprinkled with meal, mounted on a pedestal of rich architecture, and before the appointed hour, exhibited his finished work to the wondering spectators. The chief cook embraced him with tears in his eyes, called him his preserver, and hastened to place upon the table the extemporaneous master-piece of the young mason.

There was a cry of admiration from the guests. Never had they seen, said they, so remarkable a piece of sculpture. They demanded the author of it. "Doubtless one of my people," answered my lord, with a satisfied air; and he asked the chief cook.

He blushed, stammered, and ended by confessing what had happened. All the company wished to see the young journeyman, and overwhelmed Canova with praises. It was decided at once that the master of the household should take charge of him, and have him go through studies suitable to his precocious talent.

They had no cause to repent of this decision. We have seen that Canova knew how to profit by the lessons of his masters, who he soon excelled. Nevertheless, in the midst of his celebrity, he was pained with remembering the adventure of the lion of butter, and said he was very sorry that it had

been melted. "I hope," he added, "that my later statues will be more solid, otherwise my reputation runs a great risk." January, 1839.

From the National Intelligencer.

The annexed letter from a gentleman in Philadelphia relates to a lady whose arrival in our country has been recently announced in the New York papers, and whose name, lineage, and personal merits invest her with great interest for every American. We hope we may consult the gratification of our readers by giving publicity to the letter, without offending the delicacy of her whose character and attractions it so eloquently extols.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 28, 1838.

The curiosity of this city had been much excited some days ago by accounts of a remarkable young person who was attracting great attention in New York, and it has now been gratified in the highest degree by her appearance here. Before I attempt any description of her person, I will give you an imperfect sketch of what I have gathered of her history, and a very touching one it is, replete with unusual interest, especially to Americans. Her name is AMERICA VESPUCCI, a daughter of the illustrious house of Vespucci, of Florence, in Tuscany. Nor has this name been indifferently given to her. She is a lineal descendant of the great navigator, Amerigo Vespucci, after whom this country has received its name of America. Since the time when the name of this renowned discoverer was raised to so much distinction, the children of this house have borne it uninterruptedly, so that they may be Americans in a very lofty sense of the word. The lady of whom I speak, and who is the first of the family who has honored this country with a visit, is worthy of every eulogium, both on account of the dignity of her character, her intellectual endowments, and a degree of personal beauty and grace that has given her celebrity, such as few of the noblest Tuscan dames attain.

And now as to the immediate motive which brought her, young, beautiful, and alone, to this country. She makes no secret of this, and the account she gives is corroborated from the highest sources. An enthusiast, and connecting from the earliest moment the love of liberty with her own cherished name, she had the misfortune to give offence to the sovereign authority of her native country. Neither her sex, nor her youth, could prevail to exempt her from the austere judgments which, at that time, fell upon political offenders, and she was banished. Turned upon the wide world alone, and with the most limited means, barely sufficient for her honest wants, this rigor, instead of prostrating her, roused energies within her she had been unconscious of. She went into a world, then strange to her, undaunted, and her history and her unpretending merit opened all hearts to her. This occurred about four years ago. Since that period, the Court of Tuscany, which has never been a very unrelenting one, has given her permission to return home again.

No one who sees her would doubt an instant of her unquestionable respectability, but this is put beyond all cavil by the testimony which some of the most noble and honorable persons in Europe have given of her character and conduct, and of the regard she has inspired them with. I have been told that the Queen of France, one of the most virtuous and discriminating personages of our times, has written letters in her favor; and, indeed, it is said that she is addressed to the immediate protection of her excellency M. Pontois, the present French Minister in this country. But the very affectionate and cordial manner in which the ladies who take the lead in society in this city have received her, the unwearied pains taken by them to assure her of a welcome, to minister to her comforts and enjoyments, is a sufficient proof both of their confidence and discernment.

I ought to stop here, and not attempt a description of her person, in which I shall certainly fail. At any rate, I shall venture a few words:

I met her first at a select dinner-party at New York, and I confess I was fascinated both with her appearance and deportment. She is about five feet six inches high, and inclining to be stout, but carrying herself with so much ease and grace that every portion of her person seems to be in perfect harmony with the rest. She is about twenty-six years old, and when her fine intellectual features are lighted up, and those dark expressive eyes (the windows of her soul) are beaming abroad from beneath her ebony hair, crowned by a gold Tuscan Berretto, and her rich embroidered skin placed in contrast with her black velvet robe, most exquisitely adjusted to her person, she stands not in need of a very rare dignity of manner, blended with much affability and cheerfulness, to make her one of the most attractive persons I ever saw. Her conversation reveals a cultivated mind, familiar with the history of her country, and her portfolio of Etruscan and Grecian Vases, drawn by herself, surpassed every effort of the kind I had seen. But the historic interest with which this lady is invested throws an indelible charm around her. You feel all the time as if you were in company with a living personification of America. Indeed, who could have expected to see exactly such a person, and under such circumstances, in a country which derives its name from her ancestor?

Discovery of Mummies at Durango, Mexico.—A million of Mummies, it is stated, have lately been discovered in the environs of Durango, in Mexico. They are in a sitting posture, but have the same wrappings, bands and ornaments of the Egyptian. Among them was found a poignant of flint, with a sculptured handle, chaplains, necklaces, &c. of alternately colored beads, fragments of bones polished like ivory, fine worked elastic tissues, mockskins worked like those of our Indians to-day, bones of vipers, &c. It remains to continue these interesting researches, and America will become another Egypt to Antiquarians, and her ruins will go back to the oldest periods of the world, showing doubtless that the ancestors of the Montezumas lived on the Nile, and that their luxurious civilization was broken up and overpowered by the hardy hordes of Asiatic Tartars, who came down from Bering Straits and the Rocky mountains. The scenes of Atrix and Alaric in Rome and Greece, were rehearsed at an earlier day on the shores of California and the plains of Mexico. It is unknown of the mummies above mentioned what kind of em-

balmment was used, or whether it was nitrous deposits in the caves where they were found. A fact of importance is stated that the shells of necklaces are of a marine shell found at Zacateca, on the Pacific, where the Columbus of their forefathers probably therefore landed from the Malay, Hindostan or Chinese coast, or from their islands in the Indian ocean.—N. Y. Eccl. Star.

TO THE FREEMEN OF THE FOURTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA.

GENTLEMEN: Circumstances of a private nature prevented me from visiting all of you, during the recess of Congress, and I take this means of communicating with my constituents on the state of our affairs, and of presenting to them my views of the great questions which agitate the public mind. Before I proceed, however, to these interesting topics, let me remind you that I came to Congress "uncommitted and untrammelled." In the short address, published previously to the election of 1837, after stating my objections to some of the prominent measures of General Jackson's Administration, I declare that "if Mr. Van Buren advise good and wholesome laws, I shall give him a hearty support." My feelings and prejudices were against this gentleman, but, having been placed in the Presidency by a majority of the American people, it was the part of wisdom to give him a fair hearing, and to express my determination, I used the emphatic language, "I will approve where I can, and condemn when I must."

During the canvass, the pecuniary distress of the times was the chief subject of discussion, and I thought that the bungling manner in which the public finances were managed, was one of its principal causes: I condemned the attack on the National Bank—I spoke of its usefulness to the country—and endeavored to remove some of the prejudices entertained by the people against that corporation. I also believed that a great regulator was necessary to keep the State Banks in check, and I thought it probable that we should be compelled to resort to the establishment of a National Institution; but never did I pledge myself to vote "yea" or "nay" on the subject, and reserved this and all other questions for future deliberation. He who lives at a distance from the great theatre of public life, and pins his faith to scheming politicians, cannot reach a safe conclusion, and I resolved to be a free man, and judge for myself, or to remain in the honest obscurity of my private home. Had I supposed that I was elected to be the attorney of a party, or to work under the orders of some selfish leader, who is indifferent to the feelings and welfare of my own constituents, I should have rejected the tawdry honor with scorn. Whatever may have been my prepossessions, or however warmly I may have expressed my sentiments, I never doubted that the people understood me to be free from the shackles of party, and believed that I would use my own understanding in the discharge of my public duties. I cannot suppose that you think me less true than Mr. Clay or Mr. Van Buren; however, splendid may be the talents of these gentlemen, they cannot look so closely to your interest as one that was born, and lives amongst you; and in thinking for myself, without giving undue weight to their opinions, my conscience accuses me from the slightest impropriety. I refer now to the terms of my service, because I shall act in accordance with this view of the agreement: and after a cautious survey of the whole subject, with a single eye to the welfare of the country, I am opposed to the establishment of a National Bank, or the existence of any corporation, whose power and whose business pervades the whole Confederacy. It is not to be denied, that a Federal Institution is a convenient agent to the Secretary of the Treasury. The revenue, wherever collected, can be deposited there, and wherever needed, can be disbursed through its various branches; and if regard be had only to the ease of public officers, or the despatch with which credit can be transported, a National Bank is the most appropriate instrument. But it is not indispensably necessary. The commercial relations of the Union, enable the Bank to perform the duty above mentioned, and the same reason will put it in the power of the Government to expend its money through its own officers. Most of the revenue is collected in New York, and some of it is wanted in Missouri. The merchants of the latter State purchase their goods in the former, and are always glad to have funds where their debts are payable; and if the money of the Government be in safe hands at New York, a draft on this deposit will be equivalent to specie in St. Louis, and eagerly desired. This simple illustration throws light on the whole subject; in early times, when there were neither banks nor brokers, it might have been necessary to put up a National Institution; but a check or draft of the Secretary of the Treasury, wherever it may now go, will purchase the best currency, and be sufficient to pay the debts of the Government.

A paper circulation, common to the whole country, has been much lauded, and is certainly useful to the travelling community. It is said that if a person started at New Orleans and went to Boston, half of his expenses might be charged to brokerage; but the taking of a small quantity of specie would remedy this evil, even if we were disposed to compare the temporary convenience of a few travellers to the permanent interests of the thousands who never leave their own State. The local banks, if properly managed, can always furnish exchange at a moderate premium. The relative business of the different sections of the country, is the basis of this operation; if Newbern buys more than it sells, exchange will be against Newbern, and if it sells more than it buys, exchange will be in its favor, and this is the universal law under every system of finance. During the late crisis, exchange at New Orleans on New York was 25 per cent. above par, while in North Carolina a draft could be obtained at 1 per cent.; this reason was that New Orleans was heavily indebted to New York, whilst the merchants of our own State had been doing a snug and prudent business. The Bank of England has no branch at Dublin or Edinburgh, yet the merchants of that Kingdom do not complain of the derangement of exchanges; there is no bank to regulate the commercial intercourse between New York and Liverpool, and there is no

justifiable cause why this business of our own cities should not be on a footing equally favorable. In the breaking up of an old system, and the commencement of another, there will be some distress and confusion, but in a short time the business of the country will become adapted to the new state of things, and the predicted evils will not appear.

The chief argument, however, in favor of a National Bank, is its supposed ability to maintain a sound currency. The precedent of 1816, when Mr. Madison gave up his objections and signed the bill for the establishment of the late Institution, is frequently referred to, and at one time it had great weight in my own mind. But a more mature acquaintance with the history of banking, and a more searching investigation of its tendencies, have shaken my faith in the soundness of this opinion.

The General Assembly grants a charter of incorporation, and if moneyed men are pleased with its provisions, they subscribe for the stock, and the bank begins its operations. The object of the legislature is to furnish a paper currency to the people—that of the capitalist, is to make a good investment for himself. Proud, and keen styled, and looking to his own interests, he manages the bank to make money for the stockholders. The greater the issue of paper, the larger will be the dividends, and the higher the stock will rise in the market; thus for a time even an honest man will be tempted to go beyond the bounds of prudence, and throw out more currency than is wanted.

When to this is added the eagerness of borrowers, the result of the whole affair is easily perceptible. Though young in years, the country is already in the old age of luxury and refinement. Habits of industry and economy are distasteful to many of our people. They wish to substitute speculation for patient labor, and they are greedy of riches, though they indulge in expensive pleasures. A temporary combination takes place between the banker and the borrower; every thing rises in price; the rich man thinks himself a prince, the poor one acts as if he had wealth, and all go on, rejoicing until the bubble is swollen to its utmost extent, and then the puncture of a pin brings it to the earth. The bank cannot redeem its paper, because its debtors cannot pay, for prices and property are in an artificial state; the knowing capitalist took advantage of some one's ignorance to sell his stock at a high advance, and leaves the institution to the odium, which his own conduct brought against it.

Any bank of large capital, properly managed, would certainly check the State corporations, and keep them within reasonable limits. But there is no guaranty that a National Institution would be governed with more virtue and wisdom than the State banks; men of the same character are stockholders of each, desirous of large dividends, and the debtors of one are as little likely to be circumspet as those of the other. The same vice infects the whole system, and where there is apparent difference between the federal and local banks, it is caused by peculiar circumstances. If in 1816, the Legislature had compelled the B. & O. corporation to perform their contracts, or the General Government had demanded specie in the payment of its dues, there would have been no necessity for a National Bank; if the makers and guarantors of the law would extend to banks the same penalties, which befall insolvent individuals, we should not often hear of the suspension of specie payments.

That this is the true remedy, has even more than proved. The banks of New York would have forfeited their charters, if rechartered had not taken place on or before the 1st May, and this did happen not only without a National Bank, but in spite of the Mammoth at Philadelphia. I have no animosity with those who wish to perpetuate misapplied institutions, for there are times when the wisest cannot foresee the revolutions in trade and commerce, and should not be blamed; I only lay down a general principle, applicable to ordinary cases, by which the people can be protected, and the banks be made to know their duty.

But if a National Bank can confer these boasted blessings on the people, it must be invested with vast power and extensive privileges. The President of the late Institution, when asked by a committee of the Senate "Has the Bank at any time opposed any of the State Banks?" answered "No, never—but there are very few banks, that might not have been destroyed by an exertion of the power of the Bank." It thus seems that twelve individuals would control the moneyed interests of this great country. If they were favorable to a State Bank, it might issue bills to any amount, and make large dividends for its stockholders; if they were hostile, it must shut its doors and close its business, without regard to the power which brought it into existence. Whatever might be the interests of the people, among whom it was located, or the object of the Legislature which granted the charter, the local bank must look to the views and feelings of the distant master, on whose smiles and frowns its fate would hang. This powerful influence would not be confined to the capitalist and their immediate dependants; the industrious classes, the merchant, manufacturer, agriculturist, and all who were in need of loans and credit for successful operations, would have a direct interest in propitiating the great Moloch of money. When we think of the rage for riches which characterizes the present generation, and the insatiable desire for the luxuries of life, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the power, which is believed to dispense these favors, would be almost irresistible.

The Federal and State Governments combined, do not possess an influence commensurate with that which acts on the pecuniary hopes and fears of an industrious and enterprising community. The latter comes to our fireside, it mingles with our most sacred feelings, it affects all our interests, it can give us competence, or it may dash us and our children into the dirt. Without appealing to high principles, I would ask the thinking people of this country, if it be safe to give a single corporation so great privileges? Is it not best to divide the moneyed power, to separate it into smaller parts, so that capitalists would rival and check each other, and not act in a solid phalanx on the other classes of society?

But it is said that those who have money are timid; that far from interfering with State affairs, they are apt to succumb to politicians, instead of manfully struggling for their own rights. This is the truth in monarchical or aristocratical governments, where there is no chance for bankers and stockholders to acquire much influence in a republic, however, where individuals have great opportunities of perfecting the public mind, wealth is one of the greatest engines that can be brought to bear