

Williamston



Mercury.

"THE CONSTITUTION AND THE UNION—ONE AND INSEPARABLE."

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The Dead Mariner.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.
SLEEP—sleep—above thy course
The winds their Sabbath keep—
The waves are round thee—and thy breast
Heaves with the heaving deep;
Over thee, mild eve her ben'gling wings;
And the white gull flutters her wings;
And the blue halcyon loves to lave
Her plume in the holy wave.

Sleep—sleep—on the glimmering depths
Of ocean's coral waves
Are thy bright waves—thy requiem
The music of thy waves—
The gentle foam forever burn
In fallow beauty round thy urn;
And, pure and deep as infant love,
The blue sea rolls its waves above.

Sleep—sleep—on the fearful waste
Of madd'ning clouds and deep
May leave thy limbs and bones track
Above thy place of sleep,
But when the waves are in a fit to rest,
As if they would murmur of thy breast,
And the bright victims of the sea
Prevalence will make their home with thee.

Sleep—sleep—thy course is far away,
But love bewails thee yet—
For thee the heart-wrung sigh is breathed,
And lovely eyes are wet:
And she, the young and beautiful bride,
Her thoughts are hovering by thy side;
As oft she turns to view with tears
The Eden of departed years.

A True Ghost Story.

"Did you ever hear," said a friend once to me, "a real ghost story, one you might depend upon?"
"There are not many such to be heard," I replied, "and I am afraid it has never been my good fortune to meet with those who were really able to give me a genuine, well-authenticated story."
"Well, you shall never have cause to say so again; and as it was an adventure that happened to myself, you can scarcely think it other than well authenticated. I know you to be no coward, or might hesitate before I told it to you. You need not stir the fire; there is plenty of light by which you can hear it. And now to begin. I had been riding hard one day in the autumn for nearly five or six hours, through some of the most temperate weather to which it had ever been my ill luck to be exposed. It was just about the time of the Equinox, and perfect hurricanes swept over the hills, as if every wind in heaven had broken loose, and had gone mad, and on every hill the rain and driving sleet poured down in one unbroken shower.
"When I reached the head of Wentford valley—you know the place, a narrow ravine with rocks on one side, and those rich full woods (not that they were very full then, for the winds had shaken them till there was scarcely a leaf on their bare rustling branches) on the other, with a clear little stream winding through the hollow dell—when I came to the entrance of this valley, weather-beaten veteran as I was, I scarcely knew how to hold on my way; the wind, as it were, held in between the two high banks, rushed like a river just broken loose into a new course carrying with it a perfect sheet of rain, against my poor horse and I struggled with considerable difficulty; still I went on, for the village lay at the other end, and I had a patient to see there, who had sent a very urgent message, entreating me to come to him as soon as possible. We are slaves to a message,

we poor medical men, and I urged on my poor jaded brute with a keen relish for the warm fire and good dinner that waited me as soon as I could see my unfortunate patient, and get back to a home doubly valued on such a day as that in which I was then out. It was indeed dreary riding in such weather; and the scene altogether, through which I passed, was certainly not the most conducive toward raising a man's spirits; but I told how long I sat looking at it, but I remember something of a rushing sound, a feeling of relief, a falling exhausted back upon my pillow, and then I awoke in the morning ill and unrefreshed. I was ill at ease, and the first question I asked, on coming down stairs, was, whether any messenger had come to summon me to Wentford. A messenger had come, they told me, but it was to say I need trouble myself no further, as the man was already dead.

it all again, rather than sit the hour I was obliged to spend by the sick-bed of the wretched man I had been summoned to visit. He had met with an accident the day before, and as he had been drinking up to the time, and the people had delayed sending for me, I found him in a frightful state of fever; and it was really an awful thing either to look at or hear him. He was delicious, and perfectly furious; and his face, swelled with passion, and crimson with the fever that was burning up, was a sight to frighten children, and not one calculated to add to the tranquillity even of full-grown men. I dare say you think me very weak, and that I ought to have been insured to such things, minding his ravings no more than the dash of the rain against the window; but, during the whole of my practice, I had never seen man of woman, in health or in fever, in so frightful a state of furious frenzy, with the impress of every bad passion stamped so broadly and fearfully upon the face; and in the miserable level that then held me with his old witch-like mother standing by, the babble of the wind and rain outside added to the ravings of the wretched creature within. I began to feel neither in a happy nor an enviable frame of mind. There is nothing so frightful as where the reasonable spirit seems to abandon man's body, and leave it to a fiend instead.
"After an hour or more waiting patiently by his bedside, not liking to leave the helpless old woman alone with so dangerous a companion (for I could not answer for any thing he might do in frenzy), I thought that hecmedies by which I hoped in some measure to subdue the fever, seemed beginning to take effect, and at I might leave him, promising to send all that was necessary, though fearing much that he had gone beyond all my power to restore him; and desiring that I might immediately be called back again, should he get worse instead of better, which I felt almost certain would be the case, I hastened homeward, glad enough to be leaving wretched huts and raving men, driving rain and winny hills, for a comfortable house, dry cloths, a warm fire, and a good dinner. I think I never saw such a fire in my life as the one that blazed up my chimney; it looked so wonderfully warm and bright, and there seemed an indescribable air of comfort about the room which I had never noticed before. One would have thought I should have enjoyed it all intensely after my wet ride, but throughout the whole evening, the scenes of the day would keep recurring to my mind with most uncomfortable distinctness and it was in vain that I endeavored to forget it all in a book, one of my old favorites too; so at last I fairly gave up the attempt, as the hideous face would come continually between my eyes and an especially good passage; and I went off to bed heartily tired and expecting sleep very readily to visit me. Nor was I disappointed; I was soon deep asleep, though my last thought was for the little valley I had left. How long this heavy and dreamless sleep continued, I can not tell, but gradually I felt consciousness returning, in the shape of the very thoughts with which I fell asleep, and at last I opened my eyes, thoroughly roused by a heavy blow at my window. I can not describe my horror, when, by the light of a moon struggling among the heavy surging-like clouds, I saw the very face, the face of that man looking in at me through the casement, the eye distended and the face pressed close to the glass. I started up in bed, to convince myself that I really was awake, and not suffering from some frightful dream; there it stood, perfectly motionless, its wide ghastly eyes fixed unwaveringly on mine, which by a kind of fascination, became equally fixed and rigid, gazing upon the dreadful face, which alone without a body was visible at the window, unless an indefinite black shadow, that seemed to float beyond it, might be fancied into one. I can scarcely

tell how long I so sat looking at it, but I remember something of a rushing sound, a feeling of relief, a falling exhausted back upon my pillow, and then I awoke in the morning ill and unrefreshed. I was ill at ease, and the first question I asked, on coming down stairs, was, whether any messenger had come to summon me to Wentford. A messenger had come, they told me, but it was to say I need trouble myself no further, as the man was already dead.
aid, having died about the middle of the night. I never felt so strangely in my life as when they told me this, and my brain almost reeled as the events of the previous day and night passed through my mind in rapid succession. That I had seen something supernatural in the darkness of the night, I had never doubted, but when the sun shone brightly into my room in the morning, through the same window, where I had seen so frightful and strange a sight by the spectral light of the moon, I began to believe more it was a dream, and endeavored to ridicule myself out of all uncomfortable feelings, which nevertheless, I could not quite shake off. Haunted by what I considered a painful dream, I left my room, and the first thing I heard was a confirmation of what I had been for the last hour endeavoring to reason and ridicule myself out of believing. It was some hours before I could recover my ordinary tranquility; and then I came back; not slowly as you might have expected, as the impression gradually wore off, and time wrought his usual changes in the mind as in body, but suddenly—by the discovery that our large white owl had escaped during the night, and had honored my window with a visit before he became quite accustomed to his liberty."

A Costly Cathedral Ornament.

But Spain had some thing better still to show—one of the grandest things in the Exhibition. It is a superb piece of work in brass—in silver—in gold and precious stones, called in the catalogue the "custodia" (or monstrance in which the Host is exposed to Roman Catholic veneration during the rite of "Benediction") made for the cathedral of Lima, and valued at £28,000. It is a massive base, more than two feet square, and it is more than five feet high. The pedestal presents several sacred subjects in relief. At the four projecting corners as many angels, choice-ly cast in chased silver, kneel, adoring. From the midst of them rises the pillar, in polished brass, covered with beautiful ecclesiastical decorations. Then it expands, and figures in chased silver, of Moses, of David, of St. Peter and St. Paul, and of the Virgin, support a beautiful entablature. Nearer the top similar figures of the four evangelists support the continuation of the pillar, which rises further until it spreads into a blazing circle of divergent rays of glory, resplendent with gold and silver, sparkling with stars of light, radiant with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds, and surmounted with a cross chiefly composed of gems.—London Weekly Times.

Breeding as an Art.

Animal and vegetable life left to itself seems to be subject to a general law, that continually reproduces itself in the same form in which it originally appeared. The hairy crab, gnarled and thorny, is the same on the western prairies, as on the eastern hill sides—the same now it was a thousand years ago—the same it was when the stars sang together. Left to itself it is unchangeable. But subject to the control of man, and the rules of art, and the acid, worthless crab swells into the princely Baldwin and golden peppin.
The change is slow, and the result of much care and labor. It must be taken from the forest and planted in better soil. Competing trees and hungry weeds must not steal away its nutrient. With careful and generous culture, the fruit will be enlarged, slight deviations in flavor will appear to the critical and careful observer. The best of these must be planted and reared to bearing, and the best again selected, and so on until the highest perfection is attained. Precisely the same law obtains in animal life; and those animals and birds that are domesticated, have been, and can be, greatly and permanently changed by the breeder's art, in color, form, qualities and disposition. The changes you desire will perhaps seem slow, but

Agricultural.

SELECTED FOR THE MERCURY BY T. H.

Improvement of Worn Land.

As our lands are injured more by the washing rains than any other cause, the first step toward improvement is to protect the land, by guard-drains or hill-side ditches, so as to carry off the excess of water with the least possible damage to the land, and as all old land is more or less washed into gullies, the hill-side ditches are indispensable, in order to cut off the water from the gullies, and thus prevent them from increasing in size and length; and then by throwing in brush, trash and logs, they will soon fill up so that the plow can cross them. As hill-side ditching is a very important item, it should always be done with a proper instrument, and not with "the eye," as it is impossible for any man to give the ditch the same grade throughout by "the eye," and without this regularity of grade, it will wash too deep in some places and fill up in others. In grading a ditch the object should be to carry off the water without washing the ditch into a gully, and also to give full enough to prevent it from filling up and breaking over. The Rafter Compass, with a spirit-level attached, is a good and simple instrument for laying out ditches, and by giving the ditch one inch grade to every five feet in length, the water will be carried off effectually. In locating a ditch, the first thing is to get the right starting point. Go to the top of the hill and see where the water has collected sufficiently to commence a wash; then start the ditch just above, so as to catch this water, and run down hill, following the level wherever it may lead, until you reach some outlet for the water. Having located the first ditch, the distance to the next will depend on the declivity of the hill and the amount of water to be conveyed out of the field. The second ditch should be close enough to catch the water that falls on the land before the first ditch, before it accumulates to wash; and so with the other ditches. As the design of ditches is to prevent the land from washing, by the accumulation of water, be sure that you have enough of them to accomplish this design; better have too many than not enough. After laying out a ditch, I plow it with a two-horse plow. Commencing at one end, I walk ahead, guided by the little sticks which were used in laying it off, and the plow following, throwing the dirt down-hill; when the end is reached the plow returns to the lower side, throwing the dirt up hill, leaving a space of about two feet between the furrows unbroken, for the bank of the ditch to rest upon. After running two or three furrows on the upper side of the ditch, throwing the dirt down hill, clean out with hoes, being particular to strengthen the bank, across my washes, with a log, and throw brush or logs in the wash above the ditch, to catch the loose dirt and prevent the ditch filling up at that point, and causing it to break.—Planter and Mechanic.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS.

The Rev. John Dixon Long gives the following interesting account of a visit he paid to the late Hon. John M. Clayton:

The Hon. John M. Clayton, of Delaware, had two sons, his only children, James and Charles. They both died as they entered manhood. The father has recently followed them to the spirit land. Charles was talented and reserved. His father lavished upon him the wealth of his affections. He sent him to Paris and Rome to perfect his education. Soon after his return home, consumption, that destroyer of so many youthful prospects, settled upon him. The best medical aid was called in requisition. He was under the care of Dr. Comper. Death approached slowly, but with steady pace. I learned that no minister of the Gospel had been to see him. I was not personally acquainted with him or his father, but was well acquainted with James. Impressed with the conviction that I ought to visit him, and present to his mind the subject of religion, I determined to make the attempt. Discouraging thoughts arose in my mind. How did I know that a visit to the young man would be acceptable from a stranger? The father also might be displeased at the intrusion of a stranger upon the privacy of a son. I could get no one to introduce me. I knew that Mr. Clayton would receive me politely as a visitor; but I feared that my object would be displeasing, and my message rejected or disregarded.
With many fears, I walked from a neighbor's house, and arrived at the home of Mr. Clayton just before his dinner hour. I rang the bell, supposing that a servant would come to the door, and hoping that James would be at home, who would inform me of the probability of an interview with his brother. But, to my surprise, Mr. Clayton came to the door himself. I introduced myself to him as best I could, but did not inform him that I was a minister. The period of my visit was soon after General Taylor's election, and a political friend of Mr. Clayton was on a visit at his house. Contrary to my expectation, he invited me into the parlor, and introduced me to his friend. Strange feelings came over me at that hour. What to do, or what to say, or how to explain the object of my visit, I knew not. Mr. Clayton was scanning me, and probably thinking I was some politician seeking office. He asked what was the news. I told him I knew of none. This seemed to confuse him; he took up his newspapers and threw them down. The conversation between himself and friend ceased. His eye scanned me more closely, and it seemed that he could not make up his mind concerning me. My position was exceedingly unpleasant. The perspiration was gathering in drops upon my brow. Just at that critical moment, his son James came into the room, greeted me kindly, and invited me to his apartment. I told him my business. He remarked that the servant had taken his brother Charles to ride, and would soon be back—that Charles did not converse much, as it hurt him to talk. The brother soon returned, when I was introduced to him and politely received. Dinner was ready, but I had dined at the old fashioned hour of twelve o'clock. I begged to be left alone, and the young men retired to their dining-room. While there, I suppose James informed his brother who I was, and what was the nature of my visit. I was planning how I should approach Charles upon the subject of religion; and while thus absorbed in thought, I felt an arm affectionately laid about me. I turned, and it was Charles Clayton, who addressed me thus:
"Sir, I cannot bear to see you alone; I cannot eat unless you come and sit with us at the table."
I told him that for his gratification, I would do as he wished. Soon after I was seated at the table, he started the subject of Romanism. He said that he had seen it at headquarters at Rome; that the Cardinals were proud and haughty; and that he disliked the whole system. After dinner he invited me to his private chamber. He took up a Bible and said that a kind lady friend had presented it to him. He then requested me to select some chapters suitable to his condition. I did so, and among others the eighth chapter of Romans. He pulled my chair up to his, and I saw, from the tremulous tear in his eye, that this moth-

erless and sisterless young man wanted to unburthen a sin-blooding heart to some one that could tell him what he must do to be saved. I encouraged him to relate his experience. He told me that his heavenly Father had convinced him of the vanity of all earthly honors and pleasures; that he believed he should die; that he had no desire whatever to get well; that he feared, if he should recover, that such were the worldly associations surrounding him, his present impressions might be effaced; and that he would rather die than that this should be the case. I told him that what he needed was the divine assurance that God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned his sins, and that he was a son of God; that he must not trust in anything but the merits of Christ; that he must look to the Savior with a child-like faith. "Yes," said he, "this is just what I want." And the tears gushed from his eye. I asked him if I should sing and pray with him. "If you please," was the prompt reply. I sang:
"Other knowledge I disdain,
It's all but vanity;
Christ, the Lamb of God was slain;
He tasted death for me;
Me to save from endless woe,
The sin-atoning victim died.
Only Jesus will I know,
And Jesus crucified."
We knelt in prayer, and I committed the young man to God and the word of his grace.
Before leaving, I went into Mr. Clayton good by. He had ascertained that my visit was agreeable to Charles, and I never saw a father more delighted. He insisted that I should come often, and ordered his carriage to be brought that his servant might take me home. I declined, stating that I was not accustomed to riding in carriages, that I had walked there, and could walk back to the friend's house where I was staying. Charles insisted on walking a short distance with me, expressing his gratitude for my visit, and entreating me to see him as often as I could. He pressed my hand for the last time, and a short time afterward he left for Havana, and died among strangers, soon after his arrival in that city.
There was hope in his death. I related the incident of my visit to the late Rev. James Smith, my presiding elder, and he thought that I ought to publish them in the newspapers. I thought not. I thought that some might impute an unworthy motive to me as the cause of my visit.
The elder Mr. Clayton is now gone to another world, and I feel at liberty to give the facts of the case.
A SCENE IN HAVANA.—We went to hear the military band play last evening, in the Grand Square; it was a splendid band, and played several opera airs beautifully. Many ladies were walking up and down, generally attended by *caballeros*; but the greater part of the *distinguees* *Habanezers* were in their *volantes*, each fair senorita looking like the *Reine des fleurs*, crowned with flowers. The *muchedambre* (mob or crowd) were standing about evidently enjoying the music; the negroes and their sable dames and the damsels, especially, appear to delight in it. The whole scene is one of great beauty and enchantment: the lovely trees in the Grand Plaza, the magnificent *capitulum* of the night—that crown of glory—which is so unlike that tame somewhat half-a-crown like silver lamp, we call the moon, in our little northern nook—the flower crowned ladies in those chariots, sparkling with silver—the splendid liveries of the postillions—the gay military uniforms—the picturesque looking negroes and negresses standing about, or sometimes dancing in their glee to the exhilarating tunes that are played—the negresses occasionally in white dresses, scarlet satins, yellow turbans, and blue scarfs, and various other such fantastical combinations of colors, with their great flaming eyes, *a la flor de la cara*—all unite to form a delightful and singular picture.—*Lady Worth's New York*.

In North Arkansas the wheat crops from appearances, will be more than average this season. The corn crops are doing finely; but cotton has been injured by cold weather and the wet. It is supposed, though, that cotton will not fall short of an average yield. Fruit has generally been killed. Fruit trees that were not in very exposed situations were not entirely cut off.
Rise early, apply thyself with industry, live soberly, and thou shalt have bread to eat.

LARGE ORDERS FROM ENGLAND FOR AMERICAN FIRE ARMS.—We learn from Mr. E. V. Haughwout agent for the Ames Manufacturing Company, that orders were brought out by the last steamer from England, for the immediate construction of large quantities of machinery for the manufacture of the most approved American fire-arms, and that the same have been put in hand for execution, both at Chicopee and other large works, offering the needed facilities. The agents of the British government bearing these orders, also bring a large instalment of sterling gold, and are unrestricted as to the amount of work to be done. The American machinery already in England is worked up to its fullest capacity, turning out several thousand guns per month, under the direction of workmen from the shop at Chicopee.—*Journal of Commerce*.