



THE

STAR,

AND CONCEPTION BAY JOURNAL.

Vol. III.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 1837.

No. 140.

HARBOUR GRACE, Conception Bay, Newfoundland:—Printed and Published by JOHN THOMAS BURTON, at his Office, opposite Messrs. W. DIXON & Co's.

THE BEGGAR OF ALGIERS.

We feel ourselves in this country at liberty to give or refuse our benevolence to any object that implores our assistance and should be apt to treat with contempt the intimation of a person who should caution us against this generous action, lest we should by that means incur a debt we may hereafter be unable to discharge. And yet this caution, however unnecessary it may appear in this country, is very different in others. In all the states of Barbary, a present of liberality becomes a debt, which the laws of that country oblige the giver to pay; a truth which many merchants have experienced to their cost and vexation.

About the beginning of the present century, a Greek merchant resided at Algiers, who used every year to make a voyage to Tunis or Egypt, to dispose of the commodities he had purchased from the Moors and the trading ships from Europe. While he continued to carry on this branch of commerce, a countryman of his paid the debt of nature, left him his executor, and, among his legacies, ordered a certain sum of money to be distributed among the indigent and distressed. One morning, as the merchant was passing through the street, he saw a Moor sitting on a piece of mat, lame, and almost blind. Struck with an object that seemed an epitome of human miseries, the Greek listened to his moving tale, and beheld, with a pleasing satisfaction, that this deplorable object employed himself in making thread laces, by which, and the charity of the benevolent, he procured a scanty subsistence. So unusual a sight, where wretchedness and industry were so remarkably blended in the same object, excited the compassion of the merchant, who, with a generous tear of humanity, dropped him a handful of aspers. Astonished at so unexpected an instance of kindness, the beggar followed the merchant on his crutches, calling upon heaven to shower down its choicest blessings on his head. He told all he met how exceedingly bountiful that Christian had been to him—Struck with this instance of liberality, the populace joined the cripple in his applauds. This, said they, is indeed an instance of universal benevolence, because extended to a person whose religion is different from his own.

The beggar followed his patron until he discovered the house in which he resided, and took his post for the future in a place where the merchant passed daily by him. Next day the beggar repeated his request, and the merchant his charity. He was persuaded he could not discharge the will of his late friend better than by giving to this distressed object, as it seemed to have a tendency to make the infidels in love with the benevolent influence of the gospel; he therefore continued his daily benevolence till the time of his departure for Egypt.

The beggar still kept his post, but, missing his benefactor, he made inquiry after him, and had the mortification to be informed that he was not in the kingdom. Whenever his clerk passed by the beggar, he lifted up his hands to heaven, and prayed for his master's safe return, which did not happen until near six months after. The beggar expressed his joy at seeing him; but when the merchant, in return for his kind expressions, was going to repeat his usual benevolence, the cripple declined accepting it, saying it was better to pay him all his arrears at once. Confounded at so strange a refusal, the merchant asked what he meant by arrears; to which the Moor replied, that, as he had been absent near six months, his daily benevolence, which had been omitted during his voyage, amounted to 110 rials, which was the sum now owed him. The Greek smiled at the impertinent answer of the beggar, and was for some time in doubt whether it merited contempt or chastisement. But thinking the latter would be considered as cruel by

the people, he left him without deigning to return him an answer.

The beggar, however, laid his complaint before the Dey, and the merchant was sent for to make his defence. The Moor alleged that the merchant, during a whole month, had given him a rial, but that his charity had not been thrown away it had greatly augmented the number of his customers, and proved to him an increasing fund of riches: that so considerable an increase had induced him to lay aside his business of making the thread laces, which was to him a very painful operation, as he had almost lost his sight; that the merchant went away without giving him the least warning that his pension was to cease, and he had therefore constantly kept his post, where he had daily offered up his prayers for his safe return; that relying on his pension, he had contracted some debts which he was unable to discharge; and that, when he demanded his arrears, he had laughed at him, and even threatened to chastise his insolence. The Merchant admitted that the account given by the Moor was literally true, but insisted, that alms being a voluntary action, its continuance depended wholly on the donor. After a discussion of the affair in council, the Merchant was condemned to pay the beggar a rial for every day since his departure till the time of this decision, with a piastre extraordinary as a recompense for his reproaches. But he was told he was at liberty to declare that his intention was not to give him any alms or gratuity for the time to come. Against this the merchant many times protested, adding, that such a sentence would not soon be forgotten.

THE WATERMARK ON PAPER.

The following article, but more especially the last paragraph, is well entitled to public attention. It has appeared in some of the morning papers from a correspondent under the signature of I. C.

Great importance has ever been attached by the administrators of the law in the ecclesiastical, civil, and criminal courts (the two former especially), to "documentary links" in the chain of circumstantial evidence, on which are inserted *Anno Domini* water marks.

It cannot have escaped the memory of the public, that Olive Serres, the *ci-devant* Princess of Cumberland, some 14 years ago, asserted her claims to certain allowances, pursuant to grants and recognitions, which, doubtless, were attested by His Majesty George the Third, and divers members of the Cabinet of that Monarch, as well as by his son Edward, the late Duke of Kent.

The writer of this article attended, not only the courts in Doctors' Commons, but other courts to which the "blood royal," as she styled herself, was obliged to resort, and in every place the judges were staggered at the water-mark on some of the documents, which they considered a presumptive proof in favour of her claim.

I think, in the year 1822, the relatives of a Thomas Taylor, of Huddersfield, successfully contested the will of the testator, by which his property was bequeathed to some distant branches of the tree primogeniture. It was proved that Taylor died in the month of November. Affidavits were put in that at the near approach of death, but at that time in the possession of his faculties, he made a laconic will on a sheet of "foolscap." The learned judge, who soon after became Lord Stowell, regretted that he was obliged to deny the correctness of the depositions of the subscribing witnesses to the will and testament of the defunct gentleman; and why was he so obliged? because the testator, who was said to have made his will, "revoking all others," subscribed it in the middle of November, 1820, whereas the very sheet of paper bore the water-mark of 1821!!

One more instance out of many I could

adduce of judicial decisions founded on water-marks, and I shall give my reasons why they are not founded in equity.

During the time that Sergeant Remington presided in the Insolvent Debtors' Court, Moses Marcus applied for his discharge. As a London agent to several foreign houses, he, in the latter end of a particular year (1820 I think), became the consignee of considerable property, and speedily became an inmate of the Fleet. In order to prove to the court and his creditors the manner in which he had disposed of the consigners' property during the last three months of the preceding year, he put in a book, and swore positively that the entries were made on the days therein stated. The learned sergeant took a transparent view of one of the leaves of the ponderous ledger, which he indignantly hurled to the floor of the court, observing "Your petition is dismissed; for the paper was made in the year after the entries bear date in this book."

From an officer of that court I obtained yesterday (Wednesday), a document which contains the water-mark of the firm of extensive paper-makers, which I, for the present conceal, and to which is appended the following figures "1837." I have some doubt as to the legality of such an anticipatory issue, but I have none as to the necessity of those in whose hands are the issues of life, liberty and property, being, in future, extremely cautious before they decide on *prima facie* evidence.

NATIVE INDIAN SWORDSMAN.

A native Indian trooper is not less expert with the sword than with the spear and match lock, it is with this weapon only that he measures his skill with the Europeans, who have long ago relinquished the use of the others. The palm in this branch of science is usually accorded to the native, and perhaps a far greater proportion are adepts than are to be found in British battalions; but Colonel Skinner, who ought to be an authority in such cases, seems to give the preference to the European. An officer conversing with him on the subject, understood him to say, that "although contrary to the general opinion, he considered the British swordsman to be decidedly superior to the native, since the feint or pretended blow, the latter rarely understands, and therefore lays himself open in that quarter, where the attack is in reality meditated." Continuing the discourse, the Colonel mentioned, in illustration of the peculiar merits of both parties, that "he recollected, in Lord Lake's wars, a sergeant of dragoons, who was a capital swordsman, and so fond of fighting that he sought every opportunity of displaying his personal prowess against the enemy. On one occasion, having dashed out of the line to fight an antagonist worthy of the trial, he fell in with a Mahratta, mounted upon a splendid Ducknee horse, and armed with the bhella or lance. The Mahratta uttering his war cry, bore down upon the European, spear in rest. The sergeant turned off the meditated stroke with his sword, and in turn became the assailant. The Mahratta, however, parried or evaded every blow with infinite address, and the contest was carried on without either party gaining an advantage. Wearied at length with their ineffectual endeavours to defeat each other, both drew up, as if by mutual consent, and each looking in the face of his opponent with a countenance expressive of admiration and respect, gazed for a moment, and then, turning the horses' heads round they galloped back to their respective bodies. The Mahratta, rising his head exclaimed at parting, 'thubar buhadood,' which the sergeant returned with a 'bravo my fine fellow.'" This sort of single combats, although contrary to the European notions upon the conduct of national warfare, were not uncommon between our cavalry forces and that of the

enemy, more particularly during Lord Lake's campaigns, in which we were engaged with an enemy proud of the celebrity obtained in swordsmanship, and whom it was politic to impress with a respectful opinion of our proficiency in this peculiar mode of warfare.

One British officer distinguished himself very highly in numerous encounters, the battle being either a drawn one, like the rest recorded, or terminating fatally on the part of the native adversary. It is said, but the authority is only that of rumour, that he seldom returned to camp without a human head, the token of his victory, hanging at his saddle bow. At length a party who challenged him objected to the pistols which were contained in his holsters, as giving him an advantage over an adversary who had no firearms at his disposal. The British officer instantly gave his honor that, although in his possession he would not use them, and immediately the contest commenced. The native took the earliest opportunity of cutting the bridle reins of his opponent, who in attempting to disable him in like manner, found that they had been furnished with a steel chain as a guard. This circumstance he had totally overlooked at the time of the parley respecting the fire arms, and thus baffled, and finding himself wholly at the mercy of an antagonist bent upon taking his life, he drew out a pistol and shot the schemer dead upon the spot. It was altogether an unfortunate circumstance; the high notions of Honor entertained by some persons rendering them of opinion that he should not have fired under any provocation. There can be no doubt that a plot had been laid to entrap him, and the question raised was, whether, as he had not discovered the advantage taken by the addition of the steel chains at the time that his own pistols were objected to, he should have used them after having pledged his honor that he would not.

The annexed thrilling description of the amputation of Lord Nelson's right arm is from Capt. Chaumier's "Ben Brace, the last of the Agamemnon's."

"No sooner had Nelson been examined by the surgeon than immediate amputation was recommended. I undressed him myself, and laid him down on the cabin table, making him as comfortable as possible; but the wound was one which must have been dreadfully painful, for the bone was shattered to pieces, and I never remember to have seen such a fracture before—"I'm ready," said Nelson, "so doctor despatch. You know business too well for me to fear, or you to cause useless pain." I thought I should have dropped when I saw the first cut. Nelson's face never moved. His lips it is true, were closely pressed together; but I have been told is a strong sign of determination. His cheeks were pale from the loss of blood; and he appeared faint from the exertion of rescuing some of the men whom he saved from the Fox. Oh! how I felt when I saw the long knife, bright as the bimacule-lamp, dazzling all around. Nelson looked at it, and in a moment it was down to the bone, right round the arm. No sooner was the limb dressed—the knives removed—the assistant surgeon despatched to look for others, than up gets the admiral; and 'Brace,' says he 'get some paper, and write down the despatch as I tell you.' And it's as true the Gospel: he told every word, and held the paper and read it himself, to see that it was all correct, although it was eleven o'clock at night before it was finished.

A RARE CIRCUMSTANCE.—The Indiana American says that Mr. Templeton was elected a representative to the Indiana legislature, on the 1st August last, from Fountain county, twelve days after his death. He died at Warrenton, Miss. on the 18th of July last, and was elected on the 1st of August.

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