THE Weekly Chronicle.

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Weekly Almanack.

MARCH.	R. SUN.	S. MOON	H. W.
25 Saturday,	5 57	6 16	3 18 7 27
26 Sunday,	5 55	6 18	3 46 8 29
27 Monday,	5 53	6 19	4 10 9 14
28 Tuesday,	5 51	6 20	4 31 9 50
29 Wednesday,	5 49	6 21	4 51 10 23
30 Thursday,	5 48	6 23	sets. 10 53
31 Friday,	5 46	6 24	7 30 11 25

New Moon 30th, 7h. 9m. evening.

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POETRY.

THE FARMER'S HOME.

A blessing on the farmer's home, on all his grounds may yield,
The harvest of the granary, the tillage of the field:
A blessing on the hardy teams that toil before his ploughs,
A blessing on the living herds that through his meadows browze.

A blessing on the peasant's home, the cottage of the poor,
The housewife by her churning mill, the urchin at its door;
On the little idle group who on the roadside lurk,
On the weary father, whistling home his happy way from work!

A blessing on the 'squire's house, the ancient home of pride,
That hath wassail in its cheerful hall, and charity beside;
From one who greeting rich and poor with free ungrudging hand,
Still keeps a glowing English heart, the boast of English land.

A blessing on the lord's domain, the spacious, fair, and free,
The deer that skim the waving wark, the steeds that prance the lea;
But most on him whose tenants round but prove the happy strife,
Of how much human love a lord may kindle into life.

THE TWO BRIDALS.

[BY ELMYRE SEYMOUR.]

There are sounds of gladsome greeting,
In the maiden's childhood home;
For long sever'd friends are meeting,
And with joyous hearts they come:—
Come to greet her new life's morning—
Come to hail the earliest ray
Of that light whose cloudless dawning
Heralds an effulgent day.

'Tis the maiden's hour of bridal!
Aged mother, hoary sire,
Ye must yield your cherished idol,
To a claim, than yours yet higher.
Ye have reared her for another—
Gently loose your silken chain!
Sisters, in a loving brother,
You shall find your loss your gain.

O, ye mystic webs of feeling!
Binding heart so close to heart—
Ne'er your hidden strength revealing,
'Till ye hear the call to part—
What avails then your resistance?
Changeless to the mandate given:
More than adamant consistence,
By that voice of fate were riven.

Yet there's hope, there's consolation,
In *this* parting, friends, for thee—
Here is *severed* no relation;
Daughter, sister still ye'll be.
Joy, then, in the happy hour!
He who claims deserves your gem;
Tears may fall, but hope has power,
By its smiles to banish them.

Months pass on, but few and fleeting,
And again those friends have met:
Hushed are now the tones of greeting,
And each cheek with tears is wet;
On the lips the forced words falter;
Hearts are bowed from sternest pride!—
Waits the bridegroom at the altar,
Waits the coming of his bride!

She is there—yet *his* no longer—
Calm in her white robes she lies;
Drawn by claim than his yet stronger,
'To her *bridal in the skies*.
Let the tears fall fast and flowing—
Let the veiled face wear its woe—
When the loved from sight are going,
Nature bids it to be so.

O ye mystic webs of feeling!
Binding heart so close to heart—
Ne'er your hidden strength revealing,
'Till you hear the call to part—
What avails then your resistance?
Changeless is the mandate given;
More than adamant consistence,
By that voice of fate were riven.

Yet there's much of consolation,
In *this* parting, friends, for thee—
Here is *severed* no relation;
Fixed in Heaven each claim shall be.
Peace then in this hallowed hour!
Think what breast shall bear your gem!
Tears may fall, but *Faith* has power,
Back to smiles to brighten them.

Miscellany.

THE STAR OF DESTINY.

A TRUE TALE OF THE WAR IN AFFGHANISTAN.

[Concluded.]

The rest of the day was one of calm happiness to both; evening came, and with it the refreshing evening drive, the amusement of the gay crowd who thronged around them, and then the ball. It was a very gay one, given expressly in honor of the English, and in the English style, by a distinguished native of Bombay, whose humble origin, his enormous wealth, the result of his industry and enterprise, his profuse generosity, the luxury of his entertainments, and the unrivalled beauty of his exquisite carpets, have long made his name as familiarly known to all the residents in Bombay, as, though the British title lately and deservedly bestowed upon him by the favour of the sovereign, it has lately become in England. The rooms were thronged with all the rank and gaity of Bombay, native and British.

Clara and Walter happened to be together in one of the ball rooms, when they saw a little circle formed round the handsome major Seymour, one of the gayest of their acquaintance.

'Seymour got his new uniform to day by the Lady William Bentinck, with the new regulation facings,' said Captain Courtenay, 'he is showing it or himself off; but let us hear what he has got to say for himself.'

They joined the circle which had gathered round the gayest officer in Bombay, who was displaying the alterations in the facings of his handsome uniform, just received from Europe, devised according to royal taste. The criticisms were various.

'I like the embroidery on the collar,' said Walter, 'and the pattern is pretty, but I don't see any difference there from the old ——'s.'

Clara looked at it also.

'There is a difference in the pattern; for my cousin, Edward Clifford, was in the —— four years since, and I recollect his showing us all his things in the schoolroom at Rossingham, just before he joined.'

A brother officer of Seymour's was present in the old uniform; it was appealed to, but still Courtenay did not perceive the variation in the pattern; and though judgment was universally given against him, it was only on looking very closely he perceived his mistake, and acknowledged the alteration in the facings.

Mrs. Courtenay's eyes sparkled with delight and happiness, her colour rose to still more brilliant beauty.

'I knew, Walter, you were short-sighted. I am certain you are, that accounts for it all; I am certain I can see much farther than you can, I am so glad to be sure of it.'

'What a silly whim!' said Courtenay, and sat down on a sofa.

'Will you dance this waltz with me, Mrs. Courtenay!' said Seymour, who had admired her brilliant countenance, and scarcely knew what she was saying.

'I shall like it of all things,' said Mrs. Courtenay, her eyes still fixed upon the embroidery of his collar. 'Do not *you* think Walter very short-sighted, Major Seymour?'

'Rather,' said Major Seymour, and a slight smile curled his chiselled lips, as he whirled Mrs. Courtenay into the waltzing circle away from the sofa, where Courtenay was gazing at the wreaths of flowers around the ceiling.

Orders had been issued for the march of troops into Affghanistan, a large body of forces had already moved northwards, with the baggage, and Captain Courtenay and his devoted wife were already some days march on their road towards Cabul. The last evening before the departure of the last detachment had arrived, and the officers who were to accompany it, twenty-two in number, were seated at a gay supper in a large tent. At the table, loaded with the profuse abundance of an Indian meal, the moonlight, for it was a perfectly cloudless and most brilliant night, glanced, mixed with and overcoming the artificial lights, upon the uniforms, the bright locks, and the fair complexions of the British officers, most of whom of this detachment were young men, some almost boys, contrasted with the dusky folds of their tent, and the dark forms of their Indian attendants, who moved to and fro in their service, about the doors of the tent. One swarthy figure alone stood motionless, and apparently engaged in listening to every word of the gay discourse of the young soldiers, all eager to take the field, ardent for honour and for excitement of any kind.

'I wish we knew a little of the fellows we are going to fight,' said one young soldier; 'they don't seem like any thing we have seen yet, and they say their dialect is something quite different to any thing we know of here. It is too bad, after all the pains I have taken at Sandyhurst and coming out, and with my moonshee here, to find all my trouble will be of no use in Affghanistan, and we shall not know, when a fellow cries out, whether he is surrendering himself, or telling you where his diamonds are hidden.'

The dark figure I have spoken of, advanced from the door of the tent to the circle of young Englishmen.

'Do not,' he said, in a solemn and thrilling tone, which immediately arrested the attention even of the gayest and most careless of his auditors, 'do not believe that the accents you will hear from the lips of an Affghan will be a prayer for mercy, or the offer of his treasure to save a life which the demons themselves watch over; but if you knew by whom the prayers of vengeance which will burst from Affghan lips will be heard, and who will listen with delight to those accents well known to them, you would long for the power of hearing to pass from your shuddering senses. Even the name of the city you march to is fatal. When Solomon, the greatest king then upon the earth, repaid Hiram, King of Tyre, for his cedar-trees and his gold with the princely gift of twenty cities, and they pleased not Hiram, look in the First Book of Kings in the Old Testament of the Christian Scriptures, what Hiram called the gift.'

The youngest of the party, William Howard, desirous to know what was alluded to, drew from his breast-pocket a little bible. He had faithfully kept the last promise he made to his mother, always to carry this little bible, her last gift to him, next his heart. He read in the thirteenth verse of the ninth chapter of the First Book of Kings. 'What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day.' The bible young Howard's mother had given him had marginal notes, in which he saw Cabul was translated, *displeasing* or *dirty*.

'Even so: and though those cities stand in Judea, yet here, in Hindostan, does the same name bear the same dark signification. Listen to me, and learn what enemies you will have to deal with, learn the true origin of the Affghan race, the children of a mighty monarch while he walked uprightly, and the dearly beloved heirs of the demon tongue. When Saul, the son of Kish, was chosen from his father's sons to be king over Israel, because he was the most goodly and the strongest of his race, his ambition, inflamed by the prize so early obtained, soared to lofty and forbidden things, after his love for earthly power had been fully satisfied. Remember the witch of Endor!'

The young men looked with increasing interest and attention on this strange narrator.

'The longings of Saul were gratified even here as they had been before, and he obtained power and mastery even over the demons. Night and day did his demon slaves toil at his bidding to build the palace his pride delighted in, it was to excel in riches and in workmanship, and the demon art was tasked by their unfaltering master to complete it. But long was the toil, and heavy the labour his will required, and the days of Saul drew towards their close. To hasten the work, he bade his eldest born, Prince Affghan, labour with the demons, to increase their exertions; and to render him able to communicate with these slaves, he taught Prince Affghan the demon tongue. Yet was all far from completion, when the angel of death stood before Saul and demanded of him his soul. The monarch bowed his knee before a monarch more powerful than himself, and besought of him the boon to spare him yet a while, to complete his palace was completed; for well Saul knew that his demon workmen would obey no presence but his own. But the Angel of Death said, 'Lo! to no man living have I said, thou shalt follow me, and he said nay; and thou must follow me likewise. But for thy power and thy wisdom, for it is much, and like unto mine own, will I grant thee this thing, thine earthly form shall remain to the eye as though thy soul were in it when it is away with me, and the demons shall believe thou livest and shall labour at thy palace.'

'So the dead Saul stood, night and day, propped upon his staff before his palace as the living Saul had done, and the demons believed that he lived, and laboured on. But the white ants came, and grew bold as he moved not, and they devoured the wood of the staff on which the dead Saul leaned and the staff crumbled and fell down, and the dead body of King Saul fell also, then the demons saw and knew that their master was dead, and they gave one loud shout of triumph, so that such a sound was never heard before, and they fled home. And Prince Affghan left the unfinished palace, which he had no workmen to complete, and wandered into Affghanistan, where he founded a great kingdom, and all his children and his subjects spoke his tongue, which is the tongue of the demons.'

'So we are to fight with the friends of the demons, who, no doubt, will lend their help to their allies, and give the word of command in this exquisite tongue which none of us understand. It is hardly fair play, especially as I dare say these delighted foes of ours are informed first by their allies which of us are to fall before them. We will try what mortal steel and lead will do to battle against their prophecies.'

'At this instant,' said the stranger, 'the demons know well which of you will fall in battle with the Affghans; and it is granted to mortal eye to share in this knowledge, the powers of nature invisible in their origin are so subject in this visible world, and each of you may read his doom of death or life for himself, and with the eye of flesh.'

'Are we to see our apparitions pass before us?' asked two or three officers at once.

The stranger without replying led the way out of the tent into the open air. All the officers followed, curious to see the end of this kind of eastern fortune-telling, as they esteemed it. Words of admiration broke from some of them at the remarkable beauty of the night. Nothing could be more resplendent than the sky, every star was visible, not the slightest rack of cloud dimmed the full effulgence of light. The stranger pointed to the northern quarter of the heavens.

'There is a star there,' said he, 'the ray of life and light from which does not reach the eye that will not long be quickened by the universal principle of life. The first failing in the powers of life is here, the eye that can see this star, may sparkle long and brightly, but for him who sees it not, the shadow of the Angel of Death lies black upon the snow of Affghanistan.'

It was the 'Star of Destiny' of which he spoke, the same which Clara Courtenay had vainly endeavoured to render visible to Walter's eye.

'Show us the star!' was the universal cry from his listeners.

'You see that great bright star to which I point?'

'Yes distinctly; is that the Star of Destiny? we all see it?'

'A little to the left of that star, just above it, is a smaller star—who sees that?'

Silence ensued; many, after a long and anxious gaze, declared finally that they did not see it, and believed it was all a hoax; several said they had a long sight as was well known to their friends around them, they saw all the stars they were accustomed to as brilliantly as possible, more clearly than usual; it was impossible there should be a star in the place indicated to them; one or two, on the contrary, declared they certainly saw the star, repeatedly and clearly, there was no imposition on the part of the stranger, the star was certainly shining brightly, exactly in the spot he described, but the seers were much in the minority.

The stranger himself expressed surprise at the great proportion of those who professed themselves unable to see it. Finally, it was agreed that the names of each party, who did not see, and those who saw the star should be written down, and delivered to the keeping of a civilian in Bombay, that the results of the Affghanistan expedition might decide the question of the truth of the 'Star of Destiny.'

Of the party of twenty-two, there were found eighteen of the former and only four of the latter. The name of William Howard was in the first list. The spirits of those of the party who had a slight tincture of superstition were much raised by finding that the proportion of non-seers was so much the larger. It far exceeded any proportion of British officers who had hitherto fallen in open warfare in India, and they were too confident in British power, to believe it could be realized. The faith of the whole party in the prophecy much damped by this great disproportion, which seemed to deprive the question to be resolved of its probability and of its zest, the whole group returned to the tent. Just at the door, William Howard looked back at the place where he had endeavoured in vain to see the 'Star of Destiny.'

'It is strange,' said he, 'but I see the star now, though I could not before, yet there was no cloud, I see it clearly and steadily.'

'Write down what the young man says on the sheet you leave in Bombay,' said the stranger. 'Your thread of life will be bruised, but not broken; I rejoice in it.'

But four months had passed from the time I have spoken of, from the departure of this portion of the British troops for Cabul, when a wretched, solitary figure crawled in the utmost exhaustion into Jellalabad. His limbs, torn by the hardships of the road, bleeding from many wounds; his clothes rent, burned by the sun, and blinded by the snow he had passed through, William Howard, the sole survivor of the gallant band who were cut to pieces at Jugdulluk, rushed into the arms of his fellow-soldiers which were eagerly opened to receive him. The first bearer of the dreadful tidings of the fate of our arms in Affghanistan, he was eagerly questioned, but he could only assure them of the safety of four officers of his detachment, who had been given up as hostages before leaving Cabul, when the surgeon enjoining silence, commenced the examination of his wounds.

'I think none are very deep,' said poor Howard; 'the last ball I received from an Affghan would have shot through my heart, but something hard in my breast-pocket here, deadened it.'

'How providential!' cried the surgeon, as he drew out the Affghan's ball from the singed and blackened leaves of a little red morocco book next Howard's heart.

It was the Bible his mother had given him. He sank on his knees in prayer as he kissed its pages.

Reader, more than double four months had elapsed, when in a stately drawing-room, looking on to such a landscape as only England can offer to the gratified eye, of wood, of water, and that quiet sky, which is luxury in itself after the glare in India, increased as it is by the use of every gaudy colour by the natives, a woman, tall and beautiful, still in the prime of her life, and scarcely past that of her beauty, folded on her maternal bosom, with inexpressible fondness, the sinking and fragile form of her lovely daughter, who lay half in her mother's arms, half on a stool of Indian ivory at her feet. Her black soft hair covered her features, and fell around her on her mourning robe, in the same luxuriance in the halls of Rossingham, as Walter Courtenay had so often twined into a thousand graceful oriental forms in her lost home in India.

The shades of evening began to fall, Lady Clifford bore her child into an oriel window, to sooth her with the beauty of the landscape of the park for a few instants, as the last glow of the sun disappeared, and the stars began to glow brightly in the summer sky. As they moved, Clara's copy of Walter's miniature fell from her bosom.

As they stood in the oriel, Lady Clifford said, 'Look over the north avenue, dearest, how exquisitely bright the stars are.'

Clara glanced her languid eye, she saw the 'Star of Destiny,' and an instant afterwards she fainted upon her mother's neck.

Reader, for the truth of the tale I have related with disguised names, I appeal confidently to the recollection of many officers who have served in India in the Affghanistan war, and elsewhere before it commenced. The tradition of the origin of the Affghan race and language is from their own lips: and the Indian belief in the 'Star of Destiny,' is known from the natives by many Europeans, though I purposely forbear giving any further clue to it. The party of twenty-two officers who agreed to test the truth of the tale they heard in their own persons, eighteen of whom failed to see it, just before being called upon active service, and four distinctly saw it, the writing down of their names, the death of those eighteen, ten by the sword, and eight by illness, the survival of their four companions—all these are true.

THE LOVE OF A VIRTUOUS WIFE.—Were I a man and had the fortune to win a heart, with what parsimony would I use my advantage! How many gradations would I oblige myself to pass through successfully and slowly! How many delicate pleasures, unknown to the generality of men would I, as it were, I create to myself! Like the miser, would incessantly contemplate my treasure; rejoice in the richness of it; be conscious that it constituted my highest felicity; place my whole scheme of happiness in the possession of it, in looking upon it as my own peculiar property, in being the absolute disposer of it: and strengthen myself in the resolution not to lessen it by use. What transports to read in the eyes of a lovely woman the dominion you have over her; to observe in all her actions relative to you a still increasing tenderness; to perceive her voice assume a softer tone, whenever she speaks to you; to view her blushes, even upon a compliment of course; and to triumph in her confusion upon any particular dress!

Can there be a situation on earth more flattering than that of a lover, conscious of a reciprocal flame! And what surer proof can be required than instances like those? How charming! to be expected with an impatience that her whole prudence cannot conceal; to be received with a welcome which charms the more by the endeavours which she makes in part to hide her transport! She has dressed herself to suit your taste; takes the very mein, the accent, the whole air of a person that is known to be most agreeable to you. Before, she used to adorn herself to charm your sex in general; at present her toilet is spread for you alone; for you these jewels, this riband, that bracelet are put on; you are the sole object of her attire; you are become her second self, she loves you over again in her own image!

EXTRAORDINARY CASE.—William Stephenson, of the Plough public-house, on the road from Caistor to Nettleton, has not had *any sleep* since the latter end of August last, so that for *five months* he has been deprived of that great restorative. He is fifty years of age, and was considered one of the best ploughmen on the very extensive woods about Caistor. One of our correspondents sees him daily, and spoke with him on Monday last. He can walk to Caistor and about his cottage grounds much as usual, and appears active, but looks rather sickly. He is a very careful man, and eats moderately of plain but good food. He has a small family of healthy children.—*Stamford Mercury.*

ON DRINKING AT MEALS.—It is injurious to drink much at meals. Those who take a large quantity of liquids at dinner generally eat more than those who take less. The sensation of thirst depends upon the quantity of aqueous fluid circulating in the blood. It has been found by physiologists that the most severe thirst of animals is appeased by injecting watery fluids into the blood. A moderate quantity of liquid should be taken at dinner; too large a portion acts injuriously by diluting the gastric fluid.—Persons whose diet is more animal than vegetable, require more liquid during their meals. Drinking before a meal is pernicious, whilst by drinking during a meal the digestive process is promoted. Those who eat fast require more drink than do others; for, as Dr. Philip says, "the food is swallowed without a due admixture of saliva, and forms a dry mass in the stomach."—*F. Winslow's Health of Body and Mind.*

In the mountains of the Tyrol, hundreds of the women and children come out near bed time, and sing their national songs, until they hear their husbands fathers or brothers answering them from the hills, on their return home. On the shores of the Adriatic sea, the wives of the fishermen come down to the beach about sunset, and sing a melody from Tasso's Gerusalema Liberta. They sing the first verse and then listen for some time; they then sing the second verse and listen until they hear the answer come from the fishermen, who are thus guided by the sound to their own village.

HOW TO DISARM AN ENEMY.—It is said that bees and wasps will not sting a person whose skin is imbued with honey. Hence those who are much exposed to the venom of these little creatures, when they have occasion to hive bees, or take a nest of wasps, smear their faces and hands with honey, which is found to be the best preservative. When we are annoyed with insult, persecution, and opposition from perverse and malignant men, the best defence against their venom is to have the spirit bathed in honey. Let every part be saturated with meekness, gentleness, forbearance, and patience; and the most spiteful enemy will be disappointed in his endeavours to inflict a sting: we shall remain uninjured, while his venom returns to corrode his own malignant bosom.

CHINESE BEVERAGE.—The Chinese are not at all addicted to water-drinking. They distil from rice certain liquors resembling our beer, wine, and whisky. The grape, though abundant, is not used for any such purpose. The universal national beverage is tea. This is drunk in unstinted quantities by all classes of the people, from the self-styled "Son of Heaven," to the occupant of the meanest hovel or "sampan." So enormous is the consumption of tea by the natives, that Macartney is of opinion that if the whole foreign demand should by some accident suddenly cease, the price of the article would not be materially affected. Many of the wealthier natives are exceedingly fastidious in their taste, which they gratify by the use of teas obtained at prices that would startle us by their enormity. It is, however, only the very rich and the very luxurious who indulge in such extravagance.