# The Weekly Observer.

Established in 1818. Under the title of "The Star." } Whole No. 1489.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 1847.

VOL. XIX.—NO. 40.

THE OBSERVER,

Published on TUESDAY, by DONALD A. CAMERON, at his Office in Water Street, South West corner of the Market Square.—TERMS: 15s. per annum, half in advance.

☞ The postage on all Letters (except those containing money, or from Agents,) must be pre-paid, or they will not be attended to.

## THE GARLAND.

### METHUSELAH.

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

"And the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty and nine years: *and he died.*"—Gen. v. 27.

And was this all? *He died!* He who did wait
The slow unfolding of centurial years,
And shake that burden from his heart, which turns
Our temple's white, and in his freshness stand
Till cedars mouldered and firm rocks turned grey;
Left he no trace upon the page inspired,
Save this one line—*he died?*

Perchance he stood
Till all, who in his early shadow rose,
Faded away, and he was left alone,
A sad, long-living, weary-hearted man,
To fear that Death, remembering all beside,
Had sure forgotten him.

Perchance he roved
Exulting o'er the ever-verdant vales,
While Asia's sun burned fervid on his brow,
Or 'neath some waving palm-tree sat him down,
And in his mantling bosom nursed the pride
That mocks the pale destroyer, and doth think
To live forever.

What majestic plans,
What mighty Babels, what sublime resolves,
Might in that time-defying bosom spring,
Mature and ripen, and cast off their fruits!
For younger generations of bold thought
To wear their heaviest diadem, while we,
In the poor hour-glass of our seventy years,
Scarce see the buds of some few plants of hopes,
Ere we are laid beside them, *dust to dust.*

Yet whatsoe'er his lot, in that dim age
Of mystery, when the unwrinkled world had drunk
No deluge-cup of bitterness, whate'er
Were earth's illusions to his dazzled eye,
Death found him out at last, and coldly wrote,
With icy pen, on Life's protracted scroll,
Nought but this brief unflattering line—*he died!*

Ye gay flower-gatherers on Time's crumbling brink,
This shall be said of you, howe'er ye vaunt
Your long to-morrows in an endless line,
Howe'er amid the gardens of your joy
Ye hide yourselves, and bid the pale King pass;
This shall be said of you, at last, *he died:*
*Oh! add one sentence more—he lived to God.*

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### NEW YORK, &c.

FROM NOTICE OF "RECENT BOOKS ON AMERICA," in Dublin University Magazine for February.

Many are struck with the French appearance of New York, and say, at once, that it is as well the Paris as the Liverpool of America. There is always a large number of the French there, and the equipages give it more the look of Paris than of London. It is also true that the Americans, especially the New Yorkers, are more disposed to take their modes and ton from France than from England. Mr. Godley, we remember, observes that few Americans reside in England, when disengaged from commerce, while it is well known that they form a large body in France. He also remarks, that the men in America have usually more of a French than an English look; indeed, he distinctly says, that he never met with one whom he took for an Englishman, while he saw numbers whom, even in Paris, he would have passed as Frenchmen. Another circumstance aids in lending to New York its Paris air. The men there follow levity and business with equal earnestness, and blend them with singular effect. They who have passed their mornings as sedulous money-getters, or hard-working clerks are, towards evening, the overdressed loungers of the Broadway.

"It seems, at first sight, odd," says the able writer last cited, "but it is undoubtedly true, that the Americans are the most lavish people in the world. I have observed this both on the Continent of Europe and in this country; there is no kind of personal enjoyment which they seem to me to deny themselves, from considerations of economy; dress, eating and drinking, public amusements, are indulged in here by every merchant's clerk, who can at all afford them, to an extent equalled by few peers' sons in England."

This reliance on fate, or what we commonly call luck, rather than on economy, is partly referable to the gambling character of their commerce, to the rapidity with which all is won and lost, to the fact, that fortunes appear to "come like shadows—so depart." "*Carpe diem, quam minimum, credule postero*, is," says Mr. Godley, "pre-eminently the motto of New York philosophy."

The worse than club-life prevalent in the States, the usage of living at hotels and boarding-houses, must have a considerable, and, we should think, an unfavourable influence on the general character of the people, although it may possibly improve their manners. Whole families, of many ranks, live thus in public. "The tone of feeling of each individual," says the author of Hochelaga, "is formed by the masses, not by the narrow but more sacred influence of that of his house-hold; there is but little trick of manner or speech peculiar to a family; you can trace nothing closer than the State they may belong to."

Many of the public buildings of New York are massive and costly, but they are in general devoid of beauty and architectural distinction. There is one great undertaking of which this City is justly proud, that is the Croton Water Works. The water is brought from more than forty miles, through tunnel and over ravine, into two reservoirs near the city. It is carried all the way under ground, except above the Harlem River, which it passes by an aqueduct a quarter of a mile in length, supported by eight arches, and running as high as a hundred and twenty feet over the river. The labour of this magnificent work was performed chiefly by the Irish, who, indeed, make so prominent a portion of the population that the brogue is nearly as striking to a new-comer at New York as in Cork. . . . .

"The progress of this young people," says the author of Hochelaga, "is astounding; the geometric increase of their wealth and number startles me by its enormous results. In a very few years they will exceed the population of the British Islands; we cannot conceal from ourselves, that in many of the most important points of national capabilities they beat us; they are more energetic, more enterprising, less embarrassed with class interests, less burthened by the legacy of debt. This country, as a field for increase of power, is, in every respect, so infinitely beyond ours, that comparison would be absurd. Their varieties of production, exuberant soil, extraordinary facilities of internal communication, their stimulating climate, the nature of their population, recruited constantly from the most stirring, though, perhaps, the least virtuous members of our community, their institutions acting with steam-engine power in driving them; all these qualifications combine to promise them, a few years hence, a degree of strength which may endanger the existing state of things in the world."

BUFFALO is the great thoroughfare to the West, and its site on Loch Erie makes it the emporium of the commerce of the Western Lakes, which, condensed here, is borne on canal and river until it reaches the Atlantic at New York. It was destroyed by the English in 1814, in retaliation for the burning of York, since, and better called by the Indian name of Toronto. The population of this place amounts to twenty-five thousand, and they possess sixty steamers, with more than three hundred sailing vessels. The patron saint of Buffalo was a person named Rathbone, who, without money, without public or private aid, ran up whole streets, and erected public buildings. The secret of this Aladdin of the Lake was, that he forged bills in the names of many houses, always taking care to have new bills prepared, to take up such as fell due. He was found out too soon, or he might have become a *millionaire:* as it is, he is a prisoner in his own gaol. Lake Erie was, in 1813, the scene of a triumph to which the Americans are fond of referring. Commodore Perry destroyed or took all the British squadron under Captain Barclay; but this unaccustomed story of defeat is accompanied by a trait, of which we may well be proud.

"The gallant Barclay was frightfully wounded on this occasion, losing an arm and a leg. When he returned to England in this mutilated state he did not venture to meet a young lady to whom he was tenderly attached, and sent a friend to inform her that she was free from her engagement. 'Tell him,' said the English maiden, 'that had he only enough body to hold his soul, I'll marry none but him.'"—*Hochelaga.*

QUEBEC, the capital of French Canada, is a dull-looking city, magnificently situated. The streets, some of which are paved with blocks of wood, are narrow, the houses irregular, and the shops not showy, although they are improving. Winter is its lively and most characteristic season.

"The first few days of the falling snow are very amusing to a stranger; the extraordinary costumes, the novelty of the sleighs—of every shape and pattern: many of these are very handsome, ornamented with rich furs, and drawn by fine horses, with showy harness, set off by high hoops with silver bells on the saddles, rosettes of ribbon or glass, and streamers of coloured horse hair on the bridles; while the gay chirping sound of the bells, and the nice crisp sound of the runners of the sleigh through the new snow, have a very cheerful effect. "Ladies' dress in winter does not undergo so great a transformation as that of men; all wear muffs and boas, certainly, but their bonnets and pelisses are much like those worn in England. Men always wear fur caps, often with large flaps down over their cheeks, enormous pea-jackets, or blanket coats, with India-rubber shoes or moccassins of moose skin, or thick cloth boots, with high leggings. In very cold weather they often wear coats of buffalo, or other skins, and move about like some great wild animal, with nothing to be seen of the human form but a blue nose and a pair of red eyes.

"Although the temperature is usually kept very high within doors, by means of stoves, people never seem to suffer by sudden transition to the extreme cold of the open air. I have often seen young ladies leave a hot room, where they had been waltzing, and walk quietly home, when the thermometer was below zero, with very little additional clothing on; the great dryness of the air preserves them from danger. In a very low temperature, a razor may be exposed all night to the air without contracting a stain of rust. Colds are much less frequent in winter than in summer.

"The winter markets at Quebec are very curious; every thing is frozen. Large pigs, with the peculiarly bare appearance which that animal presents when singed, stand in their natural position on their rigid limbs, or upright in corners, killed, perhaps, months before. Frozen masses of beef, sheep, deer, fowls, cod, haddock, and eels, long and stiff, like walking-sticks, abound in the stalls. The farmers have a great advantage in this country, in being able to fatten their stock during the abundance of the summer; and, by killing them at the first cold weather, they keep frozen, to be disposed of at their pleasure during the winter. Milk is kept in the same manner, and sold by the pound, looking like lumps of white ice." —*Hochelaga.*

### A DUTCH WEDDING IN HIGH LIFE.

(*From "Sam Sly's African Journal," Cape Town, Nov. 26, 1846.*)

"Let her beauty be her wedding dower."

There is a saving in a Dutch wedding, because, like the Quakers, they require no ring; neither do they approach the altar, but may be said to come before the pulpit; the presence of many witnesses being a sufficient proof of the contract, without that *plain gold circle*, which often requires a *keeper*, and is no certain pledge either of constancy or obedience. On Friday last, at 3 o'clock, there was a marriage in high life at the Dutch Reformed Church, Cape Town, between the Rev. H. de Villiers, Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, Clanwilliam, and Miss Cornelia Spyker, youngest daughter of the Rev. J. Spyker—who acted in the double capacity of minister and father on this occasion.

It has rarely been the writer's good fortune to witness the nuptials of so handsome a couple, or that has excited so much interest and curiosity—the church being largely attended long before the arrival of the happy pair. The bride was dressed in a white transparent robe, with three deep flounces or tucks over white satin. Short sleeves, trimmed with Brussels lace, and a magnificent cape or berthe of the same material; a coiffure of orange blossoms, and superb lace veil enveloping all, completing the most important points in the costume. The bridegroom was dressed in his canonicals, or rather a coat with a military collar, and without lapels, after the style of the Quakers. The fashion at these weddings is for the bridesmaids to enter the church first, and place themselves in the front seats before the pulpit. Then come the observed of all observers, who seat themselves in the same rank, but a little apart from the rest. A long time passes before the arrival of the minister, which is occupied in smiles and whispers, and a variety of comments as to the age, dress, and conditions of the happy couple—that are to be. The number of *bonnets* always predominating more than *hats* in the church, there being a large attendance of young and blooming maidens of all shades, from the richest ebony to the purest white, all on the tip-toe of expectation that it may be their turn next, and by sundry glances at their "*intendeds*" too plainly throwing out their hints and hopes,—a confession which those two young damsels in bright pink and blue (only half concealing their blushes) cannot possibly conceal. During the long pause there is also a collection with a small velvet bag at the end of a black wand tipped with silver, into which the coppers and silver are dropped, but when full are emptied into another long leather bag, carried after the deacon for that purpose. At the end of the purse there is a small bell, which, in olden times—when sermons were long and soporific, and the weather sultry—was useful in arousing drowsy hearers to let them know that begging time had arrived, and that they must open their eyes, whatever they might have done during other ceremonies. But, hush! there is the minister above, and the tall stout clerk twists his neck into a becoming position below: there is a prayer,—now they are seated,—now the young couple stand alone, and turn to each other, and bend their responses rather than speak them; now there is another prayer or exhortation,—now the bride and bridegroom and five bridesmaids pass behind the pulpit, and all is over; and lots of red-heads stand around that carriage with the drab livery to see the happy and handsome couple enter;—and away they go! amidst the deafening shouts of the multitude.

*Interview between Alexander the Great and the Emperor of China.*—A remarkable interview took place between the Emperor of China and Alexander the Great, an account of which has been translated from a Persian work by the late Sir John Malcolm. After Alexander had made war against Paor or Porus, and slain him, he marched against the Emperor of China. That monarch did not consider himself equal to the conflict, and went in disguise to the Grecian camp. He was discovered, and brought to Alexander, who asked him how he could act in such a manner. The Emperor replied: "I was anxious to see you, and your army; I could have no fear on my own account, as I knew I was not an object of dread to Alexander; besides, if he were to slay me, my subjects would instantly raise another king to the throne. But of this I can have no fear, as I am satisfied Alexander can never be displeased with an action that shows a solicitude to obtain his friendship." The conqueror was completely overcome by this truly Chinese flattery, and concluded a treaty by which China was spared on condition of paying tribute. The emperor returned to his capital to make preparations for the entertainment of his great ally; and the third day he returned with an army, the dust of which announced its great numbers, which made Alexander prepare his force for battle. When both lines were opposite, the Emperor of China, with his ministers and nobles, alighted and went towards the Grecian Prince, who asked him why he had broken faith. "I wished," said the Emperor, "to show the number of my army, that you might be satisfied I made peace from other motives than an inability to make war. It was from consulting the stars, that I have been led to submit. The Heavens aid you, and I war not with them." Alexander was so gratified that he released the Emperor from paying tribute, as he was too wise, too pious, and too great a prince: he was perfectly satisfied to have his friendship. The Emperor took his leave, and sent a present of jewels, gold, and beautiful ladies, to the conqueror. [From a Persian work called Zeenut-ul-Tuarikh.]—*Montgomery Martin's China.*

SURVEYING EXPEDITION TO THE COAST OF AFRICA.—Arrangements are in progress for fitting out the Minx and Teazer steam-vessels, of 100 horses' power each, and light draught of water, and two other steam-vessels, the Rifleman and Sharpshooter, of 200 horses' power each, one of each class built of wood, and the others of iron, and all fitted with screw propellers, for the purpose of proceeding to the Bight of Benin, on the west coast of Africa, to survey the extensive Lagoon at the mouths of the Niger or Nun river, as it is named by the natives of that part of the coast. The Lagoon is a fresh-water lake, extending from Cape St. Paul to Cape Formosa, separated from the sea by a narrow beach through its whole extent, in some places the land being scarcely half a mile broad, and in no part exceeding two miles. The Lagos, the Benin, the Foseado, the Esclamo, the Rio Ramus, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, the Rio Dodo, the Formosa, and the Rio Nun or Niger, all rivers or mouths of the Niger, some of them nearly two miles broad where they enter the Lake Lagoon, supply this large inland reservoir with fresh water; and the smaller steam-vessels, the Minx and Teazer, are intended to explore the banks of the recently-discovered branches of the rivers entering the lake, and proceed as far inland upon them as will be found practicable.

AN OVER-SENSITIVE TAR.—Vice-Admiral Sir Alan, afterwards Lord Gardner, a man of undaunted bravery, but of remarkable sensitive and retiring temperament, being at that time member for Plymouth, was according to custom, to receive through the Speaker the honour of the thanks of the House, in his place in Parliament. On the appointed day, before the commencement of business, he entered the Speaker's private room in great agitation, and expressed his apprehensions that he should fail in properly acknowledging the honour which he was about to receive. "I have often been at the cannon's mouth," he said, "but hang me if I ever felt as I do now! I have not slept these three nights. Look at my tongue." The Speaker rang for a bottle of Madeira, and Sir Alan took a glass. After a short pause, he took a second; and then said he felt somewhat better; but when the moment arrived, and one of the bravest of a gallant profession, whom no personal danger could appal, rose to reply to the Speaker, he could scarcely articulate. He was encouraged by enthusiastic cheers from all parts of the House; but after stammering out, with more than the usual amount of truth, that "he was overpowered by the honour that had been conferred upon him," and vainly attempting to add a few more words, he relinquished the idea as hopeless, and abruptly resumed his seat amidst a renewed burst of cheers.—*Pellew's Life of Lord Sidmouth.*

MATRIMONIAL CORRECTION.—The *Times* says, "It is our duty to acknowledge a compliment we have just received, and to impart to our readers a fact of some interest concerning a historical fact which has already caused some excitement, and bids fair to occasion a little more. In a recent copy of our journal we alluded, in speaking of the conquest of Scinde, to the brazen whip with which Nusser Khan was wont, according to certain legends, to chastise his offending wives, and we hinted our suspicions that fact had as large a share as fable in the materials of this edifying narrative. To extinguish our doubts and confirm our faith, Major-General Napier had not only the politeness to inform us that the 'identical' whip was in his possession but he was good enough to despatch it across the channel for our inspection, and a gentleman yesterday did us the honour to call upon us, at the General's request, with the veritable Scindian scarifier in all its unnatural proportions. We regret extremely that our unpictorial character debars us from conveying to our readers so vivid an idea of this effective machine as could be given by some weekly contemporaries; but we can readily enter into the unwillingness of a lady to share the flight of a husband, who included such implements among the necessaries of his household. To princes about to marry, we hope the story will furnish a warning as serviceable as any in that immense stock of instructive examples supplied by the nuptials of last autumn.

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.—Kennet, Lord Mayor of London, in the year 1780, began life as a waiter, and his manner never rose above his original station. When he was summoned to be examined before Parliament on "The Riots," one of the members observed, "If you ring the bell, Kennet will come, of course." On being asked why, on the breaking out of the riot, he did not send for the *posse comitatus*, he replied he did not know where the fellow lived, else he would. One evening, at the Aldermen's Club, he was at a whist table, and Mr. Alderman Pugh, a dealer in soap, was at his elbow. "Ring the bell, Soap Suds," said Kennet, in his coarse way. "Ring it yourself, Bar," replied Pugh, "you have been twice as much used to it as I have."

GOOD ADVICE.—Never eat while you speak, as any man's throat is too narrow a channel for words to pass up and good meat to pass down at the same time.

GERMAN RAILROADS.—From recent German papers we gather that within the year 1846 there opened of German railways 174 German miles, or, in round numbers, about 800 English miles in length. The longest section, amounting to 94 German miles, was opened in Prussia, and includes the direct line from Hamburgh to Berlin. There is a line from Frankfort on the Oder to Berlin, which joins the line from Upper Silesia to Stettin, on the Baltic Sea. Upper Silesia is, therefore, connected by railway communication with Stettin on the Baltic, and with Hamburgh *via* Berlin. In another year there will be another line to Hamburgh, *via* Dresden, which is now finished as far as Hanover. The Prussians completed their direct line to Hamburgh while the good King of Hanover was raising the wind to change the uniform of his soldiers from red to blue. In the south of Germany the grand Austrian trunk line from Vienna to Poland passes through Upper Silesia, on its way to Galicia. A portion of the line already constructed leads through the vale of the Oder, and is continued to Cracow. The line now constructing from Frankfort to Leipsig will complete the communication between Upper Silesia or the Valley of the Oder to the Rhine at Bierberich. The line in progress from Cologne to Minden and Magdeburg will form a second means of communication between Upper Silesia and the Rhine near Dusseldorf. Between the coast of Belgium and the Rhine, the communication is opened from Antwerp and Ostend. It is intended to construct a railway from Flushing to Dusseldorf directly through Dutch and Prussian territory, in order to afford another good communication with a port always open. The reader cannot but have been struck with the direction which all these lines seem to take. They uniformly tend from the coast towards Upper Silesia. The mountains inclosing the valley of the Upper Oder are traversable. Over their passes the Prussian Silesian railroad either has been, or speedily will be, carried to join the grand Austrian line from Vienna to Cracow.

*Not a Bad Hit.*—Lord Stanley rose, the other night, in the House of Lords, after Lord Brougham had delivered himself of the first of his nightly series of speeches. He remarked, in commencing a very short speech, that what he was about to say was in reply to some remarks which had fallen from his noble friend, who had "just taken his seat." Chancing at that moment, however, to look round, and observing Lord Brougham jumping about the House like a cricket, he suddenly checked himself, and said—"I beg my noble friend's pardon, I mean my noble friend who never takes his seat." This, as may be supposed, created a general laugh, in which Lord Brougham himself heartily joined.

DEBUT OF EARL GREY IN 1787.—A new speaker presented himself to the House, and went through his first performance with an eclat which has not been equalled within my recollection. His name is Grey. He is not more than twenty-two years of age; and he took his seat, which is for Northumberland, only in the present session. I do not go too far in declaring that in the advantages of figure, voice, elocution, and manner, he is not surpassed by any one member in the House; and I grieve to say that he was last night in the ranks of Opposition, from whence there is no prospect of his being detached.—*Letter of Lord Sidmouth.*

SOLDIERING.—"Here to-day, and gone to-morrow, ought, in common with the saying of Corporal Trim, to be the motto of every military man; yet it is a *life endeared to us by custom, by the ties of long formed friendship, the strong force of habit;* and although, since I first commenced "sogering," years may have grizzled my locks, while sun and storm united have, maybe, spoiled my complexion, I have never, up to the present moment, felt a single pang of regret at having taken "the shilling," and hope yet, as a soldier, to die in "harness."—Col. E. Napier's "*Wild Sports in Europe, Asia and Africa.*"

ANCESTRY.—When the late Mr. Anson (Lord Anson's brother,) was on his travels in the East, he hired a vessel to visit the island of Tenedos. His pilot, an old Greek, remarked, as they were sailing along, with an air of satisfaction—"There 'twas where our fleet lay."—'What fleet?' demanded Mr. Anson.—"What fleet!" replied the astonished veteran; why our Grecian fleet at the siege of Troy!"

GLASS-STAINING.—The deep ruby red is conferred by gold, the bright yellow by silver or antimony, deep orange by iron, green by iron or copper, blue by cobalt, purple by manganese, and the various shades of colour by the judicious admixture of those metallic preparations with each other in originally colourless glass, the same as various shades may be produced by adding ordinary pigments to white lead upon the palette of the artist, with this exception only, that vitrified colours will never fade or deteriorate; witness the vitreous relics of Egyptian art.—*The Builder.*

HAIR-CUTTING GRATIS.—A ridiculous thing occurred in a small village of Oxfordshire, last week. A man wearing a certain badge of authority, passed through the village, and calling at each house, informed the inhabitants that he was a Government barber, sent from London to cut all the people's hair gratis, it having been ascertained to be the most effectual way of keeping off the cholera, which had already made its appearance. The fellow succeeded in carrying away with him sufficient hair to make several wigs, and the deluded people were obliged to set to and make warm caps to defend their bare heads from the cold which set in next day.

HEAT WITHOUT FUEL.—Important as cheap fuel may be, to be able to do without it altogether is more important still. A Hungarian chemist has taken some promising steps to make this possible. He places in contact two iron plates and a copper cylinder, highly polished, turning on an axis at the end of a lever, with a balance weight at the other end, to keep the plates in contact, when, by means of a very simple apparatus and trifling exertion, a glowing red heat may be produced in five minutes, and maintained with ease.—*The Builder.*

Children are so far to be dreaded that they frequently give utterance to unwelcome truths. Miss L——, an old blue stocking, and passably ugly, but who, by the pomposity of a stilted conversation, endeavours to create a diversion in favour of her little grey eyes and unmeaning physiognomy, said, before company, to her neice, a sprightly child of four years old, "Louisa, my dear, don't make faces—it is destructive of beauty." "Is it indeed, aunt?" replied the little girl, looking archly up in her face, "oh, then you must have made a great many in your day!"

A SHARP SCHOLAR.—"O dear," blubbered out an urchin who had just been suffering from the application of the birch; "O my; they tell me about forty rods making a furlong, but I can tell a bigger story than that. Let 'em get such a plaguy lickin as I've had, and then they'll find out that one rod makes an *acher.*"

Write injuries in sand, but kindness in marble.—Envy is a turn-key by birth, and an executioner by profession.

A RARE ONE.—A governess advertising for a situation says, "she is perfectly mistress of *her own tongue!*"