

BENEDICTISM.

"A young man, married, is a man that's marr'd."

"All's Well," II: 3.

I AM a bachelor, Sir, a crusty, sour-visaged, stick-in-the-mud, old bachelor, with as much hair on my head and affection in my heart as an average sized monkey-wrench. In fact, I have always been a bachelor, as far as my memory goes, and always will be, fates and the weather permitting. By the way, the fates were women :

"Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !

Lachesis, twist ! Atropos, sever !"—

Mark that ! Women are the fate of many a brave lad, and spin the web of his twisted fortune as they list. It's wonderful how much they hold in their hands ; they held me there once,—“infantry in arms” they called me then ; they don't call at all now, or ask me to call. As I said before, I always will be a bachelor ; and I repeat it, knowing that I stand on the threshold of Leap-year, and that my socks might legally be canonized—yet I have never learned to darn. Benedict ! Turn Benedict, and leave my cosy rooms and happy go-lucky life, my companions and parties and clubs !—to turn Benedict ! The very word has a foreboding sound to it. I wonder what it means—Benedict !

Some say it is from St. Benedict, a monk of the Middle Ages, who entered the bonds—mark the word !—of matrimony and founded an order of married monks. *Saint* Benedict ! Ay ! He had need to be a saint. But there was no married St. Benedict. History says so ; I say so ; the Encyclopedia says so. You can depend on *it* ; it's hard to frighten an encyclopedia into your way of thinking. No ; it's absurd. Would any sane man, having tasted the liberty and pleasures of monkshood, deliberately place his head in the fatal noose and when the knot was tied allow himself to be launched headlong into—matrimony ? True, Chinamen are sometimes sent in bond through the *United States* ; but I have heard it is much against their will. As the old saw hath it : “Better content with a single heart than the best quarter section in the State of Matrimony.

Noah Webster derives it from “Benedick,” a knight in Shakspeare's