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THE WEEKLY MIRROR.



Vol. 2]

HALIFAX, JANUARY 6, 1838. 7

No. 51

The Weekly Mirror,

Is Printed and Published every Friday,

BY H. W. BLACKADAR,

At his Office, nearly opposite Bauer's wharf, and adjoining north of Mr. Allan McDonald's.

WHERE

All kinds of Job PRINTING will be executed at a cheap rate.

Terms of the Mirror Five Shillings per annum payable in advance.

NATURAL HISTORY.

CUTTLE FISH.

Cuttle Fish: this singular creature, which is about two feet long, has eight arms or claws, and two tentacula; with these it lays fast hold of any thing that comes in its way, and when once it seizes any thing, it is difficult to loosen its hold. The body is of a reddish brown color. The eyes are as large as those of a calf, and surrounded with silvery rings. The mouth is horny, and hooked like the bill of a parrot. It is so strong that the animal can break to pieces the shells of the animals on which he feeds. When he is pursued, he squirts out a black liquor, which rendering the water as black as ink, enables him to escape his enemy. The Romans used this liquor for ink. There is a bone in this animal which is converted into that useful article of stationery called pounce. If this fish be taken into a dark room and cut up, it is said to illuminate the whole place, when taken out of the water, it makes a noise resembling the granting of a bour.

BIOGRAPHY.

GEORGE ABBOT.

George Abbot, an English prelate, born in 1562, at Guilford, in Surry, where his father was a weaver. He was educated at the grammar school of that place, from whence he removed to Balliol college, Oxford, of which he became a fellow. 1597 he was chosen master of University college. In 1599 he was made dean of Winchester, and the year following vice-chancellor of

Oxford. He was one of the divines employed in the present translation of the Bible. In 1609, he was made bishop of Litchfield and Coyentry, from whence, the same year he was translated to London, and in 1610, to Canterbury. A sad misfortune happened to him at the close of his life:—being at the seat of Lord Zouch, and exercising himself in the park with a cross bow, he by accident shot the keeper instead of the deer. He attended king James on his death-bed, and assisted at the coronation of Charles I. About the year 1627, he was banished to his house near Canterbury, and the archiepiscopal authority put into commission; but when the parliament met, he was restored to his office. He died at Croydon in 1633, and was buried in the church of the Holy Trinity at Guilford, where he endowed an hospital. His writings are mostly polemical, except a geographical description of the world.

THE ORPHAN OF BATTERSEA, OR, THE JUDGEMENT OF SIR THOMAS MORE. (Continued.)

Then Mistress Margaret Roper, Sir Thomas's eldest daughter, with a benevolent smile, took the abashed, trembling girl aside; and, having, with soothing words drawn the particulars of her melancholy story from her, she advanced to the front of Sir Thomas's chair, leading the weeping orphan by the hand, and attempted to humor the scene by opening her client's case, after a witty imitation of legal w-serjeant; the manner of a grave to detail the but, as she proceeded under which the dog was recognized, and again taken from the wretched orphan, she, by imperceptible degrees, changed her style to the simply pathetic terms in which the child had related the tale to her—the language—the unadorned language of truth and feeling, which never fails to come home to every bosom. All present, save my Lady More, who preserved a very aigre and impene-

trable demeanor, were dissolved in tears: as for the poor plaintiff, she covered her face with a part of her tattered garments, and sobbed aloud; and the council herself was compeller to pause for a moment to overcome her own emotion, ere she could conclude her eloquent appeal on her client's behalf.

"Thou hast pleaded well, my good Meg," said Sir Thomas smiling through his tears on his best beloved daughter; "but now must we hear the defendant's reply, for the plaintiff ever appeared in the right till after the defendant hath spoken: so now, my Lady, what hast thou to say in this matter?"

"My lady hath to repeat what she hath too often said before, that Sir Thomas More's jests are ever out of place," replied my Lady in a huff.

"Nay, marry, good Mistress Alice, thou have nought better to the purpose to respond, I must be fain to give judgement for the plaintiff in the case."

"Tilley-valley, Sir Thomas! thou art enough to provoke a saint with thine eternal quibs and gibes," replied the Ladyship: "I tell you the dog is my property, and was presented to me by an honorable gentlemen, one Master Rich, whom you, Sir Thomas, bought well; and he said he bought a dealer in such gear." "Probably stole him from my child," said Mistress Margaret Roper.

"Nay, but, daughter Margaret, how knowest thou that Sultan was ever the wench's property?" retorted Lady More sharply.

"Well, answered, defendant," said Sir Thomas: "we must call a witness whose evidence must decide that matter. Son Roper, bring the dog Sultan alias Constant, into court."

The eyes of Dorothy brightened at the sight of her old companion; and Sir Thomas More, taking him in his hands, said, "Here now I am placed in as great a strait as ever was King Solomon, in respect to the memorable case in which he was called upon to

decide whose was the living child, which both mothers claimed, and to whom pertained the dead, which neither would acknowledge. This maiden saith the dog which I hold is hers, and was violently taken from her three months ago; my Lady replies, "Nay, but he is mine, and was presented to me by an honorable man," (one of the King's Counsellor's forsooth.) Now, in this matter, the dog is wiser than my Lord Chancellor, for he knoweth unto whom he of right pertaineth; and, therefore, upon his witness must the decision of this controversy depend. So now, my Lady, you stand at the upper end of the hall, as befits your quality, and you my little maiden, go to the lower; and each of you call the dog by the name which you have been wont to do: and to whichsoever of you twain he goeth, that person I adjudge to be his rightful owner.

"Oh, my Lord, I ask no other test!" exclaimed Dorothy joyfully.

"Sultan! Sultan! come to thy mistress, my pretty Sultan!" said my Lady, in her most blandishing tone, accompanying her words with such actions of enticement as she judged most likely to win him over to her: but he paid not the slightest heed to the summons. Dorothy, simply pronounced the word "Constant;" and the dog bounding from between the hands of Sir Thomas More; who had lightly held him till both claimants had spoken, leaped upon her, and overwhelmed her with his passionate caresses.

"It is a clear case," said Sir Thomas: "the dog hath acknowledged his mistress, and his witness is incontrovertible. Constant, thou art worthy of thy name!"

"Hark ye wench!" said my Lady More, whose desire of retaining the object of dispute had increased with the prospect of pricing him, "I will give thee a good sell him." "dog, if thou art disposed to

"Sell my dear, constant! Oh, never, wifful faithful Constant! Dorothy, throwing her arms" exclaimed newly recovered favourite and drew her him with the fondest affection.

"I will give thee a golden angel, and a new suit of clothes to boot, for him, which, I should think, a beggar-girl were mad to refuse," pursued Lady More.

"Nay, nay, my Lady, never tempt me with your gold," said Dorothy; "or my duty to my poor blind grandmother will compel me to close with your offer, though it should break my heart withal."

"Nay, child, an' thou hast a blind old grandmother, whom thou lovest so well, I will add a warm blanket, and a linsey-woolsey gown for her wear, unto the price I have already named," said the persevering Lady More.—"speak, shall I have" pursued she, pressing the bargain

Dorothy averted her head, to conceal the large tears that rolled down her pale cheeks, as she sobbed out, "Ye—es, my Lady."

"Dear child," said Sir Thomas, "thou hast made a noble sacrifice to thy duty: 'tis pity that thou hast taken up so bad a trade as begging, for thou art worthy of better things."

"It is for my poor blind grandmother," said the weeping Dorothy: "I have no other means of getting bread for her."

"I will find thee a better employment," said Sir Thomas kindly: "thou shalt be my daughter Roper's waiting maid, if thou canst resolve to quit the wandering life of a beggar, and settle to an honest service."

"How joyfully would I embrace the offer, noble sir, if I could do so without being separated from my aged grandmother, who has no one in the world but me," replied Dorothy, looking up between smiles and tears.

"Nay, God forbid that I should put assunder those whom nature hath so fondly united in the holy bands of love and duty," said Sir Thomas More, wiping away a tear: "my house is large enough to hold ye both; and while I have a roof to call mine own, it shall contain a corner for the blind and aged widow and the destitute orphan; that so, when the fashion of this world passeth away, they may witness for me before Him, before whom there is no respect of persons, and who judgeth every man according to his works."

ON WRITING

Having in two preceding Numbers spoken of the materials employed for writing upon, it may not be uninteresting to present you, in this place, with a brief sketch of the history of the art itself. Writing is a silent language. It communicates knowledge by means of marks, characters, or signs, made upon paper, or other materials, and then presented to the eye. The characters, or marks, used for this purpose, are of two kinds, viz., such as represent things, and such as represent words. Pictures, hieroglyphics, and symbols employed by people who lived many of the former kind; the alphabetical characters, of which our books are composed, are of the latter.

1. Pictures convey knowledge to the mind, by giving a visible representation of something which happened, or which really exists. To signify that one man had killed another, the figure of a dead man was drawn, lying upon the ground and a person standing over him with a knife, a sword, or other hostile weapon in his hand. This was the only kind of writing found amongst the Mexicans, in South America, when that continent was discovered; and must

be looked upon as writing in its most imperfect state.

2. Hieroglyphics are pictures or marks made to represent things which cannot be seen by the bodily eye, and there is a real or fancied resemblance between the picture or mark and the idea to be represented by it. Thus,—knowledge is an invisible thing; we know that it exists, but we cannot see it. Now to represent knowledge, the figure of an eye was made, because it was thought that there is some resemblance between these two objects. Eternity is another invisible thing, and this was represented by a circle, because a circle, like eternity, has neither beginning nor end. Tempers and qualities of minds were represented by certain animals; thus,—imprudence was denoted by a fly; wisdom by an ant; and victory by a hawk. Egypt was the country where this method of writing was most cultivated; and in these characters all the boasted wisdom of their priests was conveyed.

3 Another step in the progress of writing, is the use of arbitrary characters or marks, that is, of such marks as have no resemblance either to the nature or properties of the object to be represented, but which, by custom or general consent, are made to signify certain things. The Peruvians, another people of South America, had strings of divers colours, on which they made knots, of different sizes, and variously arranged, to convey information and communicate their thoughts to one another. The Chinese writing, it is said, is composed of these marks, each of which expresses but one idea. Their great Dictionary consists of two hundred volumes, and contains sixty thousand characters. The most learned amongst the Chinese can hardly acquire, during their whole life, a perfect knowledge of their own written language. We ourselves use characters of this kind to express our numbers; and the following figures, 1, 2, 3, &c., signify as clearly as the words, one, two, three, &c. the number intended by them. The characters used in astronomy, with many others which might be named, are of the same sort, and perfectly intelligible to those who have learned them. Several unlearned persons have been known to invent for themselves a set of marks, by which they could record a variety of things that they wished to remember. I have read of a farmer, of considerable dealings, who conducted his business with great regularity, but the only account-book he had was the walls of a room, set apart for the purpose, on which he made marks of his own invention, with chalk. This is one method of writing by arbitrary characters, and supposing any of his family instructed in his peculiar marks, he might thus, at his death, leave, in his self-invented writing, a clear statement of his affairs,

Superior to all these must be considered the method of Alphabetical Writing, which will form an article for our following and last Number.

Wrong Estimation of the Professions.—We think there is one radical error in American society, viz: a universal disposition to underrate the mechanical profession, when contrasted with what are termed the "learned professions," and with almost all other avocations.

Does the rich and respectable mechanic, the artizan, the architect, he who rears our public and private edifices, the builder of our ships, and the constructor of our canals and railways never permit a course of conduct in himself, which goes directly to take away from the respectability of the profession by which he has gained all he possesses? When he comes to decide upon the path his sons shall pursue, is it not too often the case that an overweening disposition is displayed to make them lawyers, doctors, ministers, merchants, anything but to bring them up to the respectable calling of their parents?

And let us ask, is not the same thing true of every other class in the community?

The sons of American citizens must be educated for *gentlemen*. They must not learn a trade, or an art, upon which they can always depend for a respectable living. This would be to lower rather than to raise them in the scale of public opinion; and hence it is, that thousands and thousands and thousands of boys are crowded into "the professions" and "behind counters," to become, in the end, genteel paupers, living upon the products of other men's labors, rather than relying upon their own hands for an honest living.

We repeat, it is the wrong estimate of the comparative respectability of the different pursuits, that causes so dangerous an error. We would not stifle genius nor deride learning, nor do we entertain the least disrespect to any profession; but we would have our sons taught to believe and made to feel, that it is far more honorable to learn some handicraft, by the practice of which they can live in independence and honor, than to crowd into the overflowing ranks of professions, which will not yield their bread, and which but too often lead to the entire prostration of the better feelings of the human heart, is low cunning, duplicity and knavery.

Who are the props and pillars of our public edifice? Who are the bone and muscle of society? We say, the mechanics and husbandmen of the land. From the ranks of these, too, have sprung statesmen, philosophers and sages, who have shed imperishable lustre upon the

age in which they lived. If the amount of useful intellectual attainments could be correctly estimated, we entertain no doubt that the ranks of the intelligent mechanics and agriculturalists would carry off the palm by immense majorities.

Then why should the almost universal efforts to disgrace these professions, by a simultaneous rush into other ranks, any longer prevail? Better, infinitely better, would it be, that our hardy, athletic youth should shoulder axe and away beyond the mountains, than, by a false pride and false estimate of true respectability, they should be thrust into wrong channels, to disease society, and weaken the bonds of the body politic. There they might live in the true nobility of nature, cultivate their own fields, and slumber beneath their own cottages, and perhaps become the founders of new communities of moral, physical and intellectual grants.—*Philadelphia Mirror*.

DISCONTENT.—How universal is it; We never yet knew the man who would say "I am contented." Go where you will, among the rich and the poor, the man of competence or the man who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow, you hear the sound of murmuring and the voice of complaint. The other day we stood by a cooper, who was playing a merry tune with his adze around a cask—"ah" sighed he, mine is a hard lot—forever trotting around and round like a dog, driving away at a hoop. Heigho, sighed a blacksmith, in one of the late hot days, as he wiped the drops of perspiration from his brow, while the red hot iron glowed on his anvil—"this is life with a vengeance! melting and frying one's self over a burning fire." "Oh that I were a carpenter," ejaculated a shoemaker, as he bent over his lap-stone, "here am I, day after day, wearing my soul away in making soles for others, cooped up in this little 7 by 9 room—heigho!" "I am sick of this out door work," exclaims the carpenter, "broiling under a sweltering sun, or exposed to the inclemencies of the weather—if I were only a tailor!" "This is too bad petulantly cries the tailor, "to be compelled to sit perched up here, plying my needle all the time—would that mine were a more active life." "Last day of grace—banks won't discount—customers won't pay what shall I do!" grumbles the merchant, "I had rather be a truck horse—a dog—any thing!" "Happy fellows!" groans the lawyer, as he scratches his liver over some perplexing case, or fellows! some dry, musty record—"I than cudgel I had rather hammer, its vexatious queries brains on through all the ramifications ton." And so are complaining of their of society—finding fault with their peculiar calling. If I were only this that or the other, I should be content, is the universal cry—any thing but what I am. So wags the world—so it has wagged, and so it will wag.

We have no idea of writing a sermon on the subject—of the preaching in the world would not persuade men out of their habit of grumbling. Like food, it is necessary to

their existence—they must grumble or die. —Were we called upon for a definition of man we should say, *Man is a grumbling animal*. Paley says he is a bundle of habits. We opine that grumbling is the greatest stick in the bundle. Only thing of a man going through he world without a murmur—without a sigh—satisfied with his allotment—the weather—the times—his food—his clothing, and invulnerable to the few thousand little ills which go to bother a man's soul out, only think of it! But the age of miracles has gone by

Farewell to Steam!—There seems no limit to the surprising inventive faculties of our countrymen. We learn by the *Freehold (N. J.) Inquirer* that on the 8th Dec. and following days there will take place at that town under the direction of an examining committee, a series of experiments with a new propelling power for Railroads, invented by Mr. U. Emmons of that town, and called the Spring Power Locomotive. The speed is computed at from 90 to 100 miles per hour! and that entirely effected by springs, of which there are 500 in the Locomotive. No danger of explosions here.

Newspapers.—Every thing under Heaven increases in price except newspapers. Beef and pork, flour and butter, sugar, tea and coffee, salt fish and onions, dry goods and yet groceries, fuel and rent, buckwheat and wash women, are all advanced in price. But newspapers, that most indispensable and no-getting-along-without-it article—the rum and substance of man's existence, remains *in statu quo*.

An important experiment has been made at Montpelier, Vermont, in a drill hole 800 feet deep from which it appears that for every 80 feet descent, heat increased at the rate of one degree. According to this, the heat not far from the earth's surface is sufficient to hold every substance in a melted state, and its whole interior must be a mass of boiling liquid. This may explain many natural phenomena, hitherto not fully accounted for.

Sir Thomas More used to say to his children—"Let virtue be your amusement your sauce."

R. D.

Subscriber takes this opportunity of returning his thanks to his friends and the Public for the liberal patronage with which he has been favored since his commencement in business, and begs leave to inform them that he has entered into partnership with Mr. JOHN ENGLISH, and in connection with him will continue to execute PRINTING of all descriptions on the most reasonable terms, and with despatch.—The office is well provided with type suitable for Hand-bills, Catalogues, Car., Pamphlets, Circulars, Blanks of every kind, &c. &c.

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A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Many wish me "A Happy New Year"
They utter the words and they smile:
But happy some do not appear,
Tho' thus they would others beguile.

What then is a happy New Year
Is it, honour,—or talents,—or health?
No! The poorest its bright beams may cheer,
Which oft leave the gay mansion of wealth!

'Tis not pleasure, nor high sounding fame,
That will make me a happy New Year.
How many are blest,—BUT IN NAME,
And in secret they shed the full tear!

'TIS THIS MAKES A HAPPY NEW YEAR,—
To do good, and from evil to cease,
To love God and to live in his fear,
To seek and pursue heav'nly peace!

Then a happy New Year I shall find,
In TRUTH and OBEDIENCE and LOVE;
O Saviour but grant me thy mind,
And prepare me for pleasure above!

Then happy shall be my LAST year,
'Twill finish all SORROW and PAIN;
Then with Jesus I hope to appear,
And bliss everlasting to gain!

THE BRITISH FIRE-SIDE.

The pleasures and gratifications which flow from the Fire-side, may be considered as almost peculiar to these islands. In warmer climates the aid of fire is demanded for little else than ordinary purposes; whilst in the northern regions of continental Europe, the gloomy and unsocial stone forms, in general, the only medium through which the rigors of their intense Winter are mitigated. To the enraptured blaze, and the clean smouldering hearth, and to all the numerous comforts, which, in this country, so usually wait upon their junction, they are perfect strangers. Perfectly silent, and interesting as is the aspect of the fire, under the warmth, and sun, it is the genial influence of a summer that I look forward to without a preference, the falling leaf or drifting-sons, when closer the family circle, and ushers draws social and intellectual intercourse which constitutes the dearest charm, and, next to religion, the highest privilege of human existence.

When all without is wrapped in darkness, and the freezing blast howls eager for entrance round your dwelling, with what enjoyment do its inmates crowd to the cheerful hearth, and, as the flame glows brighter on their cheeks, listen, with a sensation of self-gratulating security, to the storm that shakes their solid roof. It is here that the power of contrast is experienced in all its force; not only in reference to the exposure, fatigues, and hazards, which may have been actually

incurred ere the day-light closed; but imagination is at work to paint the lot of those less fortunate than ourselves, and who, still exposed to all the horrors of the storm, feel the bitterness of their destiny augmented by intrusive recollections of domestic ease and fire-side enjoyments.

We owe the following lines to the learned and accomplished biographer of the poet Kirke White, who, describing in his *Madoc*, the adventurous vessel of his Hero driving before the storm, beautifully says:—

'Tis pleasant, by the cheerful hearth, to hear
Of tempests, and the dangers of the deep,
And pause at times, and feel that we are safe;
Then listen to the perilous tale again,
And, with an eager and suspended soul,
Woo terror to delight us; but—to hear
The roaring of the raging elements,
To know all human skill, all human strength,
Avail not; to look round, and only see
The mountain wave incumbent, with its weight
Of bursting waters, o'er the reeling bark,—
O God, this is indeed a dreadful thing!
And he who hath endur'd the horror, once,
Of such an hour, doth never hear the storm
Howl round his home, but he remembers it,
And thinks upon the suffering mariner!

THE ELOQUENCE OF SILENCE.

How eloquent is silence! Acquiescence, contradiction, deference, disdain, embarrassment, and awe, may all be expressed by saying nothing. It may be necessary to illustrate this apparent paradox by a few examples. Do you seek an assurance of your mistress' affection? The fair one, whose timidity shrinks from an avowal of her tender sentiments, confirms her lover's fondest hopes by a complacent and assenting silence. Should you hear an assertion, which you may deem false, made by some one, of whose veracity politeness may withhold you from openly declaring your doubt? You denote a difference of opinion by remaining silent. Are you receiving a reprimand from a superior? You mark your respect by an attentive and submissive silence. Are you compelled to listen to the frivolous conversation of a coxcomb? You signify your despicable opinion of him by treating his loquacity with contemptuous silence. Silence has its utility and advantages. And 1st. What an incalculable portion of domestic strife and dissension might have been prevented; how often might the quarrels which by mutual aggravation, has checked in the heat of passion, have been avoided by a well-timed and judicious silence. Those persons only who have experienced the beneficial effects of that forbearance, which to the exasperating threat, the malicious sneer, or the unjustly imputed culpability shall answer never a word. 2nd. There are not wanting instances where the reputation, the fortune, the happiness, nay the life of a fellow-creature, might be preserved by a charitable silence, either by the suppression of some condemning circumstance,

or by refusing to unite in the defamatory allegation. 3d. To any one who is anxious to pass for a person of deep reflection and superior understanding, I would recommend to say but little; silence being considered by many people as a certain indication of wisdom; and I must myself confess, that I should prefer the man who thinks much without speaking, to him who speaks much without thinking. Not that I would be supposed to be an advocate for habitual taciturnity. No one can better appreciate the delight derived from intellectual intercourse. Notwithstanding which, I see daily cause to admire the truth and justice of that apophthegm, which says "Of much speaking cometh repentance, but in silence is safety."

A CONTRAST.—How superior is a poor man with a rich spirit to a rich man with a poor spirit! To borrow the expression of St. Paul, he is "as having nothing, and yet possessing all things;" while the other presents the melancholy reverse—he is as possessing all things, and yet having nothing. The first hopes every thing, and fears nothing; the last hopes nothing, and fears every thing. There is no absolute poverty without poverty of spirit. The sunshine of the mind gives only the bright side. He who lives under its influence is courted by all men, and may, if he will, enjoy their goods without their troubles. The world is, as it were, held in trust for him; and, in freedom from care, he is alone entitled to be called a gentleman. He is the most independent of all men, because fortune has the least power over him. He is the only man that is free and unfettered; he may do what he pleases, and nothing is expected from him. He escapes importunity and flattery and feels a perpetual consciousness that he is not sought for but for himself. Suspicion of motives never chills his confidence, nor withers his enjoyment. He has an enriching power within himself, which makes his outward wants easily supplied with industry and prudence, without the necessity of anxious toil. A little is enough, and beyond is an incumbrance. This is the Christian doctrine, and the doctrine of reason, which ever go together.—*Elgin Courant*.

STATIONARY, &c.

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