

# THE GLEANER:

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NEC ARANEARUM SANE TEXTUS IDEO MELIOR, QUIA EX SE FILA GIGNUNT, NEC NOSTER VILIOR QUIA EX ALIENIS LIBANUS UT APES.

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## LITERATURE.

### THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From the American Union.

#### A THRILLING SCENE.

The following narrative—a true one—describes a scene that actually took place not many years since, in a country town in the state of Maine.

One evening in the month of December eight hundred and thirty four, a number of townsmen had assembled at the store of a Mr Thomas Putnam, to talk over matters and things—smoke,—drink and in short do anything to 'kill time.'

Three hours had thus passed away. They had laughed, and talked, and drank and chattered, and had a good time, generally; so that about the usual hour of shutting up shop, each of the party felt particularly first rate.

'Come,' said Charles Hatch—one of the company—'let's all liquor, and then have a game of high-low Jack!'

'So I say,' exclaimed another—who's got the cards?'

'Fetch on your keards,' drawled out a third, his eyes half closed, through the effects of the liquor he had drunk.

After drinking all around, and old pine table was drawn up before the fireplace, were burned brightly a large fire of hemlock logs, which would snap and crackle—throwing large live coals out upon the hearth.

All drew up around the table, seating themselves on whatever came handiest.—Four of them had rolled up to the table some kegs, which from their weight were supposed to contain nails.

'Now,' said Hatch, 'how shall we play—every one for himself?'

'No—have partners,' growled out one.

'I say, every one for himself,' exclaimed another.

'No, hanged if I'll play so,' shouted the former—bringing his fist down upon the table, knocking one candle out of the stick and another upon the floor.

'Come, come,' said Hatch. 'No quarrelling—all who say for having partners stand up.'

Three arose.

'Now all who say, each one for himself—stand up.'

The remaining four immediately got up.

'You see, Barclay,' said Hatch, 'the majority are against you. Come, will you play?'

'Well as I don't want to be on the opposite side, I'll play,' answered Barclay, somewhat cooled down.

Mr Putnam was not in the store that evening, and the clerk who was busy behind the counter had taken very little notice of the proceedings. About half-past ten, Mr Putnam thought he would step over to his store and see that everything was safe. As he went in he walked up towards the fire.

When within a few steps of where the men were sitting he started back in horror.

Before him sat seven men, half crazy with drink and the excitement of playing cards. There they were, within a few feet of the fire just described—and four of them seated on kegs of powder!

Barclay—who was a very heavy man—had pressed in the head of the keg on which he sat, bursting the top-hoop, and pressing the powder out through the chinks. By the continued motion of their feet, the powder had become spread about the floor, and now covered a space of two feet all around them.

Mr Putnam's first movement was towards the door, but recovering himself, he walked up to the fire. Should either of them attempt to rise—he thought—and scattered a few grains a little further into the fire-place, where lay a large quantity of live coals!

At that moment Hatch looked up, and seeing Mr Putnam with his face deadly pale gazing into the fire exclaimed,

'Good God, Putnam! what ails you? and at the same time made a motion to rise.

'For heaven's sake gentlemen do not rise,' said Mr Putnam. 'Four of you sit on kegs of powder—it is scattered all around you—one moment might send you all to eternity. There are two buckets of water behind the bar. But keep your seats for one minute and you are saved—move, and you are dead men!'

In an instant every man was perfectly sobered—not a limb moved,—each seemed paralyzed.

In less time than we have taken to describe this thrilling scene, Mr Putnam had poured on the water and completely saturated the powder on the floor and extinguished the fire so that an explosion

was impossible. Then, and not till then was there a word spoken.

Before those seven men left the store, that very night, they pledged themselves never to taste another drop of liquor or play another game of cards.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

### THE POET'S MISSION.

BY MARIA J. EWEN.

WHAT is the Poet's noblest work? To sing Of Nature's glories, light, and birds and flowers,

Of star-gemmed eyes, of fair bright skies? To swing A perfumed censor o'er this earth of ours;

To wreath the world with beauty's magic zone?

Not this—not this alone!

To catch the spirit-murmurs of the sea, The low, sweet whisper of the forest air; To pour them forth in one wild melody, A grand, softer chant by far than theirs,

All feeling linked to music's trancing tone? Not this—not this alone!

More high and noble still I deem to be The Poet's work; with his rapt soul, clear eyes,

His thoughts that wander through eternity; His proud aspirations, world-wide sympathies, His burden and his wo, his raptures, tears— His doubting and his fears.

'Tis his to bear a message from high Heaven, To dash God's sunlight o'er the minds of men; To breathe in burning words fair thoughts, God-given,

Till Earth awake to beauty—truth again; To point with Faith's firm finger to the skies:— Henceforth, thou sleeper rise!

To scatter seeds of precious worth; to shout In high appeal against the power of wrong; To teige with golden light the clouds of doubt; To 'raise the weak, to animate the strong;— To seal all souls with Love's pure signet-kiss: The poet's work is this:

From Captain Egerton's Tour in India.

### THE KING OF OUDE'S DINNER PARTY.

We had the satisfaction of waiting from half past seven, the time appointed, to half-past eight, before the king sent to say he was ready—perhaps in revenge for our keeping him waiting in the morning.

What we expected to have been a great bore, however, turned out one of the gayest and most amusing festivals I ever was at.

We went as in the morning; and the procession with lighted torches, glittering arms, and prancing horses, through the illuminated streets; the arrival at the Durbar in a court crowded with people, and literally blazing with light from thousands of lamps; the dinner itself, with its accessories of jewelled orientals, evening dressed ladies, officers in uniform, music and glitter; the fireworks, and illuminated court-yard with playing fountains, altogether made a scene such as I never saw before, and probably never shall see again.

It was more like the last scene in the 'Island of Jewels' than anything else that I can think of. The *feats* was in honour of the marriage of the king's youngest son, a boy of four or five years of age to a daughter or niece of the prime minister; and the little imp of a bridegroom was brought out splendidly dressed to be exhibited to the company. The dinner was given in the Durbar-room of the old palace, the red-hot verandah-like place we visited on the first day, and, thanks to the open sides of the building, and the coolness of the night air, the temperature was very agreeable. The king, his brother, and sons, received us near the head of the stairs, and we at once proceeded to the business of the evening. We were not seated, however, without some struggle for places, and I found myself between Grosvenor and, perhaps, the most intelligent looking native present, who proved to be the king's brother-in-law. Another interesting neighbour was a roast guinea-fowl, of which I made my dinner. The table was laid as nearly European fashion as their acquaintance with our manners and customs would allow, and there was no lack of wine, if one only knew how to ask for it. The king was about the most gorgeous, and yet nearly the most absurd individual I ever saw. All the effect of his magnificent robes and jewels was injured, not to say spoiled, by the ridiculous addition of a 42nd Highlander's bonnet and plumes, which he wore with an air as if he really thought he had 'done it now.'

Besides the usual black feathers, he had added the bird of paradise' plume to one side of it, the whole effect being supremely ridiculous. In other respects, with his yellow and gold dress, and blue velvet mantle-powdered with gold flours-de-lis, his splendid jewelled chains, and his gold-embroidered slippers, he was the most gorgeously 'got up' individual I ever saw.

The chains he wore, three or four in number, were something like the collars of different orders of knighthood, but one mass of pearls or other precious stones. Besides these, he had a string of jewels of immense size hanging about his elbows, an attendant walking close behind him on each side to hold them, for fear they should break

off. In fact, as he stood, I should think he would have been cheap at £100,000.

At his Majesty's particular request the Resident gave the Queen's health, followed also, at his request, by three cheers uncommonly well given by, of course, the English part of the company; the bands playing 'God save the Queen' (only they began not exactly at the same time). I think the staid orientals were rather astonished at the row we made, and the king was pleased at having nearly the same noise made when we drank his health afterwards. That done, we all adjourned to a balcony overlooking the entrance-court beyond the throne-room.

Arm chairs had been placed for us, and the king was no sooner seated than the fireworks, which had been placed in the court, were let off. Fire balloons by dozens, rockets by hundreds, elephants with fiery tails on a kind of merry-go-round, fish whirling, serpents hissing, fiery fountains playing, and men with their stomachs full of squibs—it was like the last scene in a grand burlesque.

A grand bouquet of rockets finished the exhibition and the entertainment, and we all retired, receiving the usual tinsel chains, but avoiding the scent ceremony.

### MIND THE DOOR.

Did you ever observe how strong a street door is? How thick the wood is, how heavy the chain is, what large bolts it has, and what a lock! If there were nothing of value in the house, or no thieves outside, this would not be needed, but as there are precious things within, and bad men without, there is the need that the door be strong, and we must mind the door.

We have a house. Our heart and mind in that house. Bad things are forever trying to come in and go out of our mind and heart. We will describe some of these bad things to you.

What is that at the door? Ah, I know him, it is Anger. What a frown there is on his face!

How his lips quiver! How fierce he looks! I will hold the door and not let him in, or he will do me harm, and perhaps some one else.

Who is that? It is Pride. How haughty he seems! He looks down on everything as if it were too mean for his notice. Ah, wicked Pride, I will hold the door fast, and try to keep him out.

Here is some one else. I am sure from his sour look, his name is Ill-temper. It will never do to let him in, for if he can only sit down in the house he makes every one unhappy, and it will be hard to get him out again. No, sir, we shall not let you in so you may go away.

Who is this! It must be Vanity, with his flaunting strut and gay clothes. He is never so well pleased as when he has a fine dress to wear, and is admired. You will not come in my fine fellow, we have too much to do, and attend to such folks as you. Mind the door!

Here comes a stranger. By his sleepy look, and slow pace, I think I know him. It is Sloth. He would like nothing better than to live in my house, sleep or yawn the hours away, and bring me to rags and ruin. No, no, you idle drone, work is pleasure, and I have much to do. Go away, you shall not come in.

But who is this? What a sweet smile, what a kind face! She looks like an angel. It is Love. How happy she will make us if we ask her in. Come in, we must open the door for you.

Others are coming. Good and bad men are crowding up. Oh, if men keep the door of their heart, bad thoughts and bad words would come in and go out as they do. Welcome to all things good, war with all things bad. We must mark well who comes in, we must be watchful and in earnest. Keep the guard! Mind the door! Mind the door.

From the New York Spirit of the Times.

### AN OLD GENTLEMAN'S SECOND MARRIAGE.

COL. BAXTER'S nuptials! We—the whole regiment—turned out in full dress to witness their celebration. Even Mrs Brill went to the expense of a white satin slip and a bonnet trimmed with orange-blossoms for the occasion. (Brill had been appointed Brigade-Major of the Division.) The Colonel looked about forty years of age. The bride was certainly a very pretty girl. Major Green gave her away. I wish Mrs Brill had stayed at home; for her mind was always running on matters of business, and she made me laugh in the church, close to the latter by saying seriously in a whisper—

'She'll come nicely on the fund, cornet as a Colonel's widow, if anything happens to old Baxter. It's a fraud! He ought to be ashamed of himself! I wish the old woman's ghost would walk in just now, and see what was the use of her saving

and pinching as she did. This young woman will spend it all, you know. I should like to catch Brill making such a fool of himself, after I'm dead and gone, and ducks and drakes of all I have scraped together. When I'm dying I'll burn every bit of Company's paper, or tear it into little bits, and throw it into the chicken broth I shall call for on purpose; and then, if Brill likes to marry again, let him. It will be quite optional.'

'Hush!' said I. 'The parson is looking at you.'

'Well let him look, the pasty-faced man,' said Mrs Brill. 'I think he might have put on a clean what-you-may-call-it—surplus'—(she meant surplus)—'although it is a dirty business he is engaged in—marrying an old painted man to a mere child. There were we pitying old Baxter not long ago, when the old lady died; and now see there are all the cornets envying him. The world is full of hypocrisy and humbug. What can that young girl care about that old thing? It is not in human nature. She wants to be Mrs Colonel Baxter, and have a carriage and pair, and all the rest of it.'

'So long as ye both shall live,' said the clergyman, concluding the vow.

'I will,' said the colonel.

'I will,' echoed Mrs Brill in a loud whisper. 'Why, his three-score-and-ten is overdue before he marks it.'

I could contain myself no longer. My wife, who was leaning on my arm, gave me a look expressive of extreme disgust; but it did not reduce me to gravity.

'For richer and poorer.' When the old Colonel came to these words, Mrs Brill whispered to me—

'He'll be poorer pretty soon, I warrant you. Give thee my troth!' she repeated after the colonel. 'Bring her on the fund, and give her a pension! I say it's a fraud!'

'With this ring I thee wed,' old Colonel Baxter repeated after the Clergyman.

'With this fiddlestick!' whispered Mrs Brill carrying on her commentary loud enough for me to hear her. 'I have no patience with an old man who paints his cheeks, and dyes his hair, and comes to church clothed in such abominable falsehood!'

'Yea, and thou shalt see thy children's children,' said the minister.

'Children's children, indeed! Now, the very idea,' said Mrs Brill.

'You had better leave the church, Robert, whispered my wife, 'if you cannot behave better!'

Mrs Brill heard her and replied, 'He had better stay where he is, you wouldn't have him cry would you?'

'Hush!' said I, in an agony of fear lest Mrs Brill should come to words with my wife, and interrupt the ceremony.

'Spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.' When the minister came to these words, Mrs Brill was very indignant.

'Spot or wrinkle!' she repeated. 'He had filled up all the wrinkles with white paint and putty! I could pick it out with a pen knife! The old man is a walking fraud! I've no patience with him; and I will say so at the breakfast. Brill is on the staff, and can no longer be bullied by a ragnuffin of a commanding officer.'

My wife, when we came out of church, begged of me not to sit near Mrs Brill at the breakfast. But of what avail was my promise, since Mrs Brill was determined to sit next to me.

'Robert, there is room for you here,' said my wife, when we were about to be seated, and she pointed to a vacant chair.

Mrs Brill observed her look, and said, 'Don't be alarmed, Mrs Wetherby. Although bolting, they say, is catching when it gets into a regiment, don't suppose I'd be so weak as to go off with the cornet. Brill is on the staff.'

Sophy roared with laughter; and so did every one who heard Mrs Brill's remark.

'Have you congratulated the colonel? I enquired of Mrs Brill.

'No,' said she; 'and I don't intend. I am not an impostor and hypocrite, like some ladies whom I could mention.' (She looked at my wife.) 'I always speak my feeling. An honest man's the noblest work of God—and so's a woman.'

I filled Mrs Brill's glass several times with champagne, and the beverage seemed to improve her temper. I trod upon her toe by accident, and she looked blandly into my face and said—

'Don't flirt with me, cornet, before your wife, or you'll be making her unhappy poor thing; and she's not a bad creature, though she looks a wretched dawdle, and has no more idea of house-keeping than a blacking brush has. It was unfortunate that she chummed with Mrs Fife-leigh, for her character is compromised by it, poor thing. Don't flirt with me

here, cornet. Brill, too, has got his bleary eyes on us.'

From Dickens's Household Words.

### HOUSE-TOPS.

BUT there are far humbler house-tops than these, as all who look about them a little in the world may easily see. There is the house-top of poverty and misery. The house-top in Ireland and in the Hebrides is too often a sorry substitute for a real rain-repelling, cold-excluding covering. Eaves to the roof we may find if we can. There is a scanty sort of wooden roof, covered with a thatch made of stubble or potato-stalk, bound by leather or rope straws, which bands are fastened by heavy stones to the top of the broad wall. The woodwork is too slight to bear more than a thin layer of thatch; and the rain tumbles in a free-and-easy sort of way, until finally excluded by the coating of soot which raises from the turf fire beneath. Poor Paddy often finds the rain peeping down upon him in the middle of the night, and has to shift his straw to a part of the cabin where the thatch may possibly be in a little more kindly humour. Sometimes he has not even the dignity of a bit of thatch over his head; he has to content himself with a layer of sods, pretty nearly in the same state in which he dug them up from the ground. By many degrees better than this is the snowy covering of the snow hut of the Laplander and the Esquimaux; for, despite our usual prejudice in this matter, snow is a warm material, the external cold finds some difficulty in insinuating itself through a snow wall or roof; and the fur-clad Esquimaux, with his four-foot high gentle partner, coddle themselves up in their bee-hive sort of a hut, defy the external cold, and feast upon train-oil to their hearts' content.

Our English house-tops put on almost as great a variety of attire as the men and women who are roofed in thereby. Slates reign paramount in modern London, although their dominion is less decided in the country. And let not the uninitiated turn up the nose of scorn at slates; they are, in their own peculiar technical career, princesses, duchesses, and countesses, according to the sizes and prices; and a slater thus mixes with the aristocracy on terms more familiar than falls to the lot of most artisans. Some house-tops dress themselves in brick-colored garments, yclep'd tiles; and these tiles, convex at one part of their width, and concave at another, afford means of lapping one over another, and for leaving channels down which rain can descend. In some instances, the house-top apes the terrace from the East; and then it requires flat quadrangular tiles, which are cemented together very artistically. The age of iron demands that iron should be tried for or by the house-tops—and tried it is. Sometimes plates of iron are lapped slightly one over another, and made into a roof which may be very nearly flat; sometimes corrugated sheet-iron is made to do duty—and wonderfully well does a small weight of iron in this form support itself, and furnish shelter for all beneath it. Our iron-roofs are bagatelles, however, to those of Russia; most of the new buildings at Petersburg and Moscow are now, as a precaution against fire, roofed with sheet-iron; and this iron being painted bright red, or bright green, displays the vanity of the house-tops very conspicuously. Sometimes iron gives way to a younger brother, zinc—as being not so heavy as lead, and not so soon corroded as iron. Sometimes (but not much in England) wooden roofs are adopted—and very ingeniously they are arranged—the trunks of trees are split down the middle, and hollowed out; one layer of these trunks is laid down side by side, with the concave side uppermost, and then another layer upon these with the convex side uppermost, covering the vacant spaces between the trunks of the undermost layer. Sometimes asphaltum is taken into favour by the house-tops; it is applied either as a liquid cement to form a terrace-roof, or is combined with hat-manufacturers' refuse felt to form a 'flexible asphaltic roofing,' to which a very learned Greek name is applied. And if this list of substance be not enough, we will mention, paper; house-tops have occasionally not refused to be covered with a paper cap. The late Mr London, always searching for the useful, showed how roofs might be formed of very slight rafters, with laths of very light pine boards upon them, and sheets of brown paper on the laths; the sheets have previously been twice saturated with boiling tar and pitch, and after being nailed on like slates, they are fed from a hot delicate dish of tar, pitch, whitening, and charcoal, with a crowing sprinkling of sand or ashes.

Thus do the house-tops clothe themselves, some stately, some daintily. Be-