

PUBLIC LEGER.

A MURDERER.—John Zimmerman, was condemned, in Pennsylvania, some time ago, to suffer death for murdering his daughter; during his imprisonment he made a confession of the manner in which his life had been spent, from which the following extracts are made.

"I was always a zealous democrat, and often had disputes with the opposition, nay sometimes fought. I was particularly warm at the last Governor's election, and Schulze's justice would then have appeared conspicuously to me if he had sentenced all that were for Gregg to the halter. At that time I little thought that my Governor would condemn one favorable to him, much less him who was so very zealous. But the tables are turned, and the friend must now feel the keen edge of the friend's sword—Justice is stronger than friendship—but what reflections—my sentence is just, it is reasonable that my blood should flow.

In my 22d year I was married to Eve, her maiden name, Witterstine; commenced and followed the aforesaid pursuits alternately, and would at all times have well supported my family if whiskey had not always robbed me of the greater part of my earning. When intoxicated I was untractable and furious, and more like a tiger than a man. My wife I loved notwithstanding, and never left her to suffer for necessities: she too, knew how to accommodate herself to my temper, and would not even incur her displeasure to a great extent, when in a state of intoxication I turned her and children out of doors, and threw a parcel of furniture after them—I became reconciled and we again lived in peace. My wife gave birth to 9 children, of whom 5 have departed from this vale of sorrow, viz: 2 sons and 3 daughters; 4, two sons, and two daughters, are living, who are now to witness my ignominious death. My two youngest children who are female twins, are now 11 years of age. One of my daughters, who is no more, burnt herself accidentally or designedly—so, that she died in a few hours after. My mother died during my imprisonment, and my eldest daughter, who had attained the age of 20, I sent in a barbarous never-heard of, and humanity revolting manner, on Wednesday the 26th of November, 1823, I choked and kicked her to death.

The following circumstances led to the cause: my daughter Rosina was hired at the coal mines at Mauch Chunk, Northampton county; there in one year she became intimate with Irishmen, which was intolerable to me. She became afflicted with the ague, and was brought home. I however treated her during the first few days after her return as a father; I nursed and waited on her, but occasionally reproached her bitterly on account of the Irishmen; who has intercourse with the Irish, has dealings with the Devil, thought I. Now some Irish men came to my house to visit her on her bed of sickness, and gibbered with her, which highly enraged me; I therefore told my Rosina to speak her father's language that I might understand her, upon which she told me in German what the Irishmen wanted, and what was the object of their visit.—After they left the house, I in the most raging manner upbraided her, and told her if the Irish did not stay away I would shoot them. Rosina reprimanded my behaviour with sensibility, saying that nothing of the kind that I suspected took place between her and the Irishmen, and that if I went on in this manner I could not be in a good way. As she had frequently done before, she admonished me to change my condition, recommended praying, and represented swearing, drinking and dancing as things leading to damnation. This affected me; I became uneasy and my mind became fearful.—Disquietude had not left me the next day; and the suspicion haunted me continually; the cause of my Rosina's disease might be pregnancy, consequently I repaired to an adjoining woods, knelt on a stone, prayed fervently, but found no relief. As I found no repose, I went further into a small valley, prayed again most fervently, imploring God, that he might direct me what to do, upon which I saw a sign at the Heavens. I saw a light, and at the same moment my prayers were heard, it appeared to me as if God said, "Put your Rosina to death!"

This confirmed my suspicions about my Rosina and the Irishmen, nay, certain was I, my daughter had done amiss, and resolved it was to save—to destroy her. I returned home—turned my wife and children out of doors, (except the twins) and seated myself at the bedside of Rosina and desired her to kneel aside of me on the floor, helped her out of bed, and thus she and I prayed a short time. Suddenly I embraced the favorable moment to execute the Divine will, drew my daughter backwards on the floor, seized her throat,

kicked her in the sides till she made no resistance. Then I dragged her by the hair on the middle of the floor, and thus the will of God was accomplished. To the execution of this act I was endowed with peculiar strength, against the struggles of my daughter, therefore, I had an easy victory.—My son and Jacob Herring, who were not far from the house splitting wood for burning tar, were informed of my conduct by my wife, who hastened to the house; but I did not admit them. Rosina was then already dead; however they knew how to get assistance, and eventually when the door was forced open, I was, in the room where the corpse lay, taken and bound.

This act I committed in Rush township, Schuylkill county, where I previously resided a considerable time. I was much addicted to drink, & this, in addition to my natural disposition, caused such ferocity in my undertakings, as seldom finds a parallel.

At the time I murdered my daughter I felt the spirit of cider royal in my head, which I had in my house.

My neighbours, who arrested me, and the inquest, on my persevering entreaties, permitted me to follow my daughter to the grave. On the same day, the 28th of November, 1823, I was brought to the jail of Orwigsburg. Here in jail I only began to reflect on my awful situation. The name of murder became insupportable, and to be treated in this way I thought was unjust. I then could not properly consider myself as the murderer, because God commanded me to do it. I thought it was him, and therefore did not suppose that any body would condemn me to death. Love of life induced me to act in jail as if I was insane, hoping to escape by such conduct. I prayed, bawled, leaped, stamped, cursed, talked nonsense, all for the purpose that they might think that I was a fool. But I could not entirely hide my sanity, nay, I was often angry that I was not more on my guard. When I was sentenced by the court to be hung, I did not give up the hope of a pardon and pretended anew to be crazy as I said before, "If they condemn me they shall soon have a complete fool—and fools they don't hang." I raved and raged, sang and leaped and prayed for hours.

The clergymen, who visited me, were received rudely: gave to their questions little or no answer, but had rather a malignant pleasure in driving them off soon by roaring and swearing. But on the 13th September, as I was laying on my bed in deep contemplation, suddenly a preacher with a serious, sympathising mein stepped before me, representing my awful situation to me, the necessity of yet saving my soul, the willingness of Jesus to receive even me, if I approached him with penitence and contrition, in a manner that produced very sensible emotions. But notwithstanding after having attentively listened to him 10 or 12 minutes, I became actuated by such a degree of ferocity that I fell into my former habits, and would have been much pleased if I could have laid violent hands upon him. I am hardened, distrustful against God, and seduced by the devil to the aforesaid nameless act, and never can—never will I suffer myself to learn or be brought to any sort of repentance.

I am now in my 46th year, and die when I might yet have been useful to my family, however they can help themselves pretty well. Therefore farewell, my dear friends, forget me, and live so that I may never see you! To me God is a consuming fire—may he be all love to you.

To the sheriff, deputy sheriff, and to all who treated me well during my imprisonment, I hereby tender my acknowledgement. I forgive all my enemies, because to take vengeance is not allowed me. The clangour of my chains will soon cease and the bustle of the multitude will commence, which will accompany me to the place of execution. Oh! I deserve such a fate. May many take warning by me and guard against the vices of drunkenness, of swearing, of scoffing at religion! They sooner or later, lead into misfortunes.

JOHN ZIMMERMAN.

There is nothing which requires so much mental courage, and so much firm principle, as to tell strict truth, in spite of temptation to tell the lies, of interest of pride, and of complaisance; because no fame, no honor awaits the person who so does; as there is scarce an individual in society who values spontaneous truth or indeed any truth:—to tell a little fib, a white lie, is thought even meritorious on some occasions; while a strict adherence to truth on small, as well as on great points, exposes the person who so adheres, to be ridiculed, if not despised by people in general: therefore, he who can act up to his own sense of right, in defiance of ridicule and example, and also, unstimulated by aught but the whisper of conscience, is capable of what I must call the most difficult moral heroism.

CONGRESS.

SENATE.

Dec. 13.—The President of the senate appointed the following standing committees:

Foreign relations.—Barbour, Jackson, Macon, Elliott and Mills.

Finance.—Smith, King of N. Y. Macon, Holmes of Me. and Lowry.

Commerce and manufactures.—Dickerson, Ruggles, D'Wolf, Findlay & Clayton.

Militia.—Chandler, Findlay, Knight, Branch and Bell.

Military affairs.—Jackson, Chandler, Benton, Taylor of Ind. and Johnson of Ky.

Naval affairs.—Lloyd of Mass. Williams, Parrott, Lloyd of Md. and Hayne.

Public Lands.—Barton, Thomas, Eaton, King of Ala. and Vandyke.

Indian affairs.—Benton, Johnson of La. Elliott, Edwards of Con. and Kelly.

Claims.—Ruggles, Holmes of Miss. Palmer, Bell and M'Ilvaine.

Judiciary.—Van Buren, Holmes of Me. Talbot, Brown and Seymour.

Post offices and post roads.—Lanman, Johnson of Ky. Knight, M'Ilvaine and Taylor.

Pensions.—Noble, Talbot, Lanman, Branch and Cobb.

District of Columbia.—Lloyd of Md. Barbour, Noble, Eaton and Parrott.

Mr. Barton offered a resolution inquiring into the expediency of offering for sale the lead mines and salines of the U. States.

The bill to "abolish imprisonment for debt," received its second reading, and was referred to a select committee.

Mr. Van Buren presented a resolution on the subject of tonnage on canal boats, which was read the first time.

Dec. 14.—On motion of Mr. Barbour, so much of the President's message as relates to foreign affairs, was referred to the committee on foreign relations.

Mr. Barton presented the petition of sundry inhabitants of the state of Missouri, on the subject of a trade and intercourse between that state and the internal provinces of Mexico. The same gentleman called up the memorial from the Cherokee Indians, concerning the taxation of merchants passing through their territory, as granted to them by treaty of the U. States, and it was referred to the committee on the judiciary.

Dec. 15.—The resolution offered yesterday by Mr. Brown, to appoint a committee on roads and canals, was then taken up.

Mr. Chandler observed, that he was one of those who believed that this was a subject on which congress had no right to legislate; that he believed it to be unconstitutional, and that, for his part, he was determined to raise his voice and vote against the resolution.

Mr. Ruggles said, it would be impossible to proceed regularly without a committee on this subject; that it was the practice of the senate, and a very necessary one, to have such a committee.

Mr. Noble said he was sorry to find the gentleman from Maine opposed to the appointment of a committee on this subject. He thought the gentleman's scruples would have time enough to operate upon his mind hereafter. He alluded to the circumstance of the president's calling the attention of congress to the subject of internal improvements; and observed, in relation to the message, that though he had not the greatest confidence in every part of it, yet he was very well satisfied with the opinion of the executive on this important subject.—He would vote for the resolution, with an eye directed to the promotion of the general prosperity of the country.—The motion was carried.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Dec. 10.—General La Fayette entered at 1 o'clock, accompanied by the committee appointed to wait on him. After his entrance, the speaker and members arose, and he was introduced by the chairman of the committee, to the house. He was then conducted to a sofa placed for his reception, when the speaker addressed him in a very eloquent and feeling manner, which, with the General's reply will be published in the next Leger.

Dec. 13.—After the presentation of a number of petitions, the speaker laid before the house the resolutions of the legislature of New York, remonstrating against the collection of tonnage from canal boats, which, on motion of Mr. Storrs was laid on the table.

On motion of Mr. Little, the subject of revolutionary pensions was referred to a committee on public lands, with instructions to enquire into the expediency of prolonging the time of locating lands within the Virginia Military District, and for obtaining patents. A bill to permit the state of Ohio to sell certain lands, granted the state under restrictions, was taken up and passed. The house resolved itself into a committee of the whole, on the bill more

effectually to provide for the punishment of certain crimes; and in order to give the committee an opportunity to make the bill more comprehensive, they rose and had leave to sit again.

Dec. 14.—Three messages were received from the President to-day. The first, accompanying a report from the Commissioner of the public buildings, by which it appears that \$95,749 23 have been expended within the present year on the public buildings. The second, accompanying a statement of the lots now and formerly owned by the government, in Washington, &c. &c. The third, a statement relative to the Virginia military lands in Ohio.

On motion of Mr. Jennings, it was *Resolved*, That the committee on public lands be instructed to inquire into the expediency of reducing the price of such portions of the public lands as shall have been exposed to sale for sixteen years, and remain unsold, to fifty cents per acre; and that such portions of the public lands as have been exposed to sale for eight years, and remain unsold, be reduced in price to seventy-five cents per acre."

Mr. Jennings said, that he had presented to the house a memorial of the legislature of Indiana, asking congress to reduce the price of the public lands generally. In offering the resolution, his object was, if a reduction should take place, to direct the attention of the committee on the public lands, to the idea of graduating the price of those lands which had been long in market, and remain unsold, by a reference to the time of their continuing unsold, as furnishing, in some measure, an evidence of their relative value.

Mr. Wright, of Ohio, offered the following resolution: "*Resolved*, That the committee on the judiciary be instructed to inquire into the propriety of providing by law, that any judicial or other civil officer of the government of the United States, who shall hereafter engage in fighting a duel, or in challenging, assisting or encouraging any other person to engage, shall forfeit the office by him so held, and be ever afterwards rendered incapable of holding the like, or other office under the government." (Agreed to.)

Dec. 15.—The speaker laid before the house several communications from the Treasury department, relating to the duties received and owing on imported goods, to the collection of tonnage duties on canal boats, &c. which were severally referred.

On motion of Mr. Jennings, it was *Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to inquire into the expediency of appropriating money upon a pledge of the three per cent. fund of Indiana, to enable said state to construct a canal around the falls of Ohio, at Jeffersonville, with leave to report by bill or otherwise."

Mr. Cook called up the consideration of the following joint resolution, offered by him last session: "*Resolved*, &c. That the several states which have been admitted into the Union under any compact prohibiting such states from levying and collecting a tax on land for five years next succeeding the sale of such land by the United States be, and they are hereby, severally authorised, whenever they may deem it expedient, to subject all lands hereafter sold by the United States, within their respective limits, to the same tax that they may levy and collect on lands not subject to the provisions of such compacts." [Referred to the committee on public lands.]

GENERAL LA FAYETTE.

The National Journal of the 18th ult. contains the following remarks respecting the reception of La Fayette in the House of Representatives.

"Yesterday and the day before have presented to the world one of the most affecting and sublime incidents in the history of nations. Kingly pomp, and the purchased pageantry of Courts—styles and titles of nobility—and the venal and evanescent idolatry of thoughtless crowds, dazzled by a fictitious and impure splendour—have been thrown into deep and deserved obscurity, by the simple and unstudied expression of a nation's feelings towards its early and disinterested benefactor. The scene exhibited in the two Houses of Congress, on the reception of General La Fayette, is one which gives a moral splendour to the republican character, far surpassing all the most magnificent spectacles which the policy and stratagem of regal governments have ever produced. It is a record inscribed by the pen of gratitude on the tablets of the heart; and it will be conveyed from age to age, so long as virtue and an honest pride in their country's character and institutions continue to influence American citizens.—History may err, and speaking marble will decay, but the grandeur of republicanism, and the influence of virtuous feelings, must be banished from our hemisphere, and from mankind, before the events of these days can be obliterated."