

VINCENNES SATURDAY GAZETTE.

"TRUTH WITHOUT FEAR."

VOLUME VII.]

VINCENNES, SATURDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 14, 1837.

NUMBER 20

A remarkable story.
The following story is taken from a notice of "Illustrations of Human Life," a new work, by the author of "Tremain and de Vere," in the New Monthly Magazine for April.

The story to which we shall now advert, has the double value of being told, we presume, on Mr. Ward's personal knowledge, and of illustrating the extraordinary changes on which human life is suffered to depend. The circumstances occurred to the well known Sir Evan Nepean, when in the Home department.—The popular version of the story had been, that he was warned by a vision to save the lives of three or four men condemned to die, but reprieved, and who, but for the vision, would have perished through the under Secretary's neglect in forwarding the reprieve. On Sir Evan's being subsequently asked how far the story was true, his answer was:—The narrative romances a little but what it alludes to was the most extraordinary thing that happened to me." The simple facts, as told by himself, are these:—One night during his office as under secretary, he felt the most unaccountable wakefulness that could be imagined; he was in perfect health, had dined early, and had nothing whatever on his mind to keep him awake. Still he found all his attempts to sleep impossible, and, from eleven till two in the morning, had never closed an eye. At length, weary of this struggle, and as the twilight was breaking, it was summer, he determined to try what would be the effect of a walk in the park. There he saw nothing but the sleeping sentinels.—But in his walk, happening to pass the Home Office several times, he thought of letting himself in with his key, though without any particular object. The book of entries of the day before still lay on the table, and through sheer listlessness he opened it. The first thing he saw appalled him—"A reprieve to be sent to York for the convicts ordered for execution." It struck him that he had received no return to his order to send the reprieve. He searched the "minutes," he could not find it there. In alarm, he went to the house of the chief clerk, who lived in Downing street, knocked him up, (it was then past three,) and asked him if he knew any thing of the reprieve being sent. In great alarm, the chief clerk could not remember. "You are scarcely awake," said Sir Evan, recollect yourself, it must have been sent."

The chief clerk said that he now recollect he had sent it to the clerk of the crown, whose business it was to forward it to York. "Good," said Sir Evan.—"But have you his receipt and certificate that it is gone?" "No." "Then come with me to his house; we must find him, it is so early." It was now four, and the clerk of the crown lived in Chauncy lane. There was no hackney coach to be seen; and they almost ran. They were just in time. The clerk of the crown had a country house, and meaning to have a long walk, he was at that moment stepping into his gig to go to his walk. As soon as Sir Evan of the under Secretary of State, at such an hour, he was not there so at his business.

"Heavens!" cried he, "the reprieve is locked up in my desk!"—It was brought Sir Evan sent to the Post Office for the trustiest and fleetest express. The reprieve reached York next morning, just at the moment when the unhappy men were ascending the cart.

With Sir Evan Nepean, we fully agree in regarding this little narrative as one of the most extraordinary that we ever heard. We shall go further even than he acknowledged, and say, that, to us, it bears striking evidence of what we should conceive a superior interposition. It is true that no ghost appears, nor is any prompting voice audible; yet the result depended on so long a succession of what seemed chances, and each of these chances was so improbable and so necessary, that we are compelled, to regard the whole matter of an influence not to be attributed to man. If the first link of the chain might pass for a common occurrence, as undoubtedly fits of wakefulness will happen without any discoverable ground in the state of either body or mind—still what could be less in the common course of things that a man thus waking should take it into his head to get up and take a walk in the park in the morning? If he had like others contented himself with taking a walk around his chamber, or enjoying the cool at his window, not one of the succeeding events could have occurred, and the man must have been sacrificed. Or if, when he took this walk, he had been content with getting rid of the feverishness of the night, and returned to his bed, the chain would have been broken, for what was more out of the natural course of events than at two in the morning the idea should come into the head of any man to go to his office, and sit down in the lonely rooms of his department, for no purpose of business or pleasure, but simply from not knowing what to do with himself? Or if, when he had let himself into those solitary rooms, the book of entries had not lain on the table; (and this we presume to have been among the chance, as we can scarcely suppose books of this official importance to be generally left to their

care among the servants and messengers of the office;) or if the entry, instead of being on the first page that opened to his eye, had been on any other, even upon the second, as he never might have taken the trouble of turning the page; or if he and the chief clerk had been five minutes later at the clerk of the crown's house, and instead of finding him at the moment of getting into his carriage, had been compelled to incur the delay of bringing him back from the country, all the preceding events would have been useless. The people would have died at York, for even as it was, there was not a moment to spare; they were stopped on the very verge of execution.

The most remarkable feature of the whole is, that the chain might have been snapped at every link, and was equally important. In the calculation of the probability of any one of these occurrences, a mathematician would find the chances very hard against it; but the calculation would be prodigiously raised against the probability of the whole. If it be asked, whether a sufficient ground for this high interposition is to be discovered in saving the lives of a few wretched culprits, who, as is frequent in such cases, probably returned to their wicked trade as soon as they escaped, and only plunged themselves into deeper iniquity—the answer is that it is not for us, in our ignorance, to mete out the value of human life, however criminal in the eyes of Heaven. But there was another interest concerned, and one of evident value.

If those coopers had been hung, Sir Evan Nepean could scarcely have escaped utter ruin; popular rage would have flared out against him from one end of the country to another; he would have been charged with the murderer. No man under such circumstances could have retained office a week. We have seen a circumstance of the same nature, but of a much slighter color, drive a late judicial officer of London from his office in a moment. No Minister could have ventured to screen him—office in England would have been shut upon him for life. He probably would have been driven to hide his head in some foreign country, even if some angry Parliamentary rebuke, royal mark of displeasure, had not broke his heart.

Yet all who know the subsequent services of Sir Evan Nepean as secretary to the Admiralty, during the long period of our naval glory in the revolutionary war, know that a humane, honest and intelligent man would have been lost to himself and his country.

The actual neglect was the crown clerk's, but it would have been thrown back from the inferior on the principal, according to the manner of popular justice; and doubtless, if Evan had made the inquiry the night before, which he made in his waking hour in the morning, the reprieve would not have suffered the hazard of delay. The inadvertence, slight as it was, would have been his ruin. Here then at least, the "dignus vindicarius," the sufficient reason, the want of which was pleaded with such effect in the crowd of popular narratives, was furnished.

From the Transcript.

Narrative of an aerial voyage from Fair Mount, Baltimore.

I must be permitted to prelude this hasty sketch with a defensive remark agaynt any imputation which might be thrown out on a seeming departure from the more delicate duties appertaining to my sex. Chance having made me repeatedly a witness of aeronautic display, both in this country and Europe, I imbibed an ardent desire to participate in the pleasures which seemed to me peculiar to such a mode of travel. I wished to look down upon our fair earth from such an eminence as this means only could command—you may say it was curiosity if you will, for that is said to be characteristic of our sex; however, in this instance I trust it was a pardonable one. An opportunity offered for the fulfillment of my long cherished design in the fall of '36, when I contemplated a journey to the skies; but one of those accidents against which it was impossible to provide, frustrated my hopes—the balloon burst almost at the instant of intended departure. Mortified at such a result, and convinced that the multitude *without the gates* was highly incensed, I determined it should not be for the want of an imprudent appeal, if I did not avail myself of the first to gratify my own desires and convince my friends that my intentions were sincere though doubtful my success. This opportunity did not occur until Thursday last, which day Mr. Mitchell had appointed for an ascension. The day was fair, the atmosphere scarcely moved by a breeze, and but a few fleecy clouds checked the face of the sky. The balloon was partly inflated when I requested Mr. Mitchell to allow me to take his place; he was incredulous; I assured him I was in earnest, and after much solicitation he consented to leave the point to the decision of the assemblage. The dissentient voices, (if any) were lost in the shouts of assent, and the car being attached I prepared for the voyage.

In concluding this lengthened statement, I will avail myself of this opportunity to return my sincere thanks to the hospitable inhabitants of that vicinity for their kind attention and also to Capt. Kenny of the steamboat Gov. Walcott for a pleasant passage home.

JANE WARREN.

A Jolly Editor.—The Editor of the Elebute, a paper published at Munich, offers to receive subscriptions for his periodical at the rate of six gallons of beer per sunum.

English Customs and Antiquities.

FROM THE LONDON CORRESPONDENT OF THE NEW YORK STAR.

Among the numerous objects of interest in the British metropolis, none are cherished with more sincerity than the ancient societies of that splendid capital. There are in this city proper half a dozen establishments, originating in Trades Unions, which in more barbarous times were the barriers between the People and the Crown. Becoming rich by deposits and donations they have become the dispensers of charity and promoters of useful arts.—These establishments sometimes became the subjects of Royal exactions and forced loans, when the King found himself reduced to extremities, and in return for supplies the monarch granted charters and monopolies and prerogatives. These are preserved with the utmost scrupulosity.

The most distinguished of these royal beneficiary societies is that of the merchant tailors, who occupy a palace in Thread Needle street, the members of which are called "Citizen Merchant Tailors." They have by royal grant, the privileges of "freemen of the city."

There is not now a merchant tailor in the society, but it is composed of members of the royal family, dukes, and nobles, as well as rich merchants and bankers. It is the common rendezvous of the nobility and the "freemen of the city." Upon one festival, the Duke of Wellington was toasted as a "Citizen Merchant Tailor," and returning thanks said he valued his election as a member of that society more than any honor before conferred on him, because it made him a "freeman of the greatest city in the world." It was the favorite resort of the Duke of York, whose portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence has a conspicuous place in one of the magnificent saloons.

The Duke of York willed to the society his gold plate, out of a large goblet of which they drink health to their invited guests. One of their festivals originated in an interesting event which happened near four hundred years ago. A quarrel rose between the Merchant Tailors and Skinners, as to the precedence which their liveried men should take in all processions in the town of London. The quarrel was continued for many years, occasioned frequent collisions and bloodshed, and finally referred to the Lord Mayor for arbitration. He was not unlike Don Quixote's governor in his temper and judgement, and decided that their claims were so nearly equal that neither should have precedence, but they should alternate in processions, dine together and be friends. They did so, and the 354th anniversary dinner in honor of the reconciliation was celebrated at Merchant Tailors' Hall, in Thread Needle St. on the 20th July last.

At this grand dinner, our countryman, Col. White, of Florida, was an invited guest, and among others, after a speech from the Master; evincing a great feeling for America, his health was drunk and received with great cheering to which he returned thanks as follows:

SPEECH.

Worthy Master, Wardens, and Gentlemen:

Deeply embarrassed as a stranger must be from the novelty of the scene, surrounded by the first citizens of the metropolis, I should have considered the custom of returning thanks more honored in the breach than in the observance. I cannot however, reluctant as I am to occupy a few moments of your time, permit the occasion to pass without making my acknowledgments for the great kindness which prompted the sentiment proposed by the Master, and received by you with so much cordiality. Although a stranger in London, and a native of a distant continent, I do not feel that I am a foreigner when associated with the inhabitants of the British capital. [Hear, hear.] I am from a country whose people speak the same language, profess the same religion, live under the same laws, and are descended from the same ancestors. [Hear.]

We are as much interested in the history and tradition, which have handed down to us the evidences of the triumph of civilization, the discoveries in science, improvements in literature, and the success in arts and arms, of this great country, that have rendered it so pre-eminent among the nations of the earth, as any of her present Majesty's subjects. It is our common inheritance, which has descended to us in common from our Anglo-Saxon progenitors. [Cheers.] It is true that we differ at this time, in some respect, in political institutions. We have preserved in our constitutions and laws, however, the great principles of liberty, and sound maxims of jurisprudence, that had their origin in your policy and your codes.

In concluding this lengthened statement, I will avail myself of this opportunity to return my sincere thanks to the hospitable inhabitants of that vicinity for their kind attention and also to Capt. Kenny of the steamboat Gov. Walcott for a pleasant passage home.

JANE WARREN.

A Jolly Editor.—The Editor of the

Elebute, a paper published at Munich, offers to receive subscriptions for his periodical at the rate of six gallons of beer per sunum.

so thoroughly are the United States and Great Britain identified upon every principle which is interesting to humanity, and the general interest of mankind, that I am sure they will always be found acting together in the establishment of an enlightened national policy, and side by side in a contest of liberty against despotism. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

Whilst we have pride and satisfaction in contemplating the glories of Great Britain, we are assured that you cannot look with indifference, or without admiration even upon a young nation rising from colonies planted by yourselves, in little more than half a century to be the third commercial Power in the world. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

But, gentleman, ardently as I am devoted to my own country, and to its institutions, I am no propagandist. I have no desire to interfere with the domestic or political institutions of other countries.

Our people would not even receive with indifference the inventions of writers or speakers who deal in the fabulous and miraculous, which are now so commonly thrown in by professional itinerant bookmakers, who live on the libels they promulgate on other countries if sent forth against this. (Hear.) I hope they will never imitate so bad an example as that which has recently been set us, of filling books with fictions and falsehoods, purporting to be representations of morals and manners in America. (Hear, hear.)

But, gentleman, ardently as I am devoted to my own country, and to its institutions, I am no propagandist. I have no desire to interfere with the domestic or political institutions of other countries.

Our people would not even receive with indifference the inventions of writers or speakers who deal in the fabulous and miraculous, which are now so commonly thrown in by professional itinerant bookmakers, who live on the libels they promulgate on other countries if sent forth against this. (Hear.) I hope they will never imitate so bad an example as that which has recently been set us, of filling books with fictions and falsehoods, purporting to be representations of morals and manners in America. (Hear, hear.)

Indiana.—It is said, and we believe the fact, that the farmers of more than sixty countries of our own state can transport the produce of their farms from their doors to market by water. Sixteen are bounded or intersected by the Wabash—five by the north, and twenty by the south branch of White River—fourteen by the Ohio and its liberties—five by Lake Michigan and St. Joseph's—and four by Lake Superior, St. Mary's, &c. Add to these great natural channels, the splendid system of artificial ones that are chequering her surface from north to south, and from east to west—take into consideration her immense productive resources, and the irresponsible energy and enterprise of her inhabitants, and then say where is the state that can take the lead of the young lion of the West? Echo answers, where.—*F. Wayne Sen.*

SENATOR TIPTON.—This gentleman has opozited or relined to a speech from the Administration, and is now desirous of occupying a station in the Whig ranks. It is soon late in the day for him to hope to obtain the confidence of a party whose most sacred trust he has betrayed—years of reprobation cannot wipe away the infamy which his vote for the Hixsoning resolutions has attached, forever, to his name. It was a bad, but not that desecration of the Constitution.

After ages will lament it, as one among the foul bolts upon the fair fame of the country's history. No error of judgement can palliate the offence. It was an immolation of liberty—of every manly and generous impulse—upon the slavish doctrine of man's deity. Mr. Tipton has earned a wretched immortality, and must be content to wear it. He is to be pitied, but not to be forgiven.

New Albany Gazette.

—The Bath Constitutional, a sound and judicious journal, has the following article:

But with all our admiration of his character and principles, of his frank and manly independence—with all our wishes that circumstance might justify his nomination—we have no expectation that he will be our candidate. The name of HARRISON has become so identified with the politics of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and numbers of other states, that it would be hazardous, it seems to us, for the Whig party to drop him, and take up even Henry Clay—much more so to take up Daniel Webster.

Although Gen. Harrison is not a man of brilliant talents as some who have been named for the Presidency, he would nevertheless make a good chief magistrate as any of them. In 1788 when the patriots of the Revolution were choosing a President, they sought not the best gifted orator, or the greatest scholar. If they had, a Henry, an Adams, or a Hamilton, would have been selected. They chose rather a man of prudence, of good judgement, and of disinterested patriotism, and accordingly took Washington. So it is now.

The people knew that Webster is a greater constitutional lawyer, Clay a more brilliant orator, and Calhoun a more profound reasoner than Harrison; but in the latter they perceive all those traits which were exemplified in the life of the Father of his country, and they are disposed to trust the reigns in his hands for the four years succeeding the reigns of his present dynasty.

Our Whig pride would be better gratified in the election of Henry Clay; but our judgement teaches that it is the duty of all those who are opposed to the present loco-foco administration, to unite in the support of the people's candidate, WILLIAM H HARRISON.—*Cin. Whig.*

—

Singular.—A star little inferior in

brilliance to the most luminous that are

visible in the heavens, has been observed

several times, by many of our citizens,

moving in various directions, with con-

siderable velocity. Its position is nearly

west at first, whence it moves towards the

meridian, and then descends and sinks

below the horizon for a few minutes and

rises again.—*Wheeling Gazette.*

—

Mileage of members of Congress.

There are altogether two hundred and ninety-four Senators and Representatives in Congress.

They are allowed for travelling charges at the rate of eight dollars for every twenty miles gone

and returned.

—

Wheeling Gazette.

—