

HITS AND DASHES:

OR,

A MEDLEY OF SKETCHES AND SCRAPS,

Touching People and Things.

BY "CYMON."

E. F. F. to Thomas Somersby 3

WHILOM PUBLISHED IN DIVERS NEWS-PRINTS OF THE DAY.

"Will you stay, gentlemen?"

A piece of beef and cold capon, that's all,—
You know you're welcome."

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Aunt Brite's Soap Kettle, - - -	Page 9
A Bait, - - -	137
A Climax, - - -	139
A Clean Sweep, - - -	134
A Denouement, - - -	37
An Epistle from Newburyport to the Boston Post, -	83
" " " " - - -	86
" " " " - - -	106
" " " " - - -	109
" Byfield, " " - - -	97
" South Berwick, " - - -	100
" Middleton, N. H., " - - -	103
" North Scituate, " - - -	146
A Gentle Hint, - - -	67
A Lenient Damsel, - - -	131
A Portrait, - - -	45
A Surprise, - - -	15
A Situation, - - -	21
A Sight, - - -	58
A Saturday Evening Sketch, - - -	59
A "Sell," - - -	61
A Slight Mistake, - - -	148
A Squall, - - -	149
Cutting it thick, - - -	71
Cutting it Fat, or the Parson and the Cheeses, - -	73
Disappointment and Tears, - - -	113

Grand "Hop" at the Ocean House, Black Rocks,	92
Interesting Associations,	27
Mysterious Twaddle,	125
Parson Milton,	75
Scraps from my Sketch Book,	52
Spirit Chirography,	122
Spicing it High and Doing it Brown,	136
Scraps from my Sketch Book,	140
" " "	144
The Battle of Quamphagan,	17
The Confession,	112
The Consummation,	114
The Close of the Year,	151
The Gem of Moose Mountain,	43
The Star of Witchtrott,	46
The Unsung Doxology,	41
The Wrong Document,	23
The Dying Fisherman,	143
Uncle Ephraim's Husking,	28
Whitewashing Extraordinary,	55
Wine Tasting,	92

APOLOGY.

In compliance with the importunities of many of my friends, and for the purpose of gathering these fugitive pieces together, I sanction the publishing of this volume. Should it appear, however, by a sudden absorption of this edition, that the work *takes*, I have another budget in reserve which shall be forthcoming in due season.

Hoping that all who take the trouble to read this book will find something therein to please them, I subscribe myself the Reader's Humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

P. S. Having been "got up" in haste, several small errors have occurred in this work, which the intelligent reader will perceive, pardon and rectify.

HITS AND DASHES:

OR,

A MEDLEY OF SKETCHES AND SCRAPS.

AUNT BRITE'S SOAP KETTLE.

A LEGEND OF WITCHTROT.

"Double, double toil and trouble,
Fire, burn; and cauldron bubble."—Macbeth.

WITCHTROT, is the appellation of a small township, lying on the banks of a romantic stream, which empties itself in Quamphegan river, at Berwick, Maine. There is a tradition among them, that many were the old women of the broomstick order, "who kept the country-side in fear," in days gone by; and many are the tales of their exploits. Aunt Keziah Brite was a good, peaceable neighbor; one who feared the ministers and deacons,—and feared not witches,—drank rum, went to meeting regularly, could smoke a pipe, and read in the large Bible. She lived in those days when a saint could be distinguished from other people, by their actions, without being obliged to wear a cockade, as they

inevitably will have to in future, if the age degenerates as much as it has of late ; but to our story : — Now this good woman would fain make soap, — as almost all economical women are wont to do. Accordingly she set up her leech-tub, got her kettle mended, looked into the minister's almanack, in order to ascertain when the moon would be full, bought a quart of *New England*, with the proceeds of three quarts of whortleberries — she dealt largely in that article, — and when they were about to build the new meeting-house, prayed fervently that the Lord would cause the berries to grow as big as pumpkins, so that she would be the better able to contribute towards building him a handsome house of worship. All things being ready, she commenced operations. Her composition had been simmering over the fire about an hour, when who should come in, but old Mog Sudgskins, an old hag as ugly as Nature could possibly form her. She heard that Aunt Brite had a supply of rum, and brought a gourd-shell, which she desired the good woman to fill with the *Nectar*. Aunt Brite loved old Mog as well as his Satanic majesty does holy-water, and instead of complying with her request, she told her to leave the house, as quick as she could conveniently, and never to show her ugly face there again. After giving her this gentle hint, that her room was better than her company, she sat herself down on an inverted half-bushel measure, and went to poking the fire vehemently. But Mog stood in awful majesty in the centre of the floor.

rolled up her tremendous eye-balls, and repeated in a deep sepulchral tone, these lines :

" 'Tis true my phiz is something odd ;
If you blame me, you blame my God."

Indignant at being refused the liquor, and having her face called ugly, she was determined to be revenged ; " May your soap never come ! " she ejaculated, in a fiendish whisper. Then, stamping her foot on the floor, and waving her skinny finger in the air three times, she went out, and slammed the door after her so hard, that it made the very soap-kettle tremble. . . .

The sun had long since buried himself in Quamphegan river ; the full moon had just showed her honest face, which she had a few moments since washed in Taenic pond, and began to play her wild pranks, by shining through the crevices and broken windows of the old school-house, casting long, fantastic shadows across the uneven road, " making night hideous," and the timid lover, as he was wending his way homeward from a courting expedition, " most horribly to shake his disposition," when Aunt Brite finished the last drop of rum, and leaning her head back against the oven-lid, gave herself up to despair. She had toiled all day, and the contents of her kettle had not been converted into soap. . . . " That hour o' night's black arch, the keystone," had now arrived ; the fire, which had long since gone down, began gradually to brighten up, the ingredients in the kettle commenced bubbling, and —

" Thrice the brindled cat had mew'd,
Thrice, and once, the hedge-pig whin'd ; "

when a sprite came headlong down the chimney, and after turning a half dozen somersets, seated himself a-straddle the crane, and holding up the tine of a pitchfork, waved it over the kettle, whereupon a score of goblins came up from the ash-hole, one after the other, like unto the ghosts in Richard, and seated themselves around the brim of the kettle, in breathless silence, waiting further orders. Then he waved his broken pitchfork again, and the composition began to separate. A stream of grease ran out into the fire; another of rosin followed, which blazed up mightily, and gave an imposing effect to the spirits, and their sovereign, who looked down upon them in awful majesty. Last, not least, came the ley in a mighty stream, which darted across the room with the velocity of lightning, and wended its way into the bung-hole of a cask of vinegar, which was lying in one corner of the room; the acid and alkali commenced hostilities at once, and being mingled together, both escaped in a torrent through the aperture, foaming like a soda-fountain, and besprinkling the whole apartment. The magic tine was moved once more; this was a signal for the imps to commence operations and at it they went. One of them who resembled Old Nick, caught up the gridiron, and using the bars for strings, "struck the *light guitar*" for the rest, who "reeled and set, and cross'd and cleek it." The pigs, who probably were descendents of those we read of in the good book, were let out of the pen by some unseen hand, and joined in the mazy dance; two

Tom-cats came in for their share in the sport. The wooden trenchers danced a hornpipe on the dressers; the old-fashioned clock which had always heretofore behaved with the utmost propriety, now struck nine hundred and ninety-nine times. Chairs and tables flew about like mad,—the windows rattled like a dice-box,—doors opened and shut alternately,—the house was in an uproar. It seemed as if Beelzebub's dragoons had been let loose, and had made this house their rendezvous. The sport had now arrived at its height; all the performers were busily engaged, when, of a sudden, Adonijah Clabberpin's red-tailed rooster screamed his morning hymn, and the leader of this devilish squad, like—

"Some old smoker, seated by the fire,
Who takes his last whiff ere the flame expire,"

seized the tin horn which hung up beside the door, and "blew a blast so loud and dread," as made the house shake to the very foundation; whereupon the spirits flew back and roosted on the edge of the kettle, as before. Their captain then took the two Tom-cats, that had just finished a Spanish dance, and hitched them to the bale with a skein of yarn which hung in the fire-place; that being done, he jumped into the kettle, when up the chimney "the hellish goblins sallied." The pigs then went back to their places,—the clock went on regularly,—chairs and tables went back to their places,—the trenchers sat upright, as all good behaved dishes should; and all was silent as the grave. Next morning Aunt Brite found her kettle in

the cow-yard, but so bruised and mis-shapen that she could never use it again. The old lady has never since attempted to make soap without first sending Mog a pint of rum, nailing a horse shoe over the fire-place, and hanging another on the crane. Now this is the truth of the story; but some of the neighbors, who are no better than they should be,—evil-minded and malicious, not having the fear of witches before their eyes, have hinted that—whist! softly!—this good woman got drunk! and fell asleep, when some roguish boys went in and threw a pound of gunpowder under the kettle, among the embers, which sent the kettle where the old lady found it. It savored very strong of gunpowder, but she said it smelt more like brimstone; and as the two articles smell very much alike, I have as much reason to believe her story as theirs.

Old Mog lies buried in one corner of Witchtrott grave-yard; a plain slate stone marks her place of rest, on which is chiselled, by some rude hand, this beautiful couplet, written by the village schoolmaster, and serves both for her epitaph and elegy:

"Here lies Old Moggy, let her rest,
For she to Witchtrott was a pest."

She has been buried about thirty years, and has not risen yet, and it is not very probable she ever will rise until the archangel winds the last trump.

A SURPRISE.

PERHAPS no class of beings are capable of enjoying a frolic like the negroes. They go in for fiddling and dancing with a perfect looseness; and their whole soul is bound up in a tamborine. When I was a youngster it did my very soul good to see the dark inhabitants of modern Guinea put in the "shuffle rigadon," at the house of the she-publican of Guinea. 'Llection day then, *was* 'lection day, and "nothin' else." But what a falling off now. Well may the darkies exclaim, "O, tempora! O, mores!" 'Twas next to impossible to get any work out of the sombre sons and daughters of Africa, for a week previous or a week after the auspicious day.

Some forty years since, in the good town of Newburyport, lived one Phillis, a dingy damsel, but a good, faithful, and honest servant. Her mistress had no occasion to find fault with her from January to December, except a week or two prior to 'lection—then it seemed as if the very deuce was in Phillis, for she would dance, sing, and caper like mad, in anticipation of the eventful day. To remedy this evil, her mistress concluded to keep her in the dark till the very day arrived, for unless Phillis was told the month she never would be the wiser, as she "took no note of time," save by observations on nature and things.

Spring had advanced. Phillis heard the dulcet

notes of the feathered songsters. "O, missus, missus, 'lection's coming." "Not so soon, Phillis," returned her mistress, "but when it comes you shall know."

The trees had begun to blossom. "Now, missy, 'lection's pretty near, sartin." "Not quite yet," said the matron.

At length the glorious day arrived. Phillis's mistress thought it best to let her get breakfast and clear away the things, then she would give her some *coin*, let her dress herself up in her holiday attire, and send her off to the head quarters—Guinea. Already had the sons and daughters of Africa assembled together. The flag was waving in triumph from the chimney-top of Dorothy's hotel. Tin-kettles and jugs were passing to and fro from the stores where the "balm of life" was wont to be sold, to the huts of Guinea. But Phillis wot not of it, for her whereabouts was out of the sound of the revelry. But just as our heroine had put down the steak to broil, a colored minstrel, dressed in gay attire, stopped in front of the house in which Phillis was domiciled, and struck up a soul-inspiring break-down. The effect was electrical! Phillis dropped the fork—threw the salt into the fire—trod on the butter-plate—and made one bound for the door,—then screamed to the "top of her bent," "O, missus, missus, gor amighty, missus, 'lection has come, sure nuf!"

'Twas vain to urge her to break her fast, much less to prepare the meal for the family. She could hardly be prevailed upon to change her dress; but her toilet

was soon arranged, and quicker than a bullet from a gun she took a bee-line for Guinea,—there to revel to her heart's content,—there to eat 'lection cake, drink egg-nogg, and

"Dance all night till broad day-light,
And drink gin-sling in the morning."

THE BATTLE OF QUAMPHEGAN.

NOW it came to pass in the one thousand eight hundred and thirty-eighth year of the Christian era,

That Abimelech was chosen commander over the soldiers of "Old Fields," which in the vernacular tongue is called Berwick.

Now Abimelech was young, he had not yet been to the barber's to have the superfluous down removed from his face,—yet, moreover, he began to assume the appearance and display the vigor of manhood.

The sons of "Old Fields," Witchtrott, and Tacnic, saw him and trembled; the very parson uttered his voice and raised his hands at his approach.

He wentest forth for the safety of the people, and when the people saw him they cried aloud with one voice, "Our country is safe!"

¶ And it came to pass on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month of the eighteen hundred and thirty-

ninth year of the Christian era, and the sixty-third year of our national independence, that the several companies of Quamphegan and Tacnic, and round about the margin of Quamphegan river, assembled together at the training field which lieth in Quamphegan,

To show themselves with their equipments to the general officers and the smiling daughters of Quamphegan and Witchtrott and Sligo.

As soon as the several companies were all assembled, the officers chosen for that purpose delivered unto each man his rations, consisting of two flat cakes, in the vernacular called gingerbread, and filled their canteens with hard cider, which being interpreted signifieth fermented juice of the apple.

Now of Abimelech's company, twenty strong men bore muskets, and ten bore pitchforks and rails, and all these were mighty men of valor.

Moreover, there were assembled two other companies from the towns round about Quamphegan, and Abimelech found favor in their eyes.

Now it came to pass at eventide, when the several companies were dismissed, that the Quamphegans and the Tearshirtites and the Bonnie-Bigites, having drank deep of the hard cider, waxed quarrelsome, and were rife for a fight.

Therefore they commenced battle by throwing the remnants of their dinners, and the viands which were vended from the tables round about the field, at one another.

And Abimelech was struck upon the head with a bean-pot; moreover, his face, which was but a few moments before covered with glory, was now besmeared with a "yellow trembler," which in the native language signifies an Indian pudding.

Now Abimelech's second officer, even the lieutenant, was struck upon the unmentionables, with a pumpkin pie, even upon the seat thereof.

Then Abimelech's wrath was kindled, his ire was up: "Ye men of 'Old Fields,' Tacnic, and Witchtrott! will ye stand this, and see your leaders covered with pudding, pumpkin pie, and dishonor.

"Arise, I say unto you, avenge my wrongs, and I will make you mighty men, even like unto myself."

After they had spoken these words, they all arose of one accord, and "let in" upon their enemies.

And the air was filled with fragments of gingerbread, pies, cakes, brick-bats, and many other things which are not written in the history of this battle; and the baked beans were strewed around in abundance.

And the battle waxed hotter and hotter, inasmuch as the soldiers loaded their muskets, and fired upon one another, albeit they left out the bullets of lead.

Nevertheless their enemies were not dismayed, and brick-bats, and clubs, and stones, were thrown with much violence amid the fire and smoke.

How the battle would have ended, nobody could have told, had not a part of the strong men of Witchtrott laid in ambush, and attacked the Quampheganers in the rear.

Now the Quampheganers wist not that there was any one laid in ambush against them.

So whilst they were rushing upon the enemy, the men who were in ambush rushed upon them and defeated them.

Then the Quampheganers took to their heels for home; and they left behind them great spoils, which the "Old Fieldites," and Witchtrotters, and Tacnicers claimed.

And of the spoils, more than twenty baskets full of pies, and cakes, and "yellow tremblers," were carried into "Old Fields," Tacnic, and Witchtrott, in triumph.

Now there was great rejoicing in "Old Fields," and Tacnic, and Witchtrott;

And they lighted dipped candles, and stucked them into turnip and potatoe candlesticks, and illuminated their dwellings therewith.

And the hearts of the people were made glad by divers and sundry libations of blackstrap; and fiddling and dancing were in abundance.

But the Quampheganers were sorrowful and of heavy heart, for her proud sons were humbled, her bright escutcheon tarnished, and her brilliant deeds outshone.

A SITUATION.

THERE must always be a first time to everything under the blessed sun. I have often thought of the heart-beatings attendant upon the first appearance of the actor, the clergyman, and the barrister. But compared with the experience I am about to relate, theirs is "nothing to the show."

The winter I was fifteen, and full of blue veins, I made a visit to a country town. One day the good lady of the house where I sojourned, took a notion of visiting her parents at a neighboring village, and invited me to go with her to drive. 'Twas excellent sleighing, and being a pretty good Jehu, I "put her over the road" in good style and time. There was a buxom, bouncing lassie where we stopped — a relative of the lady that came with me — who by her invitation agreed to return with us. I brought the team up to the door in good shape, waited upon the ladies into the "cutter," then jumped in myself, and standing in the middle of the sleigh, gave a flourish with the whip. We were off in a twinkling, at nearly 2.40 speed. Did n't I feel grand?

"Why don't you sit down?" exclaimed the good woman to me, after we had got well under way. 'Twas the last thing I thought of. Sit down, forsooth! — and where? thought I. "I had rather stand," replied I, modestly. "But you had better

sit," urged the damsel. I looked around, colored a little, and still declined. I heard a whispering something about being bashful. A trifle more crimson came over my countenance, but I still drove on. I was just getting my natural color again, and was feeling pretty comfortable, when, of a sudden, I felt the arms of the damsel encircling my waist, and in a moment I was drawn plump into her lap! "There," exclaimed the mischievous witch, "sit here upon my knees—I won't hurt you."

Every drop of blood within me, methought, then rushed into my face; I would have given the world to be free, but 'twas of no avail; the maiden held me fast—

"That desperate grasp my frame might feel,
Through bars of brass and triple steel!"

The veins of my face were now swelled "almost to bursting;" never did martyr suffer more intensely. The spirited horse needed not the "braid," but he got it, I reckon. On, on we flew, with "telegraphic" speed; the sparks of fire flew in showers thick and fast from the shoes of the "cutter," as we occasionally slid over a piece of bare ground.

"Now do thy utmost, speedy Meg!"

muttered I, mentally, as I gave the "critter" the last "lick," and in a few moments we were at our journey's end, and I was out of my misery.

P. S. I'm not *taken* that way now!

THE WRONG DOCUMENT.

SOME years since, a celebrated representative to Congress, from Essex county, who resided in Newburyport, promised a neighbor, who followed the honorable calling of truckman, that he would send him one of his speeches. Lebanon, for that was the truckman's *sobriquet*, was amazingly elated at the idea of receiving a document from Congress. He heralded it forth to all his cronies. Expectation was clear up; all were impatient to see the "concern," though some pretended to doubt his getting it. Among the doubtful was a grocer, who annoyed our hero often as he met him, on his assurance of expecting documents from Congress. One bright morning, Lebanon awoke from his dreams, told his wife he felt sure the package would come that day, for he felt it—he felt it in his head—he felt it in his bones—he felt it all over! He went about his business, however, but many were the mistakes he made that day. At length, in coming up State street, he espied the mail stage! it never seemed to roll so swift, so majestic, before! On, on it thundered—the wheels rattled sweet music to his ravished ears—every spoke and fellow seemed alive! He clapped his hands with joy, and exclaimed—

"Fly swift around, ye shining wheels,
And bring that speech this way."

The mail was soon landed at the post office. After

waiting awhile, with breathless anxiety, the long-wished-for package was put into Lebanon's brawney hands.

See the mother when she clasps for the first time her first child! See the urchin when he comes in possession of his first top! Then you'll see our hero with his document. He ran — he flew —

"Up State street — down Inn street,
By Tom Bircher's cellar!"

and brought up all standing, for the first halt, at the grocer's.

"T-h-e-r-e! There!" exclaimed Lebanon, almost out of breath; "there is the document — signed, sealed and delivered; — now I guess you believe it. But just please put it in your desk for a few moments while I put my horse up; I'll be back directly for it."

The grocer took the treasure, and Lebanon vanished. Soon as our hero's back was turned, a strange freak entered the grocer-man's noddle, who, by the way, was a bit of a wag. He removed the wrapper carefully, took out the document, and substituted a copy of McDowall's Journal in its stead. He had scarcely finished when Lebanon returned, took the package, and made for home; told his wife to light a fire in the parlor, and he would go and invite his friends to spend the evening with him, and hear the speech read. As soon as the tea things were cleared away, Lebanon and his better-half repaired to the parlor, to await the gathering. After the company were all assembled, Lebanon took out the document,

and after clearing his throat, he snuffed the candle; and commenced reading, thus:

"It is computed that there are no less than three hundred houses of questionable reputation in this city, and —"

"That is n't Mr. Cushing's speech," exclaimed the good wife.

"Silence!" ejaculated our hero, and went on.

"And from three to four thousand females who do not walk strictly in the paths of virtue. With these startling facts before us, who among the virtuous and upright, that certainly must shudder at these facts, but will lay hold and lend a helping hand to this great —"

"Well, if that's Mr. Cushing's speech, I don't want to hear any more of it," again spoke out the good woman, who then took up a book and commenced reading to herself.

"Don't interrupt me again," said our hero, and then went on; but the more he read, the more he was bewildered; — at last, by the more sober judgment of his friends — and he himself began to look about a little — he came to the conclusion that he had been hoaxed, and, as nobody but the grocer had had the package, he was the transgressor.

After making his company promise to wait his return, he went to the stable, took out his horse, mounted him in a twinkling, and armed with a big cart-whip, started for the grocery, without saddle or bridle, guiding his animal by the halter. When he arrived, the shop was closed for the night.

Nothing daunted, he repaired to the delinquent's domicil. Rap—rap—thump—bang! went the haft of the whip against the door, which soon brought out the grocer. With fire in eye and whip in hand, our hero demanded the document. The grocer owned up, and asked him if it was n't a good joke.

"We'll talk about *that* in the morning!" thundered forth Lebanon,—“but I must have the document to-night.”

It was at the store—he could have it in the morning; but nothing else would answer for Lebanon, but he must go for it then. At length the Simon-pure was in the possession of our hero; he galloped back to his friends, who were still waiting his return. The speech was read, and relished hugely by his admiring audience, and McDowall's Journal was committed to the flames. Next morning a bundle of the best tea and a nice loaf of sugar from the grocer's healed the breach between him and Lebanon.

INTERESTING ASSOCIATIONS.

HOW much the charm of some localities consists in their associations! On the borders of Maine and New Hampshire, lies some of the finest scenery in the world. It was always my delight to journey through that region. Chancing at a friend's house at Lebanon, Maine, some years since, the conversation turned on the scenery in that county,—when the daughter of mine host, a pretty little unsophisticated girl of sixteen, broke in upon us with the inquiry, addressed to me, “Have you seen Sanford Corner, sir?” I confessed I had not. “Then,” added she, “let me tell you that it is just the loveliest spot in all creation. I never saw such beautiful scenery. I never enjoyed myself half so well at any other place. O, I could live there forever!”

A short time afterwards, on a journey to the White Mountains, I noticed a guide-board at the fork of a road, bearing the soul-stirring intelligence that we were but four miles to Sanford Corner! As good luck would have it, our coach was going that very road. Now, quoth I to myself, I'm bound to see the “loveliest spot in all creation!” The sluggish coach was too slow for my imagination. Already had my fancy pictured rural scenes, forest-trees, purling streams, meandering through picturesque banks, silver

cascades, and — but ere I had got half through with my landscape, we were set down at Sanford Corner.

I looked eagerly about me for the proof of what I had heard, but in vain. Alas! it was all barren — a very ordinary place, and void of any one feature of the rural or picturesque. Of course I felt disappointed.

A short time afterwards I was again in the domicile of my old friend at Lebanon. So, my little maid, said I to the damsel who had colored up the “corner,” I have seen what you were pleased to term the “loveliest spot in all creation,” but I must confess I could see no beauty in the making up of the place; how comes it *you* should be so delighted with so barren a spot? But ere the girl could speak for herself, her little sister unravelled the mystery, — “*Sophia’s beau lives there!*”

UNCLE EPHRAIM’S HUSKING.

A LARGE stack of Indian Maize — dead ripe — stood in the middle of Uncle Ephraim Hussey’s threshing floor, at Lebanon, ready to be husked out. Bobby had started off, bright and early, upon the six-year-old colt, to give out invitations for the husking frolic, coming off that evening. Uncle Ephe had gone to the “Falls” with the old nag and wagon, to get some “sugar and things;” besides,

to have the rundlet filled at Deacon Pratt’s, with “o-be-joyful!” For who in “nater” would think of getting up a husking — if they were “temperance” — without these “fixings?” Thankful and Mercy, his two daughters, were up to their elbows in baking — and his good wife was busy as a bee, overlooking operations, and putting things to rights.

Bobby had just returned. “Well, gals,” said he, “I’ve gi’n out all your invites, besides a few more on my own hook. I’ve axed Suke Midget, Nance Downer and her feller, Bets Muzzey, Polly Widgen, the two Pressy gals, Phebe Mullen and her sister, with her feller, and the gal from Milton, that’s visiting there; — two or three more I can’t stop to think on, besides the fellers, — Tom Tracy, Bill Diggory, Isaiah Corson, Joel Pillsbury, and a hull lot more of the chaps that live down by the plains; and last, not least, Charley Stevens is coming, sure; and I forgot to say, Amos Bunker says he will come with his fiddle!”

Evening came, and the company began to assemble. They seated themselves around the pile of corn, and commenced operations. Not much said at first, for they saw there was work to be done; and, besides, they had not got warm yet, as Uncle Ephraim observed; but, one of the youngsters getting a red ear it “opened the ball.” He was, of course, according to the rules of all huskings, entitled to a kiss all round; and at it he went, — commencing at the girl next him, and following it up until he came to

her from Milton, who vowed and declared she wouldn't be kissed, that night — she knew ; but the obstinate maiden was obliged to surrender,—for, after scratching the youth on his nose, and biting his hand, she came off finally with such a shower of hearty smacks from him, that her cheeks were fairly blistered — which operated as a warning to all refractory damsels, should any others chance to be there.

Things now went on “slick as ile,” as Uncle Ephe said, — no trouble among the girls when a red ear was announced ; on the contrary, they seemed to relish it hugely ; and the Milton girl had not, now, the least objection to be saluted, provided they did it upon her lips — for she declared her cheeks felt very sore !

Quite a heap of the golden grain was now husked out, and the jolly proprietor thought it about time to tap the good stuff. A bucket of black-strap was quickly fixed up and handed round to the “men-folks,” — and mugs of sweetened cider to the women ; fun and frolic then commenced in good earnest.

Charley Stevens was called up for a story, which he did up in his inimitable style, setting the whole circle in a roar. Tom Tracy and his girl were next uproariously called for, to do up a song together, and they tuned their voices right merrily to the ballad of “Two Unfortunate Lovers,” pouring forth the rich melody, in shrill nasal tones, “long drawn out,” accompanied by Amos Bunker's Violin.

Uncle Ephraim was next on the docket ; he must tell his famous Witch Story ; so after a brimful tin dipper

of the precious liquid from the bucket, — not the “old oaken,” — he hemmed, took out his quid of tobacco, and thus began : —

THE WITCH OF LEBANON PLAINS.

“I han't a doubt but some on ye here, will dispute this 'ere story, but I tell you, 'tis true as preaching, nevertheless. You see, about twenty years ago, we had a witch about this neighborhood, that is, I called her a witch, and most of the neighbors did, although some wouldn't admit it ; but I only wish the doubtful ones could have gone through what I did, one night, I guess as how they would have come to the conclusion, that the old serpent, or some evil speret or other, was round about these premises !

This old hag — they called her Aunt Spudgins — called at our house one day, and wanted her snuff box filled with yaller snuff ; we had filled it for her two or three times, for nothing, and this time I told her she had better go and buy it herself, as we couldn't afford to find her in snuff for nothing, always. Such a look as she gin me, then, no mortal man never seed, I'll be bound ; then, muttering something between her teeth, she started off in a huff. We thought no more on't at that time, so nothing more was said, than that we were glad to get rid of the old critter.

The next day, I had to go to Dover with my team, to haul a load of wood down, and bring a load of notions up, for Mr. Cowell our trader at the “corner,” then. Wal, you all on ye know that speret, them

days, was a staple article; a man couldn't keep store without it; and many is the good pious deacon, who has made a snug little fortin by dealing in the article; but never mind that, it is nothing to do with my story now; all I wanted to say about the spirit, was, that it was part of my load home that night.

I got my load all on, and after a good hearty swig of old W. I. at the store where I got my notions, I started off,—the storekeeper, as was his custom, presenting me with a pint bottle of the "stuff" to last me home.

I had been eating salt-fish and crackers at the store for a lunch, just before I started, and by the time I got to the "Falls," wasn't I dry? I took a swig from the "pistol," and jogged on, happy as a clam, but my thirst wasn't quenched a bit; I took another, and another, but my throat was dry as a lime kiln, or as a country minister's sermons!

By the time I had got to the edge of the plains, every drop was gone from the "pistol," and yet my burning thirst was not quenched. I didn't dare to drink cold water, for it always gin me the gripes; but drink something I must, and as the speret didn't taste *bad*, I seemed to have a fancy for that. I happened to have a gimlet in the little box on front of the cart, so I stopped the team, and soon made a hole in the top of a cask of the "stuff," into which I inserted a straw, and putting my lips to it, commenced operations; I thought at the time, of the words of the old soaker, "if my mother had given such suck as this, I never would have been weaned!"

How long I was at the spiggot, I can't tell; the first I knowed, I had a bit stuck into my mouth, and the bridle buckled on to my head, quicker than a flash, by the old hag to whom I refused the snuff, and who seemed to drop upon me as if from the clouds.

—"I'll teach ye better than to treat me ill again!" exclaimed the old beldame, as she seized the bridle, and snatching up my goad-stick, she sprang upon my shoulder, standing on her feet, then giving me two or three smart pricks in my side, started me off on a clean run.

Away we went, she pricking and goading me on. I never ran so fast before,—it seemed as if I could never stop. On, onward we sped, over Pine Hill, past Blackberry Hill meeting-house, down through Witchtrott, and as the vases in my old school book, says:—

"Wild as the wind o'er meadows we flew!"

round back of old York, then,—smack! we brought up all standing, as the sailors say, right agin the east side of Agamenticus!

Whew! Didn't I puff and blow some! I had scarce time to get my breath comfortably, before the old hag, who had stuck to my shoulders all this while, turned me about, and giving me three or four smart goads under my ribs, sent me agoin' the same speed back the road we came.

We soon arrived at the place from which we started, where my cattle stood waiting. The old hag then stripped off the bridle, and taking a handful of snuff

from her pocket—the real yaller—she threw it in my face, and in an instant was off, flying in the direction of her hovel, astride a birch broom!

I then crawled on, sneezing, to my load, as best I could, but so overcome by the journey I had performed, was unable to drive my team; so I laid my head upon a keg on my load, and soon fell asleep.

'Twas broad daylight when I awoke, sneezing. I had taken a snuff keg for a pillow; a few grains had been forced through the cracks, on the journey, which tickled my nose and aroused me. I started the team along, but I could hardly stand or walk,—the terrible seige I had been through that night, had used me up; I felt like one who had been pelted, pounded and parboiled! 'Twas a good month before I got fairly over it.

There, neighbors, you have the story as it is; but my wife and the unbelievers, will tell you, perhaps, that the hull upshot of the affair, is, I got fuddled, and when I went asleep on my team, dreamed all this ere; but I tell ye that my story is gospel truth."

The old codger had just finished his tale, when supper was announced, and all the company then made one grand rush for the kitchen, where they found the tables loaded with good cheer.

They had just got comfortably seated, however, when it was ascertained that Isaiah Corson and the Milton girl were among the missing. A delegation of three with a lantern were sent in search of the absentees. After a few moments' search, the little minx

who was so loth to be kissed at the first of the evening, was found, fast asleep, behind a pile of husks, in Isaiah Corson's lap, who looked as silly as a fool when they came upon him; and didn't the girl color up as soon as she opened her eyes?

The two lovers refused at first to go in at supper, but after some coaxing, they made their appearance; and in a short time, the two tardy ones were as blithe as the rest.

As to the supper; if any one went home hungry that night, it was their own fault,—for the tables seem to groan under their load. None of your city or town mushroom, mock gentility there. None of the disgusting, cold formalities of a sickly, sentimental, weak, wishy-washy village, meagre, mock-aristocratic *soiree*! I'd rather have a dry crust for my supper, and eat it alone, on a winter's night, upon Agrimenticus' shaggy top, than to attend one of these hollow, vain and pompous *levees*, where there is more sentiment than beef, and more politeness than pudding!

Uncle Ephraim's tables showed a goodly array of the solids that night. A gigantic round of beef in the centre, flanked up on either side with vegetables. A bouncing junk of corned-beef at one end, and a big chicken-pie at the other. An Indian pudding of ample dimensions stood forth between the middle and end dishes, and a giant pot of beans loomed up on the other side; whilst pumpkin pies, apple sauce and a host of other "fixings," filled up the spaces. Last, not least, good cider was there in abundance!

"Lay hold, and help yourselves, gals; make a long arm," said the good wife, "and let the men folks take keer of themselves. If any on ye likes turnips *squat* and buttered, *squat* and butter 'em to suit yourselves."

The guests seemed to do ample justice to the viands; mirth and festivity reigned around the board; jokes, witticisms and flashes of fun, would occasionally "set the table in a roar." All appeared determined to enjoy themselves at the "top of their bent."

As soon as supper was over, all the girls lent a hand, and the table was cleared away in a jiffy. Blindman's buff was then introduced; the company now was uproarious!

Dancing was the next consideration. Amos Bunker screwed up his viol, rosined the bow, and "did up the toe and heel inspiring notes of Fisher's Hornpipe; whilst a number of the party who were some skilled in the Terpsichorean art, put in the "double shuffle rigadoon." Presently the lookers-on caught the enthusiasm, and the whole company, old and young, adepts and novices, took the floor, and did their utmost:

"'Twas right and left, and down outside, six round and back to back;
Harum-scarum, helter-skelter, bump together, whack!"

And thus Uncle Ephraim's husking kept up, till the old clock, which stood in one corner of the kitchen,

beat out the dozen, then broke up this jolly gathering;—

"And fair lips breathed forth prayers that night,
Whose hearts were with the merry throng;
And dreams stole o'er the sleeping wight,
Of bright eyes, red ears, dance and song!"

A DENOUEMENT.

NIGHT had spread its ebon wings over the quiet settlement of Newburyport.

A son of Festus, whose chief calling was that of a victualler, had washed his dishes, stew-pans, and other culinary utensils, and stowed them away for the night. Then, after a hearty swig at the cider tap, and a whiff or two at a Dutch pipe, he took up the "brisk, awakening," and began to pour forth his soul in its "sweet, entrancing notes."

"Old Hundred," "Zip Coon," "Arnheim," "Downfall of Paris," and divers other familiar airs, both old and new, had he gone through with, much to his satisfaction, and was now deeply engaged with "Near the lake where grew the willow," when a brace of precious scamps, who had no music in their souls, and who were moved only to mischief by the "concord of sweet sounds," chanced to prowl along that way. Reeking from the tavern, "filled with

whiskey, and with gin inspired," which set mischief awork in their wicked noddles, they looked about them to see if any one was near; then seizing a mighty grindstone which chanced to set against a neighboring store, they rolled it to the edge of the upper step of the cellar where our hero was pouring forth his rich melody. Just as he was doing the finest low notes of "Long time ago," in "lengthened sweetness, long drawn out," not dreaming of any auditor, save his old Tabby, who sat by him on an old stool, purring satisfaction—lo! the gigantic stone came tumbling down, making sad havoc in its path among the "fixins" of the establishment, and bringing up against the board partition with such a mighty, rattling, crashing sound, as if it would

• "Mock the deep-mouthed thunder!"

To draw our hero's portrait, at this crisis, is beyond the power of my pen. Suffice to say, he threw his viol high against the ceiling—then, with bow in hand, stood "wonder-struck!"

His smashed instrument is even now hanged up in a remote corner of his cellar, and many a customer is regaled with the history of its mishap—some of whom laugh, while others, more used to the melting mood, sympathize with the unfortunate owner, and swear 'tis pitiful!

Had I my way with the miscreants who did the mischief, they should share the fate of Sisyphus. For I'd chain the rascals naked to the self-same stone, and when they had dragged it to the top of the steps, it

should be rolled back—so their daily labor should be in raising that Scotia disc from the chasm into which they had rolled it!

A SECOND, BUT NOT SO VERY SOBER A THOUGHT.


A CERTAIN gentleman of a certain village lost his wife by death: he mourned much at her demise, as all good husbands are in duty bound to. Not having any relative near, one of his neighbors—a jolly good fellow—walked with the widower to the grave. After the ceremonies were gone through with, and the procession was returning homeward, the kind neighbor sympathized with the bereaved husband, and told him he must not give way too much to grief, for it would break him down,—and he hoped to see him cheer up and be happy again, as tears would not regain his loss, and were of no avail. "Alas!" sobbed out the mourner, "earth has no longer any happiness for poor me. What is life? what is this whole world to a man who has lost such a wife?"

"You have ever done your whole duty towards her," said the other,—treated her kindly and indulgently. Your wife can never come back to you, mourn you never so much; so all you have to do is to seek out

another to cheer your way along the rough paths of life. There is the kind, amiable and pretty little buxom widow Cosey,— she would make your home happy,— I know you would like her, and I am quite sure she would be willing.” “My dear friend,” replied the wifeless man — his eyes full of tears — “do not, I beseech you, speak of such a thing — my loss is irreparable.”

The mourner invited all his friends who attended the funeral to sup with him that night, according to the usual custom of the place on such occasions. As the party was retiring, the widower urged his neighbor to stay with him till bed-time, as he felt so very lonely. A bottle of choice wine was brought on, which the two friends discussed — then another was broached and finished. Finally, the neighbor arose and took his departure. He had not proceeded many yards, when the man of grief and bereavement hailed him to come back, as he had a word to say to him. Then, placing his lips to his friend's ear, he whispered — “Neighbor, I think *now* that I could bear to hear that lady's name mentioned !”

THE UNSUNG DOXOLOGY.

 AN item from a religious paper tells us that the Presbyterians of a certain town not a thousand miles from Exeter, N. H., have voted that the Unitarians are *Christians*. Good ! — there's one more hitch towards the milleneum. But if the truth was told, these people could not well do otherwise, for they had been listening to liberal doctrines a long time without knowing it. “I'll tell the tale as it was told to me,” not vouching for the strict truth thereof. Several years since, the Orthodox Society in that certain town was without a pastor; a letter from one of the most influential leaders, i. e., the *richest* man of the church, was received by a Unitarian clergyman of a far distant town or city, inviting him to come and settle among them, and preach the gospel unto them. But, wrote the astonished Socinian, my creed differs essentially from that of yours. “*Nil importe*,” returned the liberal prop of Presbyterianism, “draw it mild — keep it to yourself that you are a Unitarian — and I'll warrant you.”

In a short time the preliminaries were arranged, and the Socinian was duly ordained over the Presbyterians. He was a gentleman and a scholar, — kind and affable; his sermons were richly laden with the unbounded love of God to man, and “done up” in that quiet and yet flowery style, as none but those of

his brotherhood *can* do. He took. His praise went abroad throughout the land. He was invited hither and thither to pour out his rich offerings to the hungry souls, who, till then, never knew that there was a luxury in religion. And —

“Leading them prisoners in a red-rose chain,”

his flock were of the most liberal belief before they were aware of it.

But, like unto the elderly rat in the fable, who thought that the *whole* heap was not meal, when grimalkin lay in ambush within the meal-tub — one old preacher-man residing in a neighboring town — and of the ancient school of Presbyterianism — Simon Pure — dyed in the wool — thought he would exchange with the new comer, and give the liberals the doctrine of divinity, as he understood it — “in good set terms.” And he did it. Shades of John Calvin and Martin Luther! How the old champion scattered the fire-brands! — now here — now there — sending

“One to heaven and ten to hell!”

As he grew bolder and bolder, the audience began to show symptoms of uneasiness, — two women fainted outright — and one nervous young lady went into hysterics; but, nothing daunted, the old apostle “put it through.” At times ’twas unbearable, — then would some of the men, not having the fear of such dogmas before their eyes, set to shuffling with their feet — cough and hem, all to signify their disapproval. At

length and at last the long looked and wished for, and most welcome *amen* was pronounced, — and the staunch old pillar of Orthodoxy, to wind up his performance with a round turn, opened “Dr. Watts,” and read one of the old Trinitarian doxologies. The audience stood up, but all was hush and still. Not a sound from the choir. The parson arose and remarked that he had read a stanza, and was awaiting its singing. Thereupon the organist got up and addressed the preacher thus: — “Parson W., let me tell you that this new organ of ours has never been tuned to those doxologies!”

THE GEM OF MOOSE MOUNTAIN.

FOLLOWING along from crag to cliff, in order to catch a new view of the magnificent scene spread out below me, as I trod the summit of Moose Mountain, N. H., my eye caught a glimpse of a female figure, at a little distance, who seemed to be busy in gathering berries, in which this eminence abounded. As I approached nearer, I saw that she was of no ordinary mould: —

“Taper as candles laid at Cuthbert’s shrine,
Taper as silver chalices for wine, —
Such were her arms and form!”

"Good morrow, damsel," I said, as I stood before her; with a winning nod, and one of the sweetest smiles she acknowledged the salutation. Juno! what a set of features! Psyche! what an expression! Her whole soul illumined that heavenly face, —

"That eye, Love's arrows darting round, —
That cheek now blushing at the wound!"

"What success in gathering berries to-day?" I queried of the fair stranger.

She turned her steps towards a shady nook and beckoned me to follow. She looked like a fairy — a mountain nymph — as indeed she was, as she tripped along —

"——— Her golden hair
Floating and dancing in the mountain air!"

Anon the breeze would disturb her 'kerchief — and such a neck! By the pure and immaculate crescent of Diana! a flake of new fallen snow would have tarnished it! I stood rivetted —

"With heart all rapture, and with eye all light!"
as the maiden drew forth from the bushes a goodly sized willow basket, and removing the nice white towel which covered the luscious berries, she looked up in my face, then with a smile that would outvie an angel's, she exclaimed — "*aint there a darned shue on 'em!*"

A PORTRAIT.

I MET the queen of snuff-takers in the street yesterday, and wished very much that every beginner in that filthy habit could have seen her likewise. She was the very embodiment, the very quintessence of snuff! A walking snuff-bladder! She looked as if she had been snuffing, snuffing, and snuffing, till every vein in her dried-up carcass was full to repletion. Yes, every pore in her shrivelled skin was loaded, crammed, rammed, jammed with the dirty powder, till it could hold no more! Then, at the extreme point of her sharp pointed nose hung, tremblingly, a drop! — not a dew drop, but such a drop! The strength and substance of more than ten pounds avoirdupois, of Macaboy, was concentrated in that dreadful drop! The odor thereof impregnated the air of the whole neighborhood round about her, so that two dozen men, women and children fell to sneezing thereat! Yea, verily, the very cats and dogs caught the titillation — one old towser lost two teeth and one eye during the operation, besides getting a kink out of his tail; and two tabbies sneezed off both their ears! — That drop! I verily believe would tincture the whole waters of Massachusetts Bay!

THE STAR OF WITCHTROT.

"Near the pond so still and lazy,
 Long time ago —
 On the banks where grew the daisy
 Whiter than snow,
 Lived a bouncing, buxom lassie,
 Vat vas n't so slow!"

THE sun was about putting on his night-cap, in the shape of a purple cloud, which hung over the purple hills of Lebanon; Simeon Hartford had just shut down the mill-gate, — Samuel Wentworth was shutting up shop, — Peleg Jenkins had gone after the cows, — the weathercock on old Somersworth "meetin' 'us" was glowing with an extra lustre; — and Taenic Pond was all of a blaze! In plain English, 'twas sunset, or thereabouts, when Ezekiel Tugglesworth came home from ploughing, — put some water down to the fire in a skillet, for shaving, — and called his mother to get him his best shirt.

"Where upon airth be you goin' to-night, Zeke? Hope you aint goin' down to Witchtrott, to see that flirt of a Suke Huldrith, be ye?" exclaimed Ezek's mother.

"Not exactly," said Ezek., with a knowing wink, strapping his razor on the corners of "Alonzo and Melissa," even and anon drawing the edge carefully across his thumb nail.

"'Tis'nt Sal Hull nor Bets Lummus, nither, is't?" again enquired the old lady.

"P'r'aps 'tis, p'r'aps 'tisn't;" answered Ezek, who had just began to lather his countenance.

"Wal, you need'nt be so putchkity about it;" returned the old lady, — all is, you needn't go down to Witchtrott arter gals, there's enough on 'em here in Quamphegan, and a plaguey sight better ones, too, than you'll find in Witchtrott, unless you could get Bets Lummus; but you know that Zeph Parkins, the trader, is arter her; and Abednigo Mullikin, the school master, is e'ena'most ravin' distracted for her; so I reckon there ben't much of a chance for you."

"Zeph Parkins be darned — and let Abednigo Mullikin go to grass; I know which side my bread is buttered on, I reckon."

This last speech of Ezekiel's ended the conversation; — he had removed the superfluous down from off his chin, — and taking his ruffle-shirt, goes into the East room, there to change his drapery, and put on his "fixins."

Miss Betsey Lummus was as smart, tidy, and in fact, the handsomest girl, that sung psalms, or wore a chintz frock, in Witchtrott "meetin' 'us." And such a hand at making dough-nuts and pumpkin pies! I shall not weary your patience by a tedious detail of her charms, — I'll leave that task for some love-sick romance scribbler; he may paint her, as saith the immortal Sterne, "as like his mistress as he can, — as unlike his wife as his conscience will let

him." She was the belle of the village; and as is natural to such girls, was rather coquetish. But whatever conquests she made, whatever hearts she broke, — her heart was as true to Ezekiel Tugglesworth, as was Elder Boyd to the Calvinistic creed. Ezekiel had now got on his "go-to-meetin' fixins;" — his kersey grey coat, mulberry trowsers, lavender vest, fur hat — one of David Hammonds best, and his black-balled boots, made him look like quite a man, — while a bran new breast pin made him appear a little more than a common man, to say the least. He looked beautiful! By this time, the silver queen of night had begun to squint over the eastern side of Agamenticus, lighting up the windows of Hope Nason's domicile, — and Ezek. took a peep in the looking-glass to see that all was right; then took up his line of march for Witchtrott. When he arrived at the house of his duleinea, who should he find there, but Zeph Perkins, and Abednigo Mullikin. Betsey's mother was telling her that she should not flirt any longer; that if she married any one, it should be the school-master; while her father swore she should have the store-keeper.

"And as to you," said the old lady, who had just observed Ezek. sidling up to Betsey, "you may go home as fast as you come."

"Yes, and sooner the *quicker*," added the old man, "'twont be you that'll have my darter, I can tell you now."

"May be not," returned Ezek. "Wal, I guess as

how I mought as well be goin', if that ere's the case," continued Ezek, giving a sly wink at Betsey, and then made for the door. Betsey followed with the candle to light him out. As soon as they reached the outer threshold, Ezek. whispered something in her ear. "All right," said Betsey, "I'll be ready."

"'Twas the deep noon of night," when Ezekiel tackled the "Cobbe mare" into the "von horse shay," — told his mother he must be at Kennebunk next morning at daylight, on business, — and then started for his Betsey.

The moon was in its zenith, and looked as round and bright as Temperance Wilkins's new warming-pan! Its ray silvered the antique rooster on "Old-field's meetin' 'us," and caused Col. Brock's chimney top to glisten like his well burnished sword on muster day, — as Ezek. jogged on in the Witchtrott road, singing to himself the following parody: —

"How happy is the folkses,
Wot live on Tacnic hill;
Who raise good apples and good pears,
And lots of Indian meal."

He soon arrived at the fork of the road, within a few rods of his whereabouts, — tied the mare to the fence, near Abonijah Brite's barn, and walked gingerly along by the river, towards the "Lummas place." Not a sound was heard, save the low gurgling of the river, and the faint clickings of his brogans. He soon came up to the cottage, — all was hush as death! he goes to Betsey's bed-room window, — his pulse beat high — he

gave a light tap—his heart was in his mouth! in a twinkling the sash was raised, and Betsey appeared with a bundle and a bandbox. "Give me your hand, whispered Ezek., "now jump, that's right." In a few moments they reached their chaise, jumped in, and soon left Witchtrott many miles in the rear.

* * * * *

"Now jocund day
Stands tiptoe on Agamenti's misty top!"

Gumbo Samson, a juvenile darky, is seen running towards Mrs. Tugglesworth's.

(Enter Gumbo.)—O Missy Tugglewuf! gor amighty, Missy Tugglewuf! de berry debil and Tommas Walker be to pay, down to Witchtrott. Bets Lummus has gone, hook and sinker, an' lef' a billet on de table, sayin' how she be gone off to get married wid you Zekel. De ole man says as how he'll hunt 'em to de eends of dis ere revolvin erf, if he ony jest find out wot eend dey went to. Zeph Perkins swears he'll lick Zeke like blazes, when he catches him;—and den dere's 'Bednigo Mull'kin, settin on de school 'us steps cryin', lookin' like de werry immij ob despair, in de picter book; it's enuf to break the werry heart ob a weel-barrer to see him!"

Our lovers are now half way to Boston for Rhode Island; "as blythe as blythe can be." As soon as they arrived at Providence, Ezekiel bought a license, and for a trifling remuneration, a justice of the peace put on the yoke.

They immediately started for Quamphegan, and arrived in due season, safe and sound, at Ezek.'s mothers. Betsey was forthwith introduced as Mrs. Tuggleswerth, by Ezekiel.

"Lor me!" exclaimed his mother, throwing down her knitting; "Wal, I never! who'd have thought it? you'll be hung in Tacnic hay-scales, that's sartain, you Zeke!"

Ezek. now sent a letter to Betsey's father, telling him that he had saved him the trouble of getting a husband for his daughter. The old man foamed and swore, and sent back to Ezek, that if he didn't want a "tarnel thrashing," never to set his foot in Witchtrott again.

Ezekiel now began to build an addition to the old homestead; and matters and things went on "smooth as ile," as he expressed it. Betsey's father was satisfied after a while that his daughter hadn't made out so badly; and some of the neighbors convinced him that she had done better than by having either of her other suitors; accordingly his wrath was somewhat appeased,—but he never got fairly reconciled to the elopement. Zeph Perkins solaced himself as well as he could, by drinking cider-brandy and smoking longnines. As to the poor school-master, he was inconsolable; he mourned and would not be comforted. Betsey's mother took pity, and did all she could to comfort him. She could not give the substance of his wishes, but she gave him the shadow, in the shape of a profile of her daughter, which an itinerant artist cut a few years previous.

One Sunday last summer, I saw Abednigo standing on the steps of Witchtrott meeting-house, just before the services had commenced. I asked him if he had got married yet. He gave a deep sigh, — and taking a sheep-skin pocket book, sadly worn, from his breast pocket, opened it, and showed me Betsey's profile. I saw that his heart was broken, for he wiped a tear from his eye, with the sleeve of his thread-bare coat, as he gazed on the "counterfeit presentment" of Betsey's features, and exclaimed —

"She's the star I miss'd from Witchtrott,
Long time ago!"

SCRAPS FROM MY SKETCH BOOK.

TOM FREELY was a jolly, fat fellow; his heart was big as that of an ox, as Sol Swap would say; — and such a hand at making a boot! The young bloods of Lingville would suffer no one else to form the cases for their *understandings*. He was a capital sportsman, too; no other man in that neighborhood could bring home more game at one time, either fish or fowl, than Tom. And more than that, he was one of God's noblest works — an honest man! But, alas! Tom is now no more. He has waxed his last thread, he has finished his last boot, he has caught his last fish, he has winged his last bird, and his honest soul has

winged its flight to the arms of St. Crispin. One day after his stent was finished — for, mind you, he would never leave his business undone for pleasure — Tom, with a party of his "ancient, trusty cronies," embarked on board Sam Foley's wherry, for a fishing excursion down Lingville river. Having fished to their hearts' content, they put ashore on Heel-tap island, at the mouth of Clam Bay, to cook their piscatory spoils. Heel-tap island is a small round piece of loam, about three fathoms from the main land of Coonic, where it is connected by a rustic bridge. Tradition says this island was formed by a heel-tap, which chanced to fall from the shoe of some patriarch of yore; the pegs which remained in it served for an anchor; it stuck fast in the bottom of the river, — the eel-grass and weeds fastened to it — the soil washed from the shores during the freshets accumulated upon it, so in process of time it became an island; it is about fifty yards in diameter. Tom and his brother souters always chose this spot for their fishing frolics, on account of its name chiming with their professions, and for its being near their fishing grounds. A chowder was now soon served up, and as quickly despatched, by Tom and his hungry companions. The "striped" was now handed round, and

"All the lads looked gay and bright,
And wine and genius flashed about!"

But, while all this was going on, their boat was going off; for she, like her master, possessed rather a roving disposition, and being rather impatient withal,

in waiting for her freight, she had, by some means or other, slipped from her moorings, and was going down with the tide; and by the time "the hour approached when they maun go," their bonnie boat was full fifty fathoms from the shore. What was to be done? They didn't like the idea of losing the boat, nor of being laughed at for walking home. "I'll swim for't," exclaimed Tom, who ere this, had stood still, with his finger on his lip—

"And like a néutral to his will and matter, said nothing."

"And," continued he —

"I've read in ancient story book, that for to kiss his dear,
Leander swam the Hellespont, and I will swim this 'ere."

"I'll bet a quart of 'white-face' I'll get her."
"And I'll bet two quarts you won't," said one of the company. "Done," exclaimed Tom, who immediately commenced operations, by bracing up his spirits "a leetle" higher, with a drop or two more of the "streaked;" then doffed his robes, and breasted the green waves for the boat. After buffetting the stream, till he got within a few yards of the fugitive wherry, nature began to be exhausted,—he could swim no further; he turned his face towards the shore, and shouted—"I've lost my bet!" then sank for ever!

His bench now stands unoccupied, in one corner of his shop,—the spiders have spun their webs round about it;—there has no one yet been found that can fill his place. The birds now sing, the trout and pickerel wag their tails and leap of joy, as if they would say

—"let us now rejoice, for our destroyer is conquered!" The beaux of the village sigh as they look at their now bungled "trotter coverings," and exclaim with Hal,— "We could have better spared a better man."

WHITEWASHING EXTRAORDINARY.

UNCLE JEM'S grocery at Newburyport was a queer looking medley, a conglomeration of things in general, a confused confusion of particular goods, with those of no particular use, profit nor account. A smoke-house graced one end of his store, where hams and herring were wont to be cured, which tintured the wares with a smack of creosote, besides tinging the walls and ceiling with an unctious and very delicious brown. Heaven's first law was out of the question entirely in that unique receptacle of multitudinous multiplicity of notions; for, mixed and commingled with a delectable mixture, his ample counters showed forth heaps strangely heaped in strangest and wildest juxtaposition of heterogenous bunches, piles and bundles—wet, moist, hard, soft and dry goods—gingerbread, gimlets, jewsharps, jack-knives, gloves and gridirons—jumbled, higglety-pigglety, in maddest mazes! Moreover, the walls were in most excellent keeping with the rest of the

store; hanging pendant therefrom, or laid upon shelves of every shape, size and condition, were warming-pans, brooms, bacon, shovels and steel-traps, sad-irons and stew-pans, in sweetest confusion; in a word, chaotic chaos reigned there supreme, and medley of medleys was fully realized.

One bright morning in June, Uncle Jem took a quirk in his noddle, and "calkylated" 'twould *pay* to whitewash the interior of his store—five and twenty years, at least, having gone by since the rejuvenating brush, dipped in the calciferous mixture, had been applied thereunto. Two men of lime were sent for; they were soon on the spot, armed and equipped, ready and willing to beautify the ancient walls at the grocer-man's bidding. "You may whitewash everything," said Uncle Jem, carelessly; "and," continued he, "there's a mug, and there are the *sperit* casks, — so you may work away and help yourselves." The direction to the locality of the standing casks might have been spared—the men had been there before—but the *ad libertim* use of the contents thereof was well received by them, for two drier chaps never worked in lime.

As soon as these two artists of the broad brush had tested pretty freely the divers taps, they took each a bouncing swig of old Jamaica, and went to their work—first taking down jugs, pots, pans and panikins—then whitewashing among the mazy intricacies of hooks, nails, buckets, chests, braces and hanging shelves. They soon found this rather slow and che-

quered work, besides inconvenient in stepping among the wares taken from the walls, which encumbered the floor. So, after a few more liberal draughts upon the old Jamaica, these worthies of the lime-tub concluded to put the job through, obeying orders, literally, by whitewashing *everything*. At it they went, doing over pots, mugs, scythes, brushes, buckets, clothes-lines, stew-pans, legs of ham, strings of herring, onions and Bologna sausages, ox-chains, augurs, and so forth. Then came the case of drawers,—the counter, next, with the load of uncypherable things came in for its share of the renovating fluid; the bins, the shot-bags, the nail-casks, the barrels, the standing-casks and the molasses hogshead, all, all came forth from the lavish brushes of these artists in lime, "fresh as bridegrooms,"—even the venerable tabby, that lay dozing in a basket of filberts on the window-seat, got a big *lick* upon her brindled back; and I verily believe, had Uncle Jem crossed the path of these liberal whiteners, especially after they had imbibed "thirteenthly," he would have got *his* share of the diluted staple of Thomaston. But when the grocer-man *did* make his appearance, he was amazed beyond measure, he wot not of his whereabouts, he thought that he had stepped into a lime-kiln, or had been transported, unawares, to the chalky cliffs of Dover—all, all, was so very white!

A SIGHT.

THE cotton mills at Dover, N. H., are some six or seven stories in height, in the rear. Directly opposite stands the old Ela tavern. These mills, viewed from that house, loom up mightily, and make a very imposing show, especially at evening, when they are lighted — then they look quite formidable.

Two youths from the interior — their first appearance in any town or village — “put up” at this old tavern one night, it being the place where all the yeomanry did congregate. The youngest went up stairs to go to bed, leaving his companion in the bar-room to finish up a horse-trade and the end of a “long nine.” The tired youngster had partly disrobed himself, when glancing out of the window, the legion of illuminated panes met his astonished eyes,

“In one tide of light — one unclouded blaze!”

With one boot in his hand, the other upon his foot, leaving the remainder of his wardrobe, with the exception of his shirt and trowsers, behind, he made a rush for the bar-room, descending three steps at a time, then, with phrenzied phiz, his eyes dilated to the size of two full grown ruta-bagas, he thus made utterance: —

“Jock! come up! *will* you come up stairs for mighty-gracious sake? Of all creation’s works, this ere’s the darned-all-firedest! Tophet is moved, and sot up in Dover Landing!”

A SATURDAY EVENING SKETCH.

WHITE PICKERING’S big, brawney hands had just clutched the bell-rope at Dr. Spring’s church, to give notice to the puritans of good old Newburyport that all worldly affairs must be closed up for the week. Jenmy Ball had hauled up his wherry, and his wife had just put on a pot of clams, wherewith to regale her lord and master. Parson Milton had written out “thirteenthly” and “lastly” to his to-morrow’s sermon, and Deacon Solomon had finished reckoning the week’s profits and losses. Harry Harmless, with a quart-jug of “white-eye,” was describing a Virginia fence on his way home through Star Alley. Captain Moody Davis had shut up shop. The she-publican of Guinea, after taking her gin-toddy, had given the key of the bar in charge of the “minstrel,” and enveloped snugly within the warm folds of her virtuous blankets, resigned her dark drowsy head to the arms of Morpheus. The dipped candle had burnt low in its socket at Jem Douglass’s shanty, and — in short, ’twas eight o’clock on Saturday night. The weather was stormy.

Hovering round a scant fire, was a bankrupt merchant’s wife, and her three little ones; the husband and father was then lying in jail for a debt which he was totally unable to pay, —

“Deserted at his utmost need,
By those his former bounty fed.”

Too proud to beg, the excellent woman had struggled alone to gain a scanty pittance for herself and children; 'twas too much for her alone. She had pawned her silver spoons, one after another; her jewelry had gone long since — the brass fire-set, so very fashionable in those days, soon followed, with many other things, but the money was soon expended, and "short commons" was again their lot.

"My dear children," said the good mother, "I do not know what I shall do to get bread for you to-morrow. I really did expect, surely, that Mrs. M. would have sent to pay for the sewing which I did for her; O, if she did but know how much I depended upon her, she would have sent it, I am sure. I dare not ask the grocer nor the baker for any more credit, and I know not what more I can pawn. I do hope," continued the afflicted woman, as she wiped away a tear from each eye — one of honest pride, the other of sorrow — "I do hope we shall get along without begging."

The storm whistled, and the sleet rattled against the windows.

"Let us kneel together, my darlings," she resumed, "and pray to our Father which is in heaven; for he tells us to call upon him in time of trouble." The saintly mother then kneeled, and her little jewels, folding their tiny hands, knelt round about her.

O, thou kind Being! By whom even the sparrow's fall is noticed. Thou who didst feed thy children in the wilderness, — see'st thou that mother, with her

group of little cherubs around her; hearest thou her supplication, accompanied with the sweet responses of those lisping babes, invoking Thee not to forsake them in their adversity?

Thou hast said, — I will not see the righteous forsaken, nor their seed begging bread.

Her prayer is heard!

The point of the minute hand upon the Old South dial had scarce traversed a quadrant, when a neighbor entered. It was a good old nurse; she stated to the distressed mother that she had baked a batch of bread that day, but being called away that night to attend the sick, on a week's absence or longer, she had no occasion for it, and, if she would accept, was welcome to it.

He that heareth the young ravens cry, will not suffer such an invocation to go unheeded.

A "SELL."

IN making repairs upon the dam at Salmon Falls, N. H., a few weeks since, one of the workmen found an aquatic root of peculiar color, spotted; he gave it to Sam. Ricker, of Quamphegan, to do as he liked with it. Sam is a cosy and ingenious wag of quiet demean; so immediately on the receipt of this curious relic, he sat himself down upon the nave of

one of his wagon-wheels — Sam is a wheelwright — lit his pipe, and cogitated thus :

“There has been nothing turned up here of late wherewith to arouse the natives ; true, the village architect has bought a snuff-box, Parker Abbott a new pipe, the post-master has had a new chimney to his domicile, Walter Bell has just finished the laying of ten new shingles on Jenkins’s barn — he works by the day,—a foot in height has been added to the new dam, and a new window has been cut in Dea. Foote’s mill,—but something of more “pith and moment” is needed to stir the sluggish blood of the Quampheganers, so I’ll e’en try my hand at getting up a new wonderment.”

No sooner thought than done. Sam, with the aid of his jack-knife, carved the head of a snake upon the large end of the root ; a half score of shoe-pegs from Donty Tuttle’s kit did the teeth, two China beads from the toy-shop represented the optics, and a bit of red baize formed the tongue. The snake was finished,—nothing of the serpent kind ever looked more formidable,—

“Not those that in Illyria changed
Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
In Epidaurus : nor to which transform’d
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen.”

The “critter” was transported to Sam’s brother’s store, and placed in “awful state” upon a round table in the centre of the back shop ; the shutters were closed, save one small aperture, and “a dim religious

light” pervaded the apartment. A notice was forthwith written out in a round, bold hand, and placed in a conspicuous place, running somewhat thus :—

A NATURAL CURIOSITY !

A young specimen of the Ichthyosaurus, or Water Lizard!!! Found in the Salmon Falls river, by Charles Tuttle, Esq. This is the only one of this class of reptiles, supposed to have long ceased to exist, that has been seen for the last century!!! This very peculiar species of the aquatic snake is a very young member of the Ichthyosaurian family, being only about four feet in length ; it has the snout of a porpoise, the teeth of a crocodile, the head of a lizard, the vertebrae of an eel, the tongue of an ornithorhynchus ; uniting within itself a combination of parts of the three animal kingdoms. The eye, “rolling in liquid circles,” is somewhat large, being a third of an inch in diameter, and

“Robed in flames of liquid light !”

The animal is covered with a smooth skin, which in different lights, looks

“Starred, striped and spotted, yellow, green and blue !”

This fish-like serpent was originally an inhabitant of the ocean ; it fed upon its own species ; hence, very like, the reason of its expulsion. Milton makes mention of this monster —

“With head uplift above the waves, and eyes
That sparkling, blazed !”

This curiosity may be seen at No. 1, brick block, rear

room, Quamphegan square, for this day only, previous to its departure south and west. Admittance, 6 1-4 cents — women and children, half-price.

It took; the village was all agog. The villagers thronged in by dozens. The circuit judge was there, the preacher-men were present, the school-master was on hand, the village doctors were not behind the call, "the oldest inhabitant" hobbled in, the learned pundits all came to see the show; the bump of wonder stuck out "a foot" on the cranium of a transcendentalist, as he beheld the sight; the elite and the plebians of the village rushed with one accord, and mingled with the motley and wondering crowd around the curious "varmint." A deputation from Tacnic came to see the "snaik,"—and ere night-fall people rushed in from Witchtrott, Sligo, Agamenticus, Tear-shirt, and Bonnybig — yea, verily, even Barrington plains sent down a delegation of three.

A rail was put up a few feet from the table, encircling it, on which reclined this

"Monster of the bubbling deep."

Sam's brother stood within the railing, and thus harangued the crowd:—Gentlemen and—I was about to say ladies—this nondescript, this aquatic lizard, this remnant of other days, was taken alive at Salmon Falls River this very morning at sun-rise, but he has about given up the ghost, as you see he scarcely moves." Here one of the audience gave the "pesky serpent" a poke with a stick, which made the elastic,

pulpous, counterfeit "snaik" tremble, and seem to writhe, and the over-curious auditor

"Back to the crowd did slink."

"This reptile, gentlemen," continued the speaker, "being a native of old Neptune's domains —

"Now sporting on the yesty crested wave,
Anon, wooing the slimy bottom of the deep!"

is a great wonder in these parts; he must have come hither by the Piscataqua and Quamphegan rivers, and finally taken up his abode and settled down among the winding mazes of the romantic Salmon Falls, along the wild, sedgy banks by Cutts's neck —

"Where the raven flappes his wynges,
In the briard dell belowe;
Where the dethe owle loude dothe syng
To the nighte-mares as heie goe;
Alle underre ye willowe tree!"

"Cre-a-tion! what a mouth!" ejaculated Zerubabel Mullikin, from Witchtrott. "Ah-r-r-r, that's a comploot snake, a com-ploot snake!" outspoke the village architect, as he took a bouncing big pinch of Maccaboy from his new box. "By zucks!" exclaimed a baptist deacon, "we won't have any more baptisms in *that* river!" "Will he bite, Thommuth?" lisped out a village miss, who had just entered the room with a young sprig from the academy. "I should be rather fearful of the reptile," replied the gallant, "he looks decidedly wicked, and

"See the sparkles that flash from his eyes!"

"By ——, he's one on 'em!" roared out a gondola captain. "I s-w-e-o-u-w!" drawled out Peleg Jenkins, in a semi-tone. "Very probable this reptile is an infant of the mighty leviathan of the vasty deep, that the scriptures tell us of," suggested one of the parsons. "I'll probe this matter," whispered a young "saw bones" of the village; and suiting the action to the word, he dodged under the railing, and inserting the point of his pen-knife into the "pesky varmint," immediately withdrew it and placed it to his nose, remarking at the time that it cut and smelt very like a vegetable. The audience began to smell a joke; the "snaik" was snaked out, the plot was uncovered; the game was up; and

"Such a shout was there!"

it made the windows rattle, nearly unhung the ponderous shutters, and actually shook the plastering so that it cracked from wainscot to ceiling!

As soon as the tumult had a little subsided, Sam started for Tom's, and quickly returned, loaded with a big demijohn; the proprietor of the store where the exhibition took place, furnished the "principes" and "Havanas;" the fastidious ones vanished, and the rest had a "time" on the proceeds of the "show." Punch was concocted and swallowed, cigars were used up with *gusto*, jokes were cracked, and finally, this gathering wound up with a song sung by "Don-ty," entitled "*The GREAT Sea Snake!*"

A GENTLE HINT.

THE following incident of a voyage down east, several years since, I have told so often in self-defence, anticipating my friend relating it in his own way, although the joke was sadly at my expense, I have got quite used and reconciled to, — so here it goes in print: —

My friend Jemes and myself were journeying eastward one winter. After buffeting a north-east storm all day, night found us cold, wet, weary and hungry. We began to look about for a tavern; but as we rode on, and rode on, no signs of one appeared. Desperate, we called at the first house, and were told we had passed a tavern a mile back, and that there were none other for six long miles. We told them our situation, and that we really believed the horse would give out if we drove him a mile farther that night. The old farmer told us we might stop with him, if we wished, and he would do the best he could for us. We soon saw our horse well bestowed — the very first thing always — and then were ushered into the domicile, where we found a rousing fire of maple logs to gladden our hearts withal.

Whilst we were warming and drying ourselves, the daughter of our host, a buxom lass, spread the table with good cheer; a bouncing pitcher of cider

in the centre, flanked upon either side by cold beef, hot tea, toast and dough-nuts, fat, ruddy and plump as Bardolph's nose, with

"Other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses."

We were soon seated round the bountiful board, doing ample justice to the viands, with appetites sharpened to such an edge as nothing short of a down-cast winter air could fix. The damsel waited upon the table; my friend and myself were both taken up with her, as well we might be, for she not only looked interesting, but supplied our wants with such a pretty and willing hand, that I involuntarily exclaimed —

"Yes, let Hebe, ever young,
High in heaven her nectar hold,
And to Jove's immortal throng
Pour the tide in cups of gold —
I'll not envy heaven's princes,
While, with snowy hands, for me,
Kate the china tea-cup rinses,
And pours out her best Bohea!"

After tea, among other topics, that of watches was brought up; my friend prided himself not a little upon his knowledge of chronometers; the old man's watch was "out o' kilter," he said, and wished Jemes to look into it. Proud of an opportunity to display his knowledge of mechanism, Jemes took the antique horologe to a table and opened it. The whole family, with the exception of the girl who waited upon us at supper, gathered around him, to see him illustrate, and hear him expatiate upon the wonders of the time-

keeper. Preferring the warm fire side to the back part of the room, and the charms of a damsel to the wheels and fixings of an old-fashioned "bull's-eye," I kept company with the maiden. We soon

" ——— grew quiet gracious,
With favors secret, sweet and precious."

The old lady, as she would occasionally glance at us from over the top of her specs, looked somewhat discomforted, and my friend would, ever and anon, leave his subject and give a most envious look at me. I was in full feather—it would have taken something of a bonus to induce me to exchange places with Jemes.

"Come and see the *turnip*," said Jemes to me, coaxingly, "it's a curious one."

"Here's metal more attractive," replied I, in the language of the prince of Denmark.

"Lor sake, Katy!" out-spoke the old lady, "I should ra'lly think you'd rather see the inards of a watch,—I know you never seed one opened in all your born days." The damsel heeded the invitation not.

"Nods and becks and wreathed smiles"

were plentifully exchanged betwixt us, most of which the vigilant eye of the mother saw; and Jemes would now and then cast an envious glance at me, which I would repay by placing the end of my thumb on the tip of my nose, and extending the remaining digits towards him, all of which he understood too well to be mistaken to mean, "You can't shine here, young man."

The plot thickened. The old lady began to look worried. Finally she could't stand it no longer; she rushed into the "fore-room," and soon returned with a huge slice of rich cake upon a "chaney" plate, which she handed to me, remarking at the same time, "This 'ere is some of my darter Kate's — this 'ere gal's — wedding cake; she is to be married next week. I kind o' thought you'd like to taste on't, cause she made it herself; and we think it's as good as the boughten. Her fellow has gone to the village; he'll be back to-night. You'd like to see him, I guess, for he's a right good young man!"

James shouted, kicked over his chair, broke the crystal of the "bull's eye," and asked after the health of my grandmother. The old man stared, the hired men giggled, the old lady sat down and took a pinch of *yaller* snuff, the children laughed, and the damsel wept. As to myself, a smooth six-cent piece would have bought me then — hats, boots and all!

CUTTING IT THICK.

MANY years since, there did dwell in a certain town, not a hundred miles from that far-famed place where orthodox divines are fitting up for their profession and calling, a certain D. D., notorious for his parsimoniousness, which would occasionally run into the wildest extremes:—

"Like a peach that's got the yallars,
With it's meanness bustin' out!"

One day this doctor of divinity chanced into a hat store in this city, and after rummaging over the warës, selected an ordinary looking hat, put it on his reverend head, ogled himself in the glass, then asked the very lowest price for it, telling the vender that if he could get it cheap enough he thought he might buy it.

"But," said the hatter, "that hat is not good enough for *you* to wear — here is what you want," showing one of his best beavers.

"'Tis the best I can afford, tho'," returned the theologian.

"Well, there, doctor — I'll make you a present of that best beaver, if you'll wear it and tell your friends whose store it came from — I'll warrant you'll send me customers enough to get my money back with interest, — you are pretty extensively acquainted."

"Thank you — thank you!" said the doctor — his eyes gleaming with pleasure at raising a castor so

cheaply — “how much may this beaver be worth?”

“We sell that kind of hat for eight dollars,” replied the man of *nap*.

“And the other?” continued the reverend gentleman.

“Three.”

The man of sermons put on the beaver, looked in the glass, then at the three dollar hat.


“I think, sir,” said he, taking off the beaver, and holding it in one hand as he donned the cheap “tile,”

“I think, sir, that this hat will answer my purpose full as well as the best.”

“But you’d better take the best one, sir, it costs you no more.”

“But—but,” replied the parson, hesitatingly, “I didn’t know—but—perhaps—you would as lief I would take the cheap one—and leave the other—and perhaps you would not mind giving me the difference in a *five dollar bill*!”

CUTTING IT FAT—OR THE PARSON AND THE CHEESES.

 OUR reverend hero of the hat story was riding home from a visit to Newburyport, one afternoon,—and being on the road where a friend of his, Mr. T., lived, a staunch old farmer, famous for his fat cheeses and good living, he gave him a call.

In a short time, tea was ready, and the doctor was of course cordially invited to sit down at their bountiful board.

“I declare,” ejaculated the divine, “I must say that this cheese is the nicest I ever ate; why, it will nearly melt in one’s mouth!”

“Sartain,” returned the dairyman, “you must know, doctor, that my wife lets no one go ahead of her on cheese; she always gets the first premium at the cattle show; I stamp my initials on all we make, and they bring a cent or two a pound more than any others in the market.”

“Excuse me for helping myself to it so bountifully,” said the reverend guest, “it is so *very* nice; besides, it is quite a luxury to me—such extra cheese,—we don’t have such at home; in fact, to tell you plainly, we have n’t had any of *any kind* lately.”

This brought out the good dairywoman.

“Husband,” said she, “had n’t we better give the doctor one of our cheeses?”

"Sartain," replied the farmer, "give him a good one — the best you've got in the house."

As soon as the doctor was ready to start, the generous woman selected a nice fat cheese from her store-room — fit for a king's table — rolled it up nicely in a spick-span clean napkin, and handed it to their hired man to put it in the parson's sleigh.

"I'll take care of it, myself," said our doctor of theology, taking the rich disc from the man, — and, after thanking the good people kindly for their nice present, he bade them good night, and started with his prize for his horse and sleigh, which was standing by the front gate.

After stowing away his cheese, he unhitched the animal, and jumped into the sleigh; but he had scarcely got seated, and the reins adjusted, when the horse, feeling impatient to be off, gave a sudden side-jerk towards the road, capsizing the sleigh, spilling out the parson, and after him *three* cheeses, which he had got at different places that day, besides the one just given him, which verged off in different directions like rays of rich orange light, leaving the doctor in the centre of the halo for a nucleus!

All this came off before a good audience — the scene was not lost. A picket guard of children stood at the gate — the farmer and his wife were posted at the front door, and the man-servant and the maid-servant stood at the window.

As soon as the doctor's rich cargo was revealed to the astonished eyes of our good dairyman, he sprung

forward and seized, with his huge paw, the cheese marked "S. T.," clapped it under his arm — then turning to the parson with a satirical smile, said — "Doctor, when you are out of c-h-e-e-s-e, just come this way and you shall have this!" The parson was never known to call for it, we believe.

PARSON MILTON.

WHO that knows anything about Newburyport, surely knows there was once a good, honest, but rather a rough old parson, Milton. Many are the anecdotes extant of this eccentric man. He was a queer looking personage, withal, resembling very much, Crehore's jack of clubs. And such a voice! Like the thunder of some mighty organ, 'twould make the very clapboards rattle on his old church!

One Monday morning, as the good old man was lugging home a huge codfish, he was accosted by one of his deacons, with — "Mr. Milton, did you know that fish was caught on the Sabbath?"

"What of it," returned the parson, "the fish isn't any the worse for't."

This same deacon was a dealer in wood, and it had been whispered more than once about his short mea-

asures. On the following Sunday, Parson M., after reading his text from Proverbs, about short weights and measures, roared out at the top of his lungs, almost cracking the old sounding board, "any man that will sell six feet of wood for a cord, will have to 'take it' in the next world, if not in this,—I don't care if he does sit in the deacon's seats—that won't save him, by a long chalk!"

About the time that temperance and anti-slavery began to bud forth, a committee from his society waited upon, and desired him to espouse those causes.

"Shan't do't!" said the parson of the old school; "when you hired me, it was to preach the gospel—now it's rum and niggers!"

The good man bought a load of potatoes of a countryman one day. On their way to the house with the load, they passed Prospect street church.

"Isn't that old Milton's church?" asked the farmer.

"Yes," snapped out the minister.

"Wal, I should like to see the old codger, I have hearn tell on him so much."

"You'd like to see him, eh? wal, I'll show him to ye directly," returned the parson, jogging on.

They soon arrived at the house, and between them both, quickly had the potatoes stowed away in the cellar. The old man brought out the decanter—'twas the custom in those days—both took a pull at it,—then, after paying the farmer, the reverend gentleman plant-

ed himself in front of him, and screamed out, "Ye said ye'd like to see old Milton, didn't ye."

"I did," replied the man of potatoes.

"Wal then," roared forth the man of God, at the "top of his bent," look at me—I'm old Milton!"

A party of the good citizens of that town took it into their heads to make a trip to the Isle of Shoals; among the rest was our good parson. A few hours out, a terrible squall arose,—the boat could but just live under it,—every cheek was paled,—the minister was as frightened as the rest. "Mr. Milton," said one of the company, "we marvel much that you should be alarmed in danger,—a saint like you, in case you are drowned, would of course go to heaven."

"All right," replied the eccentric man of God, "but I don't wish to go there by *water*!"

A huge pile of "notes"—not promissory, but mostly invocative, were laid upon the pulpit desk, one Sunday morning—an extra lot; Parson Milton overhauled them, threw them down, and told the congregation that there lay a lot of requests—some desiring prayers for one thing, some for another; and many wishing to return thanks for various things;—"Twill take a long while to read them," said this funny preacher-man, "so my hearers, we'll lump 'em, and pray for 'em in a bunch!"

At another time this eccentric old parson found a

"note" for him to read, which ran somewhat thus — all but the names ; — "Abinadab Humm and wife desires the prayers of this congregation for their son Sam, who is given over to hardness of heart and blindness of mind." The odd divine, as soon as he had finished the reading of this strange request, exclaimed in one of his big Paixhian gun tones — "it's of no use to pray for him !" — then rent the "note" in twain, and flung the pieces on the floor.

A queer lot of requests, generally, were sent to this erratic reverend ; one of the very richest ran thus, barring the names : — "Zachariah Plumper and wife, desire to return thanks for being blessed with the natural consequences of matrimony !"

This compound of oddities — this queer old parson, went down river one day on a chowder-party, with a half score or so of his fellow saints. In due time the savory dish, smoking hot, was set before these living pillars of presbytery, who, with appetites sharpened to a double edge by fasting and the sea air, were both ready and willing to go into the mess with more than religious zeal and good will — the parson, especially, was anxious for the onslaught. He, with watering mouth, stood up and invoked a brief blessing thus : — "O Lord, bless the repast set before us, for Christ's sake, amen — Deacon Dole, hand me that spoon !"

Parson Milton was never lukewarm. He always went into his sermons with a rush, with a zest, a zeal, a gusto, and sometimes with a "whirlwind of passion," a perfect hurricane of action accompanied by a thunder-storm of words. One day this queer apostle was engagad in doing up his doctrines "brown," hitting occasionally the socinians, arminians, antinomians and Hopkintonians big "licks," and showing the opponents in general to the presbytery no quarter whatsoever, — when in one of his immense flourishes, he hit the big bible a thump, — and over went the huge volume from the desk, slap-bang ! down upon the bald and reverend head of one of the deacons ! The excited parson "pulled up" short, in his harangue — peeped over the cushion down among the living pillars of the church, and seeing the elder rubbing his pate, screamed forth in one of his unearthly yells — "Did it hurt ye, deacon ?"

Like many church-goers in those days, his congregation were impatient to rush out before the benediction. And, in cold weather, (for they had no fires in their churches in those days — the minister performing the services in great coat and mittens,) most of his flock had their pew-doors open, and one foot out, ready for a start, ere the good man had even begun the "grace."

One bitter cold Sunday, this old parson had

scarcely got the "amen" out, before every pew-door was swung open, and its occupant ready for a rush — when our divine roared out in one of his peculiar yells, — "Ye need'nt hurry — your puddin's won't get cold!"

The effect of this rebuke lasted but a short time. His people soon got into their old habits; they must have another dose, thought the old parson — and they got it. Accordingly, one Sunday, as usual — before the minister had even got to the "grace" — the pew doors flew open, and the whole congregation seemed

"Like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start!"

when this excentric preacher bellowed forth, at the "top of his compass," — "If you'll stop I'll ask the blessing — If ye don't I won't!"

One Saturday, a young milk-and-water looking sprig of divinity, fresh from the Andover minister mill, called upon our parson, and offered to preach for him. Mr. Milton told him he didn't think his voice loud enough to fill so large a house; but the young man was rather confident it was. Finally, Milton agreed to let him try it, with the proviso that he himself should be seated in the pulpit, and if he thought the youngster's voice pitched too low, he would remind him of it, by pulling at his coat-tail.

The next morning the young sprig mounted the sacred rostrum — while the head of the establishment sat

in the rear — who suffered the *debutant* to go through the prayer unmolested. But when the young man commenced upon the hymn — the legitimate proprietor of the desk gave the coat-tail of the young divine a slight twitch, which caused its owner to raise his voice a little higher. The second stanza was hardly begun, when another twitch caused the reader to raise his voice another note; — another and another twitch — a louder and a louder strain, was the consequence. One more long, hard pull at the coat tail, — but there is a point, — Nature had done her utmost — still "excelsior" was the cry, which ran from the coat-tail to the brain of the poor martyr — who now put his whole strength into his lungs, and brought forth one long, almighty squeal!

When this eccentric preacher first came to Newburyport from London, he then, as ever afterwards, wore his hair very long. Some of the curious old dames of his church wondered at his taste; whilst others, more malicious, hinted that his ears might have been cropped. The story, like all slanders, soon spread like wildfire. Curiosity was "up and dressed," — and one antique vestal declared she would be satisfied. Accordingly, one afternoon, she invited the parson to tea. Both before and after the repast, the venerable virgin was on the *qui vive* — trying to get a peep under the parson's locks, to see if the appendages to his bearing portals were not clipped of their fair proportions — but to no purpose. Just as the

preacher-man was about to depart—the matron becoming desperate at her ill-success—as she handed him his hat, remarked, “La, Mr. Milton, what beautiful hair you have!”—at the same time pushing away the locks that clustered around his ears; upon which the eccentric divine, comprehending at once the woman’s meaning, snapped out in one of his inimitable yells—“D’ye see ’em!”

On being called upon to do a prayer at a Fourth of July dinner, he arose and invoked the throne of Grace thus:—“O Lord, deliver us from sham patriots—for Christ’s sake, amen!”

EPISTLE FROM NEWBURYPORT TO THE BOSTON POST.

LIKE as an egg is full of meat, so is this antique town replete with traditions of eccentric men who, whilom, did flourish here. But their day and generation have passed and gone. Things have taken a revolution. The *oneness* which of yore did mark the people, is vanished. Cotton mills have usurped the places once dedicated to the West-India trade, and the agent, overseers and spinners walk in the footsteps of the former merchant, clerk and mechanic;—

“Old times are changed—old manners gone!”

’Tis now like finding manna in the wilderness to light upon an old *codger* who will tell of the things that were.

Here stands the theatre of the first display of witchcraft in Massachusetts,—the “olde Morss house,”—where, as Cotton Mather has it put down in his “magnolia”—“Brickcs, stickcs, and stones, were thrown against ye house violentlye bye an unseene hand!” And in goode man Morss’s own words, *vide* the court records of those days:—“The two pottes which didd hange in ye chimly didd knock together very violentlye for severalle minutes. Moreover ye andiron didd leap into ye big potte and dance, and there abide. I putt my awle in a cupboard and fastened ye dore—anon it came down ye chimly, I know not how. We heard a noise at midnight,—arose, and

found a grate hogge in ye house, ye doore beinge locked—very willinge to go out!" Besides many more freaks which I have not space here to put down. The house is a curiosity of itself, with its half a score of L's and additions, — looking like a game of dominoes."

Of course, you and the whole world have heard of Lord Timothy Dexter, who so pompously flourished here some thirty or forty years ago. But whilst all his little foolish eccentricities has been published to the world, I am sorry to say that his many virtues have been hid under a bushel. He was a benefactor to the people—not party. He took things in a cosmopolitan light—not one-sided. He did not give a large sum to a sectarian minister manufactory; if he had, his name, like some others, would have pealed forth throughout the land. But he gave his little here—his little there. He gave, as a saint, a pretty little purse towards building St. Paul's church there, which, in olden time, would have canonized him. He gave, as a christian and a MAN, a goodly sum to be put in the care of the town, the interest of which, annually, to be invested in provisions for the poor, who kept themselves out of the almshouse. In short, he did many noble things, which he should be credited for, and which are now lost sight of through his peculiarities. Every one who has read his will, says there never was a more judicious one made. He was no fool, either, as many an anecdote of him will show. Speaking of a man whom he had befriended

many times, and got repaid with ingratitude, he said, "D—n him, he reminds me of a hog under a tree, eating acorns, never once thinking of looking up to see where they come from!"

I will e'en give you a story or two about Jemmy Ball, of the piscatory profession, in bye-gone days, — and that will wind up this epistle. A queerer chick than Jemmy never was hatched. Rough as a shag-bark outside, he was all right within, and withal, a perfect philosopher. But his spouse, who gave him a deal of trouble, was quite the reverse, coarse as a grater, both outside and in. "I want tow-cloth enough to make a pair of — for Bets," exclaimed Jemmy one morning to a shop-keeper, "she has been dunning me for't for a long time, and swears if I don't get it to-day, she'll take my wherry sail for 'em!"

Jemmy came home unexpectedly one afternoon, and found his spouse in the lap of a gentleman of color. Instead of flying in a passion, as most husbands would, and raise a miniature tophet about the house, — he folded his arms, looked at the delinquent wife "more in sorrow than in anger," and exclaimed, "I don't care a cent about it, Bets, — *but it don't look well!*"

His idea about the note was not any farther out of the way than many of our banks get sometimes. "You may put these fish to the old account, Mr. Ball," said a customer to him after selecting a nice lot of tom-cod. "Put 'em to the account!" replied our hero of the book and line, with surprise; "what ac-

count? I don't owe you anything; didn't I give you my note t'other day?"—'Twas this same Jemmy who said one time that the clams were scarce, as they had struck off in deep water!

By my troth, this is a pleasant town, beautifully situated on the Merrimac, near the sea, every variety of prospect abounding it. A nice, quiet place to spend a few days, — especially now,

"When summer smiles on sweet Pow hill,
And corn is green at Salisbury!"

EPISTLE FROM NEWBURYPORT TO THE BOSTON POST.

LENGTHENING my visit here, you shall have another epistle from these parts.

Took a sail down to Black Rocks one hot evening last week; found things all right at this fashionable watering place. There was the Hon. Japhet Dingleton, from New Algiers. Moreover, the two accomplished Misses Dingleton were there, and shone forth like unto two new tin pans! The elder was dressed in a light chintz frock, high in the neck, with circular pockets in front, bound round with red tape,—into which she would ever and anon thrust her pretty fingers with the air of a princess. Her flaxen hair tied up in a single tress with an eel-skin, gave a *tout ensemble* to

her classic head. Her substantial pedals were encased in right good *kip*, and she wore the hose which Mrs. Nature gave her. The younger sported a spick-span new gingham, purchased at Ezra Merrill's—a *leetle* low in the neck; a string of glass beads fell over her swelling bust, like unto green pease upon a white platter! There was not a little ogling between the younger, who appeared a trifle coquettish, and a dapper little skipper from the port of Bellahache.

The mayor of Dogtown is expected here to-morrow; the "keg" has been sent up to "Mark's" to be replenished, in anticipation of his coming. A grand ball will come off on that occasion; Israel Turner will be there with his fiddle, and a delegation from the Isle of Shoals is expected.

Speaking of the Isle of Shoals reminds me of one of the natives, who was caught there, long ago, before the place was civilized, 'twas said by a dough-nut tied to a boat-hook,—but I rather doubt it; nevertheless, caught he was, no matter how, and brought to Newburyport, where he expressed the wildest astonishment at all the strange sights. But his wonderment knew no bounds when he saw a horse and chaise go past. He ran into the house of his master,—his eyes expanded to the size of a pair of the largest Oldtown onions,—and screamed to his highest note,—“Mr. Knapp! O, Mr. Knapp! the cow is running off with the windmill!”

This was in olden time—the people are, of course, more enlightened now. Albeit, there may be found

some few "cases" round about these parts in this enlightened age. "Beautiful weather, sir," said a minister to an old codger, not far from New Algiers, awhile since. "Yees, yees," replied the fisherman, sich weather as we reads on." "I don't recollect the passage, my dear sir," returned the parson. "Wal, by thunder! that 'ere's a good un," retorted the man of ichthyology, "don't you ever read your almanac?"

Here's a good 'un about phrenology, which came off here once upon a time. An itinerant in this science gave a public lecture, interspersed with a few public examinations. A celebrated tonsor of this town came forward and placed himself under the hands of the man of skulls, who, after feeling and rubbing the cranium, gave our artist attributes diametrically opposite from those he possessed; whereupon the man of lather thus spoke out: "I tell you what, my dear sir, it's my opinion that you might as well undertake to tell who lives in a house by examining the shingles upon its roof as tell about a man's brains by feeling the bumps on his head!"

WINE TASTING.

SEVERAL years since, at a certain village in New Hampshire, a disappointed theological student — a trifle weak in the "upper works" — who had tried his hand at divers callings — such as school-keeping, soliciting subscribers to religious publications, lecturing upon phrenology, temperance, &c., — finally took it into his precious noddle to open a store. He was of the temperance school — as well he might be, for a thimblefull of the "ardent" would upset his shallow cocoa-nut; moreover, he was parsimonious, even to meanness.

The store was opened in due season; his goods all well arranged; muslins, molasses, peppermints, pork, calico, cod-fish, sewing-silk, salt, singing-books, sweet oil, bibles, brown sugar, ginger, gimblets, psalm-books, saltpetre, testaments, tow-cloth, almonds, augurs, &c. &c., were put in their several places, ready for the campaign; and our trader stood ready with his spic-span new white neck-cloth, and his hair combed smooth, to wait upon his customers.

"You haven't any wine;" said a wag to our shopman, after taking a survey of the premises — "you'll have to keep *that* article for a medicine, or lose the very best custom in the village."

Our trader thought, probably, that if he lived among the Turks it were well to do as the *Turkeys* did; or

may be the increase of dimes from the wicked traffic served to turn his weak head — stronger ones than his have been sadly warped by the latter cause — at all events, he consented, and sent off forthwith for a quarter-cask of old Madeira — for a “medicine,” and nothing else.

The delectable liquor arrived; it was soon rolled in, put upon skids, and tapped; the latter operation had scarcely been got through with when our wag, who had been on the look-out, again entered the store. “Got your *medicine*, I see,” he observed, “but are you sure it is *good*?” “I bought it for the best,” replied the shopman, “just you taste it; I durst not, you know; besides, I’m no judge of the article.” “Neither am I,” returned the wag; “but there are three gentlemen in the village with whom I chance to be acquainted, who are most excellent judges of wine, and if they pronounce it good, you’ll be sure it is all right.”

“Please do me the favor to invite them in,” said the vender of varieties. The waggish gentleman was off in a twinkling, and soon returned with three of the finest specimens of *bon-vivants*, as could be found in a sabbath-day’s journey. These gentlemen had received a sly notice of this affair that morning, and had dined upon salt fish; so they were ready to do ample justice to most anything in the shape of liquids — good wine in particular.

Our shop-keeper took down a wine-glass from his glass-wares, and was about to fill it with the “glory

of Madeira,” when one of the trio remarked that it was not easy to judge from a small quantity, and that it required a larger body of the “juice” to test its qualities correctly. Accordingly a half pint tumbler was brought, which one of the “tasters” seized and filled to the brim with the rich liquid —

“The blood of Madeira’s vine!”

then holding it up to the light, and eyeing it with the air of an old connoisseur, he placed it to his lips, and to the amazement of our temperance and parsimonious trader, swallowed every drop of it, instanter, — then filled the glass again and handed it to one of his companions, who followed suit, and gave it to the third, who did likewise.

“Well, gents, and what do you think of it?” queried our vender, as soon as he had recovered from his amazement. “I’ll tell you, as soon as I get my mouth in taste,” replied the first man, “you must know that I dined upon fish to-day, and it takes something to quench my thirst — so here goes another;” and away went the second brimmer of the “medicine” to keep company with the first. The others followed the example of their leader, smacked their lips, said it was not bad to take, — then did up a third round with as great gusto and despatch as the first, and told the astonished trader that his wine had quenched their thirst somewhat — that they could perceive no bad taste to it, and if he would take a jug of it into the counting-room, accompanied with some crackers and cheese and a dozen good Spanish cigars, they would then

and there deliberate upon it, and give their judgment accordingly in good season!

Our unsophisticated shop-man was thunder-struck! But he found he was "in for it," and could not well back out, so he did as desired—and such a time as they had on't! Suffice it to say, that after nearly two gallons of his "medicine" had been punished, our trader at last got rid of his "tasters" at midnight, by giving each a bottle of the precious juice and a bunch of cigars. Before leaving, however, they gave in their verdict, that the article they had been drinking was wine, good old Madeira wine, nothing else, and, in their opinion, was not bad to take!

GRAND "HOP" AT THE OCEAN HOUSE, BLACK-ROCKS.

"Sound the loud timbrel o'er Salisbury's blue waters,
A ball at Black-Rocks!—bring on the fair daughters!"

THE long talked of "hop" at this fashionable resort came off with great *eclat* one evening last week 'Twas emphatically *the* ball of the season. There was nothing untouched or slightly handled. Manifold were the preparations on this auspicious occasion. First and foremost, the "keg" was sent up to "Mark's" to be filled. Evergreen was brought up

in abundance to trim the spacious hall. Ezra Merrill's store at the point was ransacked to grace the fair forms of Salisbury's daughters; and Mr. Johnson's assortment of jewelry, at Newburyport, contributed no little to the show. Israel Turner, the Dogtown Paganini, was ready and willing with his inimitable violin,—and the Guinea minstrel was not behind hand. Even the shepublican of Guinea, Dolly Small, assisted there; and, antique as she was, answered every lady's beck and call. In short, things "went merry as the marriage bells."

The bugle now sounded—"On with the dance!" First on the floor came the admiral of Jappa, with his spouse; though somewhat in the neighborhood of forty, she looked sprightly and rather juvenile withal,—to tell the truth, however, she was somewhat indebted to the Newburyport tonsor, and dressmaker, for her young appearance. This couple was followed up by their three daughters, the oldest being the belle of Joppa; all, nevertheless, looking fair as the graces. The trio were dressed in pink gingham. We noticed, also, the accomplished Miss N—y—z, of the former place, attended by a young ropemaker; we envied him his happiness. *En passant*, the jewelry worn by this young lady was valued at nearly *one dollar and a half*, or twelve shillings York currency!

"Rich and rare were the gems she wore!"

Yes, they were!—But, decidedly, *the belle* of the evening, was the beautiful, the bewitching, the lovely, the brilliant Miss F—r of S—ab—k. She was ac-

accompanied by her parents. Her mother, a daughter of Pomona, long known at the Ferry Store, Newburyport, as an extensive dealer in whortleberries, took her station at the belle's side, and went through all the figures of the mazy dance, like one long practised in the Terpsichorean art. Though the mother, she presented somewhat a youthful appearance—a full round figure, and, if her face *was* tinted by

“The shadowed livery of the burning sun!”

still 'twas fair to look upon—open and ruddy. But the daughter! How shall we describe that form? She seemed not of this earth, but—

“Like some bright spirit from above,

Come down to cheer man's weary way awhile,”

Lightly were her limbs fashioned. Her bright flaxen hair—done up on clothes-pins over-night—hung in profuse ringlets over her neck, which, barring a very little tan, was faultless. And, although upon her cheek—

“Triumphed the russet brown,”

still 'twas beautiful. She was dressed in a light muslin-de-laine, with manifold flounces, and trimmed around the neck, carried in long points down front and back, nearly to the waist, with either a dark yellow or orange cord—'twas impossible to tell which, as the two colors resemble each other so nearly, by candle-light. A silver ring upon her fore-finger was the only jewelry she wore. And even that *brilliant* seemed useless, when she could boast of such a pair

of dazzling eyes—round, black and shining, as two large Seabrook whortleberries, wet with morning dew! Her father, a retired clam-merchant, and a jolly old codger, would sit and watch the sylph-like motions of his darling, as she floated along the lighted hall,—ever and anon winking his larboard weather-beaten eye—and occasionally exclaim, “she'll do!”

Next comes the fascinating Miss E. A. Q. R—e—z—e of N—w A—g—s. She looked lovelier than ever. The belle of the evening will have to look sharp at her laurels—for this lass of A—g—s has shaken them some. Moreover, I noticed a few jealous glances exchanged between these two stars. “When Greek meets Greek,” &c. *N' importe*, nothing very serious will grow out of it, I think. This beauty was habited in a very fine Lowell print—cut low in the neck, and—

“In longitude tho' sorely scanty!”

it gave her a decided coquettish and flaunty air—not a little heightened by the brilliant flashes of a mischievous pair of dark hazel eyes—

“Those orbs in liquid circles rolling!”

played the very deuce with the yeomanry present. A string of white glass beads encircled each of her beautiful wrists, in lieu of bracelets; and the belt of her frock—studded all over with white spangles—as it reflected the light of the four-and-twenty dipped candles, looked like the girth of Saturn:

“Where'er she moved, those beads and spangles bright
Shed on the scene it's bright and silvery light!”

Come we now to the two Misses F—ddes, of N—a. The elder rejoiced in the possession of a magnificent Dover calico, light pink, sprigged with pea green, and mounted with thirteen deep flounces; while the elder graced a fine looking Manchester chintz, of a light orange, trimmed very tastily with sky blue gimp. They made rather a *rich* appearance on the floor, and were very good dancers. By the way, I must not forget the navy agent's wife at Bellehache — that fair and wholesome looking lady; she was dressed in excellent taste, and more costly, as she could well afford it, than any of the assembly. A superb Portsmouth lawn over a light blue corded robe, made her look neat as a new dory; in fine, her *tout ensemble* from the pink turban to the nice white cotton stockings, kept up with green lastings, gave her an appearance of coming right out of the upper draw! She wore upon the second finger of her right hand a massive shell ring. Many more of the fair ones present were deserving of notice, but I'll e'en defer them to the next ball, where I shall hope to see them shine forth like Naiads upon Joppa Flats!

AN EPISTLE FROM BYFIELD TO THE BOSTON POST.

SIX miles from Newburyport lieth this parish — famous for raising *porkers*, plump and fat. Many years since, a certain parson who raised a goodly number of these unclean beasts, was putting the old Presbyterian doctrine down hard, to his congregation, one Sunday, when he and his hearers were disturbed by the appearance of the minister's servant, a colored boy, who ran in hot haste up the pulpit stairs, and whispered to the divine, who immediately cut short his discourse and hastened homewards. Nearly the whole congregation followed him — thinking, of course, that some dire event had happened; but what was their surprise, when they found the cause of the darkey's errand — for, lo, and behold! the female swine had just ushered into this world of trouble a half-score of little piggies, that were busily engaged in exploring the "milky way!"

Many is the good frolic that I have enjoyed in this settlement when an urchin; and many is the old landmark that minds me of times gone by:

"There's the mill that ground our yellow grain;
Pond and river still serenely flowing;
Cot, there nestling in the shaded lane; —
There's the gate on which I used to swing,
With Mary Jane!"

Just on the north-west borders of this parish, lieth the famous place for whortleberries, known by the eu-

phonious cognomen of Dogtown. The march of internal improvement has now nearly obliterated the strong peculiarities of the natives. Few of the old settlers remain — and they, with their manners and customs are fast fading away.

I well remember, as many a Newburyport boy can, the only two vehicles that once hailed from Dogtown — old Dame P.'s square-topped chaise, yclept by the urchins, the "mail," — and another carriage of the same fashion, owned in joint stock by a company of whortleberry and herb merchants. Early in the spring, these caravans would make their weekly visits to the port of Newbury — loaded down with all sorts of roots and herbs in all their varieties — literally covering the vehicles — with huge bunches of sweet-flag hanging pendant on the wooden axles. These, with the whortleberries in their season, was their staple. The natives were clannish, and went in for universal good amongst themselves. Even bribery could not reach them. They raised a very peculiar cucumber, not to be found elsewhere; it was early, very rich flavored, and of a singular, smooth exterior. Determined to keep the plant to themselves, as it brought them an excellent income, they resolved, each and every one, never to part with a single seed, upon any consideration. A certain grocer of Newburyport once determined that he would procure some of these seeds. Accordingly he commenced making a friend of old dame R., who occasionally came to his store to trade, by treating her to sundry potations of cordial, a plug

of tobacco, snuff, &c. One day, after the good dame had swallowed two gratuitous bumpers of peppermint cordial for a pain in her stomach, our grocer broached the subject: he told the good dame he knew it was against their rules to part with any of their cucumber seeds — but as he had a friend bound to New Orleans, who wished for some of them to take with him, he thought in that case that she could have no objection, as it could not interfere with their market. The dame promised the grocer the seeds, and got a quarter pound of snuff on the spot, with the promise of a bottle of cordial upon the delivery of the articles. Next week, true to her word, the dame came with the seeds — delivered them to the grocer — and took her *quid pro quo*.

The next season the grocer planted his rare seeds with a deal of care. Cucumber time came, but he had not even a vine. He dug up his seeds, but there they lay in the same state as when he planted them; they had not even *began* to germinate. When dame R. next called upon the disappointed grocer, he told her that her seeds would not grow.

"How d'ye know that?" replied she, "I thought you was going to send 'em off to Orleans."

"Yes, but I kept a few to try, and see how they were going to work," replied the grocer man.

"Didn't ye 'spose I knowed all that," returned the dame, as she took a bouncing pinch of yellow snuff; "you 'port merchants ain't nigh so sharp as you think you be. I know'd what you was up to, so I thought I'd fix ye. I *biled* them 'ere seeds!"

EPISTLE FROM SOUTH BERWICK, TO THE BOSTON POST.

THIS is one of the old settlements of York county, Me., very pleasantly situated on the Quamphegan river; hill and dale, meadows, fields, streamlets and waterfalls abounding in it. I have passed many a pleasant hour, in days gone by, strolling along the picturesque banks of the river, watching

"The waters as they run
Thro' woods and meads, in shade and sun."

About a mile from the "landing" is a natural curiosity called the "great works." It is a large chasm, some two or three hundred feet across the top, forty or fifty across the bottom, and about a hundred deep. The sides are made up of rocks and soil, trees and thick underwood lining it. A waterfall of fifty or sixty feet comes tumbling down a precipice of rocks at one end of this chasm to a very deep basin below. A nice cool place, as one might well imagine, to sit upon the rocks at the edge of this basin, and watch the waters as they rush, foam and sparkle down the precipice.

There are some relics of antiquity about here. A few miles down the river, on its banks, may be seen a score of old graves, with very rude, narrow headstones, the initials only of their tenants rudely chiselled thereon. Who or what they *were* I cannot find out

to a certainty. But they sleep in a quiet spot. The gently rolling waves of Quamphegan kissing the mossy banks of their still resting place. Here —

"Echo in her airy round,
O'er the river, rock and hill,
Cannot catch a single sound,
Save the clack of yonder mill."

The first settlers here were troubled some by the Indians. A blacksmith killed one with his hammer, so it is said; but I will give the story in Mr. Styles's own words. This old worthy flourished about forty years ago, and many a time has he related the affair to men who are living here now, and to whom I am indebted for the anecdote. He had a peculiar delivery caused by an excess of yellow snuff, which gave a piquancy to his narrative.

The parson and Mr. Styles met at a wedding one evening, and the divine asked our hero if his sire didn't slay an Indian once. "Yes, he did do that 'ere thig. You see the old mad was at work at his advil, ad jest as he ad put th' irod od it, ad took up his habber to poud, he heard a snap, ad lookig up, seed ad idjin's head pop up behide a log, jest cockig his gud; quicker 'an lightnig th' old mad flug his habber, and struck th' idjun od his head, killig him quick in a bobet!"

"Then he slew the son of the forest, did he, Mr. Styles?" queried the divine.

"Yes, yes, he killed hib deader thad thudderation!"
This Mr. Styles was in the habit of imbibing some,

and occasionally would come home with a "brick" in his hat. His wife, who was never of the sweetest temper, would flare up on such occasions awfully.

"Go out of the house," said the termigant to her lord and master one day, as he reeled in, as well as he could from the effects of divers potations of *New England*.

"Shadt do addy sich thig, Mrs. Styles," replied our hero.

"If you don't," roared forth the shrew, "I'll knock you through the side of the house, carrying away the posts, braces, clapboards, and all!"

"Ah, Mrs. Styles," returned the delinquent husband, "there's a law agid that, you'll fide, deped up-od it. Yes, there's a law agid a wife's knockig her husbad thro' the side of the house, carryig away posts, braces, clapboards, and all, deped on't!"

This village is getting modernized, more and more every year. It is fast losing its old landmarks. Some old citizen will die, then his estate will undergo a change. I remember some sixteen or eighteen years since, an old lady owned a delapidated house right in the midst of the factory company's land, where they intended to build a large block of boarding houses. They thought she asked too much for it. She thought otherwise. The agent told some one, in a jocose way, that he thought the company had better give the old lady as much gin as she wanted — she being very fond of the liquor — and that might hurry her out of the way, so they could get her land at a reasonable

price. It soon got to her ears, and she immediately sent word to the agent that she wished they would try it!

AN EPISTLE FROM MIDDLETON, N. H., TO THE BOSTON POST.

"Red light shone on the hill-tops, —
Red light danced in the trees."

ROBIN-RED-BREAST and Rob O' Lincoln poured forth their morning hymn in rich liquid notes — whilst a full choir of the different feathered songsters joined in full chorus — John Crow did the sub-bass. The golden sun now rolled up from behind Agamenticus in all its splendor — rich, round and yellow as one of Mrs. Colbath's premium cheeses! The dew-drops sparkled in the golden light!

Myself made one of a party on a Moose Mountain expedition. After riding a few miles over a rough-and-tumble road, embellished with sundry and divers gridiron bridges, we came to the base of the mountain where we hitched our horses and struck-out on foot. Verily, 'twas the roughest path I ever trod. From the base to the summit of this vast pile of earth and granite, is a good long mile. After ascending about fifty rods, we halted for the ladies to rest — while the

guide and myself went to the "gulley" to procure water. What a chasm! There is nothing among the White Mountains that will surpass this gulph in wildness. Gigantic rocks piled forth in dire confusion — recesses for wild cats and bears — overhanging cliffs — broken trees, over which we had to cross from point to point of the rugged granite. After crossing, walking and leaping awhile along our craggy, zig-zag path, we soon came to the deepest and remotest recess of this chasm, where, sheltered by a huge rock, from the crevices of this awful mountain,

"Waters, pure as diamond drops,
In a stone-basin fell!"

What a cooling and refreshing place after a long tramp, on a hot summer's day! After a short tarry at this wild place, we soon joined our friends, with a share of the cooling drink we had brought from the den, then resumed our march for the summit.

I never worked harder — 'twas almost impossible to scale those nearly perpendicular ledges. We had to take off our shoes to do anything at it. I broke both my suspenders, scratched the skin from my hands, and tore my trowsers! One of the ladies lost her bustle in the perilous ascent — the strings of her companion's linsey-woolsey gave way, and *that* garment went rolling down the steep precipice! Even the guide's knit "gallusses" "gi'n out!"

"Sich a gittin' up stairs you never did see!"

Finally, after a heap of "double toil and trouble" we

reached the awful summit of Moose Mountain. A magnificent panorama was spread out before us. Lake Winnipisseogee on the right, with its manifold islands, "laughed upon the sky!" A little to the left of that, lay in all its loveliness, the clear, calm waters of Merry-meeting Pond —

"Slumbering o'er sands of pearly whiteness!"

From that wild summit the host of granite hills of New Hampshire stood in array before us. 'Twas a splendid sight! A peculiar sensation is apt to seize me as I stand upon one of these mountains — with lungs inflated with pure oxygen, I look down upon the pigmy forms beneath my feet, and am ready to exclaim with the militia officer upon Mount Washington, "'Tention, the universe!"

It is a rocky country — albeit, there be some good farms round about this region; and they would be much better if the young people would stay at home and help to take care of them. It is almost impossible to get a girl to do house-work here — they had much rather go into a pestilent cotton mill, or make shirts in a village or city for six-pence a piece. At the tavern in Farmington, the town adjoining this, a young man tends the table and does the chamber-work, — and I hear he has had a good offer to serve in the capacity of "wet nurse!"

O, ye wayward daughters of the Granite State! go back to your native hills — cheer up your lone fathers

and mothers, and regard your health — enliven the rough country by your sweet presence, and

“Make her barren rocks and her bleak
Mountains smile!”

EPISTLE FROM NEWBURYPORT TO THE BOSTON POST.

INEXHAUSTIBLE was the widow's pot of oil, mentioned in the holy writ, and likewise inexhaustible seemeth the anecdotes of eccentric characters, stored up in this old settlement.

Among all these characters, none have figured so conspicuously, and no one has had so little justice done him as Timothy Dexter. In a letter to the Post last summer, I gave a sketch of a few of his benevolent deeds, which had heretofore been hid under a bushel; and I have raked up a few more, which shall be rescued from oblivion.

Timothy Dexter was anything but a fool. Everything he took hold of worked well; not by luck, as some folks have said, but by most excellent judgment. He bought up the state notes of Massachusetts, when they were at the lowest ebb, and gave as his reasons for doing so, that if the state ever came up and flour-

ished, she of course would redeem her paper; if, on the contrary, she went down, why, he and the people and his property would all go to the devil together! Of course, the old Bay State came right side up, and Dexter reaped a golden harvest.

Dexter once had a challenge sent him to fight a duel; with the judgment of a philosopher, he enquired if his antagonist was worth as much property as himself, as it would not be a fair thing for him to fight at nothing — to “pit” a fortune against a beggar!

If the old settlement had been blessed with a few more as generous and public spirited men as Dexter, it might have been something, and kept its head above water. He did not send his money to Italy for statutory chiselled by a foreign artist, but he employed a young townsman, just beginning life, to carve images of our best public men from native wood, to adorn his republican mansion. Furthermore, he offered to build a splendid hall and give it to this town, provided they would christen it “Dexter Hall.” But the stiff-necked and straight-waistcoated old puritans, in the plenitude of their grace and profound wisdom, spurned his generous offer with a holy horror, because it came from Dexter, the eccentric Timothy, who did not wear leather breeches and belong to a Presbyterian church. O, those self-righteous old fools! They had heads — and so had Dexter's images.

O, Timothy! thy weaknesses have been blazoned forth to the world, whilst thy good and benevolent actions have been written in the sands, and thy manifold

charities nearly forgotten. But, while I live, I'll take every opportunity to do thee justice, and strive to

"Weed the nettles from thy grave!"

Billy Watkins was a queer genius. He flourished about the same time as Dexter. He lived in Dead-man's Lane, as he facetiously termed the quiet street at the lower end of the town where he was domiciled.

Billy offered to give a vane to be put upon the spire of Mr. Giles's church, provided they would let him get one up to suit his own fancy. His design was, to have the figure of a saint in the centre, for the spindle to run through; perched upon the tip of the small end of the vane was to be an angel, facing the saint with outstretched arms, ready to receive and succour the saint, ere the devil, which was to occupy the other extremity of the vane, could beat up to windward!

Billy's journal of the weather was a rich document. Among the many queer entries in which it abounded, was his notice of twenty-eight consecutive days of north-east wind—at the foot of the page, he had written in a bold round hand—ONE ETERNAL NORTH-EASTER!

I have picked up another anecdote about Charley G., the mad wag who swapped the water for liquor at Peter Morse's—which story you will recollect I did up for the Post last winter. Charley took a field to plant at halves. At harvest time, the owner came for his share of the produce, but the wicked wag told him very coolly that he was sorry there was none for him,

as the land did not yield but half a crop, and of course the cultivator was entitled to the first chance!

EPISTLE FROM NEWBURYPORT TO THE BOSTON POST.

HOW you managed to get through the hot weather of this week in Boston, I know not,—but we have had a seige of it here, I assure you. Old Sol reigned supreme; like unto one of Williston's double-gilt buttons, he shone forth in all his brightness! The sky resembled one immense sheet of English yellow metal! Even the moon looked as if she had been on a spree—her face bearing the similitude to the back of a pinchbeck watch—or like the renowned phiz of Sir John Falstaff after he had swallowed his sixteenth glass of sack! W-h-e-w! those were melting times. The ladies threw off their straight-bodied dresses—and *en dishabelle* was the order of the day. Fish, oysters and clams did *not* improve by age—and fresh water eels from up country were at discount. Old cheese was *lively*, and strong butter was dull. Dolly Small took in her sign of "baked beans and sassingers," and replaced it with "spruce and ginger beer." "Roast pork—fat!" ceased to be called for at the resto-

rants — and sandwiches were in good demand. The very grease was dried up from the axles of the carriages, and the dry wheels, like unto the old ghosts we read of, did

“ Squeak and gibber in the dusty streets ! ”

Mint-juleps were at premium — and sherry cobblers were swallowed by teetotallers and anti-teetotallers — yea, verily, even the very temperance men did call for punch !

As for myself, I took up my line of march for the environs, among

“ The lone paths neath’ cooling shadows ; ”

and from thence to Plum Island —

“ Where old ocean, wildly dashing,
Pours his broad flood upon the shore ! ”

where, finally, I made myself tolerably comfortable over one of my friend Thompson’s “ juleps.”

But thanks for this rainy day, which has cooled off this mighty heat, so that I can once more sit down comfortable and “ take my pen in hand to let you know,” &c.

To-morrow I take a trip over to New Algiers. You will recollect I sent you an anecdote, last summer, with a description of their vernacular. Queer place that. The natives are all engaged in the fishing-trade, and do business upon the community system. As soon as the fishing season is over, and their piscatory spoils disposed of for cash — these men form a circle,

and their chief leader stands in the middle thereof with the “ smiling chinking heap,” which he deals out in this wise : — the dollars are dealed as many times as they will go round, — then the halves — the quarters next, followed up by the small change and coppers, — the odd pieces left, are put into the public treasury for improving the settlement. A public well was built last year with the overplus ; and this year, if they have good luck, a curb, sweep, bucket and trough will be added thereunto.

The good wives of these honest fishermen help their lords and masters by picking berries, which the place aboundeth in, and bringing them to this town to sell. Every fall, immediately after the fishing season, a series of dancing levees come off at the different houses there. It is amusing to be present at a store here when these ladies come to make their fall purchases. One lady, last fall, came into a certain store to purchase her varieties, commencing with an enquiry for some “ ninepenny-calico-for-ten-c-e-n-t-s ! ” and “ how many-yards-will-it-take-to-make-a-switch-tail-geuawn ! ” “ What’s that ? ” queried the vender. “ Why,” resumed the damsel, “ a geuawn with f-l-a-u-w-n-c-e-s ! ” “ And Mr. Daven-p-o-r-t,” continued the fair purchaser, “ I-wants-to-buy-some-bugle-m-u-t.” “ Bergamot, Miss Souter,” replied the trader. “ Yes-yes-that’s-it,” chimed in the fair Algerine — “ Bugle-m-o-t-e — you know — the-stuff-to-make-the-hair-smell-like-a-jilly-f-l-e-a-u-w-e-r ! ”

“ And-Mister-Daven-p-o-r-t,” added the pride of

Algiers — "I-wants-some-of-that-ere-s-h-i-f-ting—sich-as-Phebe-Deauw-had — not-sich-as-you-sold-me-last-f-a-l-l,—for-that-'ere-was-so-slimsy-it-stuck-to-my-back-like-a-bean-l-e-a-f!"

THE CONFESSION.

A CLOUD seemed to pass suddenly over the features of Maria. The lustre forsook her dark eyes. Her spirit seemed troubled.

"Triumphs the lily now, on that young cheek
Where bloomed the rose."

Ten times that evening did Edward importune her to acquaint him with the cause of her sadness, but not a word escaped her fair lips. Sadly and silently she sat; —

"And now and then a sigh she stole,
And tears began to flow."

"Breathes there a wretch" so base as to injure you — my dearest — by word or action? Tell me — and by thine heart, as pure as heaven! I swear, never to rest till I have redressed thy wrongs! Is any awful mystery locked up in that bosom, that I must not know? Tell me the secret, and, by the ringlets of thy hair! I will swear never to reveal it, though the most

infernal torments rack me! Pour out thy soul — tell thine own Edward, *what lies heavy in thy breast?*

She blushed — she placed her fair hands across her snowy bosom — looked languidly into her lover's face, and softly — "like the last breathings of an expiring saint" — she thus confessed: "'Tis them 'ere darned green apples, Ned!"

DISAPPOINTMENT AND TEARS.

DURING the years 1813–15, a Nantucket fisherman, finding himself thrown out of his employment in consequence of the embargo, and being an enterprising man, started for Ohio, cleared a piece of wild land — built a log house, and soon got his little farm in quite a thriving condition. This being done, he returned to Nantucket for his family, and told his wife he had purchased a fine country seat, and described it with all the enthusiasm of a romantic narrator. His wife was anxious to see the land of promise — they lost no time in packing up their goods, which were put in a covered wagon drawn by a favorite black mare, which served the family for many years,

and proceeded on their journey. When they got into the state of Ohio, every handsome house they saw, the good lady would earnestly enquire, "is that the house?" "Oh no," said the man, "ours is far superior to any we have yet passed." After riding through the woods for several miles, he halted before his own log cabin, and told his wife and children to alight and walk in. "What! is this the house?" she exclaimed in surprise. On being told it was, she burst into tears, — the children, too, began to weep, — and, said the fisherman, "By G— the old mare cried too!"

THE CONSUMMATION.

IT was twilight. Seated at the door of a moss-covered cottage, was the pride of the village — lovely Phœbe. Her finely moulded form — her exquisite and voluptuous bust — her classic and beautifully chiselled features — her sweet lips — teeth of pearly whiteness — and such eyes! two drops of liquid azure set in snow! all combined — 'twas enough to melt the very soul of an anchorite!

Beside this angel, knelt a youth, whose cheek, pale as ashes, told the tale — he was in love!

"Tell me, said he, in trembling accents, "tell me this night my fate. Keep me in agony no longer. Tell me what sacrifice I shall undergo for you — you, my soul's idol! Command me to perform a pilgrimage around this earth on burning coals, and it shall be done. Anything — anything — but cast me not off. Plant a dagger in my heart, but keep me in suspense no longer! Say, lovely Phœbe — will you — *will you be mine?*"

He trembled — his heart throbbed — she saw he was ready to swoon — a crimson flush mantled her cheek —

"Like the rich sunset 'neath Italia's sky!"

She took his hand in her tiny fingers — put her smiling lips to his ear, and whispered — "Obed! *I shan't be nothin' else!*"

YE MAN WITH YE CARPET-BAGGE:

YE CONTENTS THEREOF BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

DAN PHŒBUS had reined up his steeds, and given them their supper of chop-feed and good fresh hay. Sweet Cynthia, with the very smallest morsel of rouge upon her lovely cheek, rose from her ocean bed, nice and fresh as a ball of new June butter, — lighting up the sand hills of Plum Island — "tipping the rough outlines of "Black-Rocks" with her

soft and mellow light—casting a broad stream of liquid brightness around the “breakwater,” and sil-
vering the manifold window-panes at the settlement of
Joppa. Now came forth Hesperus, “neat, trimly
dressed,” and the whole constellation winked, blinked
and twinkled “blythe and gay.”

'Twas at this interesting hour that a middle sized,
pale, and rather elderly gentleman, with a slight
blush upon his nose, clad in a suit of rusty black,
alighted from the cars at the Newburyport station,
from a western tour, and taking up his inseparable
companion—the well-worn travelling bag, trudged
onward to the principal public house. Upon reaching
the hotel, our veteran laid his carpet-bag gingerly
down on the steps of the piazza, and went straightway
into the house in order to negotiate for a short tarry
there. But O, unfortunate man! Returning—lo, and
behold! the carpet-bag was not. A young man, who
sat smoking a “regalia,” told this man of *travail* that
the driver of the Dogtown mail coach had just driven
off, and as the mail-bag lay near by, he probably took
the carpet-bag in lieu of it. More in sorrow than in
anger did the wanderer receive this sad intelligence,
and setting his face Dogtownwards, trudged unwearily
onward.

At the upper end of the town, our poor wight en-
countered the eccentric teamster,—“Tell me,” quoth
he, “thou man clad in a smock-frock,—tell me, and
direct my steps to Dogtown.” George, with finger
to the side of his proboscis, told his interrogator very

gravely that Pearson's mills lay over *there*, pointing
south-westerly. Our traveller then bent his steps in
the direction of “over *there*,” and by great good luck
chanced to reach the Dogtown post office at ten p. m.,
where he found the post mistress busily engaged in as-
sorting the contents of his truant carpet-bag. Had it
been a post *master*, the world would still have remain-
ed in ignorance of the contents of that mysterious bag;
but thanks to the curiosity of this daughter of Eve, I
am enabled to lay the inventory of the long-hidden
mysteries before a curious public:—

ITEMS.

One shirt without collar or bosom.
Two collars and bosoms.
One pair of shoes—somewhat worn.
One pair of blue yarn stockings.
One pair of drawers and one flannel shirt.
Shaving apparatus, including pocket looking glass.
Hair, tooth and shoe brushes, and box of paste blacking.
A small piece of yellow soap.
Needle, thread, sewing-silk, thimble, and bit of bees'-wax.
Cotton night cap with border.
Ball of yarn and darning-needle.
One dozen shirt-buttons.
Roll of parchment filled out in the Sanscrit.
A slice of old cheese.
Roll of M.SS. in Latin and Hebrew.
A pocket Bible in Greek.
One fine-tooth ivory comb.
A small quantity of gingerbread.
Cotton Mather's Magnalia, in two vols. octavo.
Pilgrim's Progress.
Sternhold and Hopkins's collection of Psalms and Hymns.
Half of a baker's roll.

Half quire of foolscap, two quill pens, and vial of black ink.

Baxter's Call.

A poor man's plaster.

Small lot of barley candy.

A temperance tract.

And last, though not least — would it have been believed — rolled up in a copy of the Puritan, was found a bottle of "Otard!"

The articles were immediately replaced, an apology offered by the post mistress for overhauling this queer mail, and granted by the persecuted possessor. The lady then invited our wanderer to spend the night at her domicil, and in the words of Bunyan, "The Pilgrim they laid in an upper chamber, whose windows opened towards the sun-rising; the name of the chamber was peace; where he slept till break of day, and then he awoke and sang."

A RESPONSE.

I HAD been reading very late one evening, about the "spirit rappers," who have set the wonder-struck wonderers agog, of late, as well as some others. Suddenly, an indescribable sensation of drowsiness stole over me, and I was soon lost in the misty mazes of Morpheus. I dreamed that I was sitting in "ye Morss howse," at Newburyport, the first place of rendezvous for "ye unseen spirits" and witches in New England. Save the monotonous clicking of the old eight-day clock that stood in one corner of the room, and the occasional snap of the last remnant of a backlog, all was hush.

Well, thought I, things have changed here somewhat since Cotton Mather's day; everything in this room — once the scene of all manner of strange pranks most strangely played — is now as quiet as the quietest body might wish. Ah! those were rare times, when old Gaffer Morss's "inke horne did fly about ye roome, lyke as if itt was possessed with ye dyvel," and when "ye potte did hoppe and dance and skippe around ye roome," all to their great amazement! But those days of superstition are passed and gone, and witchcraft has gone down to the grave, with the old fools who believed in it. At that moment, I heard one — two — three, distinct raps upon the old oaken table

beside me, and immediately the antique candlestick thereon did twirl about with the velocity of a top, the flame of the twenty-four-to-the-pound dipped candle therein, burning with a most brilliant ultramarine tint. One loud rap, the candlestick ceased its gyrations, the flame of the tallow luminary "paled its fire," and all again was still. Another distinct rap—like the Gaelic chieftain, I sprang upon my feet, and exclaimed, "Thy name and purpose?" Rap, rap again. By the aid of the alphabet I learned that 'twas the spirit of Lord Timothy Dexter.

He had come to tender me his thanks for vindicating his character as I had done—in reminding the cold, heartless, self-righteous, narrow-minded, ungrateful old hunkers of his manifold charities, and his magnanimous public spirit, when on earth in the flesh. Rest in peace, generous spirit, I replied—so long as this town existeth, so long will the product of that fund thou didst bequeath the poor and needy, who have kept themselves from the alms-house, cheer and gladden the heart of many a poor widow, who shall, from her grateful heart, as she partaketh of thy bounty, send up thanks to thy good and kindly spirit!

Rap, again; it was Billy Watkins's spirit; he had just called to pay me his compliments. A bouncing rap! Parson Milton," was the response: "and," replied the spirit of the old parson, "I don't thank you for telling so many anecdotes about me; d'ye hear!"

Rap, rap, rap, rap—thicker and faster—some I could recognize, others I could not make out distinct-

ly; but many, I knew, were spirits of the olden school, who whilom did flourish in the flesh in this good old town, that had come to greet me. A short pause now ensued; but in a few moments—rap! bang!! whang!!! sounded upon the floor of the kitchen, "so loud and dread!" that it seemed to shake the old building from sill to ridgepole. With no little trepidation, I demanded what spirit had now come, that

"Roared so loud and thundered in the index!"

With reverence did I bow mine head, even unto the floor, and hold in my breath, when this transcendent spirit responded—"ANDREW JACKSON!" "And what is your bidding?" I queried of the old sage, warrior and patriot. By Jove's imperial thunder-bolts! such loud responses! when the General rapped or rather thundered out—"THE UNION! by the Eternal! don't split it!"

SPIRIT CHIROGRAPHY.

In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace : and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.—*Daniel chap. v., verse 5.*

A NEW marvel comes up, and we slow believers have just begun, after investigating it thoroughly in all its parts, phases and ramifications, to give it the slightest credit, when lo ! like unto the plant in the vision of Pescara, it has grown to a hundred times its original size, making a corresponding demand upon our slow growing faith. So with the spirit rappings.

According to Mr. Fernald and some other disciples to the faith, this spiritual wonderment has now nearly, if not fully, reached its climax ; for they tell us that the spirits now write upon tissue paper, placed up against the under part of the table ! That announcement staggered what little faith I had been months in collecting ; which, altogether, might have been stowed away, close and safe in the remotest corner of the shell of a mustard seed. But now the thing has been tested—proved to a demonstration—so, skeptics, avaunt ! and dark infidelity, turn pale !

A *soiree* came off at the hotel of Mrs. Dorothy Small at "Guinea," on Monday evening last. During a pause in the dancing, the "minstrel," by request, *did up* "Old Uncle Ned." He had just got well into

this exquisite melody, when an accompaniment of "knockings" was distinctly heard to proceed from under the table. The whole company were amazed beyond measure, and so affrighted that "the joints of their loins were loosed, their knees smote one against the other," and they stood speechless, with

"Extending eye-balls rolling in white !"

Peter Tusang was the first to break silence. This *gemman* told the company that "he had had de pleasure to be present at seberal ob de sperit rappings, mong de fus cullered cirkels in Bosting ; and de comp'ny need n't neber be 'feared ob noffin,' for if dey will jes' keep still, he will endebber to find out who de sperit be, — else to 'stop-dat knockin' altogedder, intirely !'" Mr. Tusang then advanced towards the table from whence proceeded the rappings, pulled up his shirt collar, run his fingers through his wool, then, throwing the whole weight of his body upon his right leg—his left a little advanced, his right arm a trifle extended, with the hand open, the left arm akimbo, and with his woolly "cocoa-nut" a little a-jaunt—he, with the dignity of a commanding chief, demanded, "what sperit 'twas dat had come to visit this sembly, makin' de ladies and gemmen shake in dere petticoats an' trowserloons, like jujube paste or Guaba jellies, an' dere eyes to spand bigger dan Shanghai hens' eggs ?"

[Knock ! knock !] Peter called over the alphabet from A to Z, but no responses came. "Rudder guess

you can't do nuffin wid dat ere game," exclaimed one of the company; "p'raps de sperit nebber knowed him's letters." "De 'telligent sperits, ladies and gemmen," continued Mr. Tusang, "had on'y jes one way to tell us who dey am, till tudder day, I heerd as how dat dey can write; but if dis sperit can't do either, den what am we to do? dat am de question now 'fore dis 'sembly." "I'se got it!" shouted the "minstrel;" "let dis 'ere sperit get anodder sperit dat *can* write to help it." Mr. Tusang then called for a sheet of tissue paper; but even a scrap of common white paper was not to be found in the house; the very fly-leaves from the only volume in the domicil, "music for the violin," were gone. Finally, as the last resort, a shingle was produced, and clapped underneath and up against the table. A succession of raps followed; the knockings ceased; the shingle was removed, and laid upon the table; when, to the astonishment of the ebony crowd, chalked upon its face in bold characters, stood revealed —

his
UNCLE X NED!
mark

MYSTERIOUS TWADDLE.

"Augurs and soothsayers, astrologers,
Diviners, and interpreters of dreams,
I ne'er consult, and heartily despise:
Vain their pretence to more than human skill;
For gain, imaginary schemes they draw;
Wand'ers themselves, they guide another's steps,
And for poor sixpence promise countless wealth;
Let them, if they expect to be believed,
Deduct the sixpence, and bestow the rest." — ENNIUS.

NO matter how ridiculous the hobby that is brought out, there can be found plenty of riders, ready to stride the nag, gallop and ride away, leaving common sense and reason to "tottle" a-foot, as best they can.

Some of our transcendant transcendental wiseacres, with their big bump of marvellousness, swollen almost to the capacity of a premium pumpkin, are congratulating themselves that they have reached the climax of wonders now in the nineteenth century—fairly outstripping our forefathers, and the ancients before them, in all that is marvellous. Fools! Just let them read only as far as the Salem witchcraft, of the doings, mystifications, wonderments, twistified twistifications,

"Quips and cranks and wanton wiles,"

and all the divers and manifold ramifications of the bewitched and bewizarded ones of those days that

tried men's souls — aye, and bodies, too — then compare them with "these weak piping times," and they must exclaim — "O, New England! thou hast lost the breed of noble witches!"

Let us compare feats — a few of them. The spirits now, *it is said*, will remove a table a few inches. Pooh! that's nothing. Why, I have it, myself, from living witnesses, good men and true, that at the house of one Deacon Spafford, at Rowley, Mass., a big meal-chest did, without any human aid whatsoever, traverse, sundry times, the garret floor, from one end thereof to the other, and with six men upon it! Think of that, ye modern goblins, and show forth no more your weak and puny powers!

Rap upon the table, forsooth! Wasn't there a shower of "bricks, stickes and stones" rattled against the windows of "ye old Morss howse," at Newbury — that Cotton Mather tells us of in his truthful (?) *Magnolia*? Yes, even the very hog was affected, for he walked into the house of his own accord, and moreover, strange to say, was very willing to go out! The spinning wheel, there, was up-tipped — goodman Morss's awl flew up the chimney, and anon would descend again, all by some unseen power. And a string of sausages that hung in the chimney-corner went up the chimney, flying through the air — perhaps for a feast to these missionaries of "ye dyvil!"

After very many solicitations, I, a short time since, went to hear the "mysterious rappings." It was at a certain domicile at the "South end," where spirits do

nightly congregate. An oblong table stood in the centre of the floor, and a round dozen of us, men and women, were seated around it, waiting in breathless silence for the ghosts of the departed to "squeak and gibber!" The conductor of the farce told us, very gravely, that we must keep our minds in spiritual trim, and aloof from things of earth, as much as possible; those obeying these rules the most strictly, would have the best responses. Thereupon, two-thirds of the visages of this magic circle elongated to the longitudes of so many loins of veal! I cannot tell what the others of this wonder-seeking company were thinking of, but my mind flew from one thing to another, on any but *spiritual* themes. At first, I gazed upon the good-looking, buxom little witch — the *medium* —

"And fell to such perusal of her face,
As I would draw it."

Then upon the countenances in general, round about the table — one, I was sure was jolly — two were thinking of anything but spiritual affairs — most, I know, were serious — and one poor wight appeared

"Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors!"

The solemn and sable conclave of the Belknap street colored circle of rappers now flashed across my mind; I was forced to bite my tongue nearly through to avoid a giggle. Lastly, the ridiculously sober ap-

pearance of *us* seated in "awful state" in that mock solemnity, made me feel as if I would gladly sell myself for a crossed sixpence. Such was the state of *my* mind—the only *spirituality* about my brain, was the effect of a bouncing glass of old Madeira, which I had the precaution to take before I went there—to prevent any of the *spirituals* striking at my stomach!

'Twas now time to commence. Being nearest the *medium*, I was told to begin. "If there be any thing here in the shape or condition of a spirit, it will oblige me by manifesting itself," I exclaimed, at the same time trying to suppress a smile. No response. The next "caller" was an old stager, the spirits always came at *his* bidding. But, alas! "disappointment lurks in many a prize," *he* couldn't fetch 'em. Nor would they respond to the next, nor the next;—the whole company were disappointed.

"There is some person or persons here that is or are repulsive to the spirits—I'll put the *medium* in a trance, and thereby find out the Jonah," exclaimed the director. "And I'll keep nothing back," returned the fair *medium*.

A few passes from the potent hands of the master of ceremonies, and the damsel "went off like a lamb," into the spirit world—*perhaps*.

She told us that she saw myriads of spirits,

"Like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start!"

ready and willing to respond to each and all of the company present, save *one*. "And who might that

be?" I queried of the maiden. "I'd rather not tell,—you'll see anon," she replied. "But you were to keep nothing back," I urged. "I can't tell *that*," she replied, maintaining her point.


"The time waxeth late," said the conductor—"and now we'll go on again; you will commence, sir," addressing himself to me. Obeying the orders, I brought my fist down upon the imitation of rosewood, with a pretty sound thump, and thus tartly spoke out: "If there be *any* spirits present—good or evil—that have any idea of responding to me, they will please do it very sudden, as this will be their last chance!" Whereupon one of the circle, a lady, started up, horror-struck,—and glancing at me a withering look, told me, snappishly, that she guessed I'd find out that the spirits would not be dictated by me! "Ah, well o' day!" said I, "and perhaps that's *your* opinion, madam; but just let me tell you that it is, and always was, against my nature and practice to coax any one in the flesh—and I certainly shan't do it to spirits, you may be assured. I requested them politely, at first, to respond, but they heeded not; now I'll challenge them, and do no other way, you see if I don't bring 'em!" The disaffected lady then retired to another part of the room, and left me to do things as I pleased, without further catechising or lecturing.

I gave another bouncing thump, and told the spirits, *i. e.*, if there were any, which I very much doubted, that I was determined not to sit there and be fooled by them any longer, and that this was their *very last*

chance!—The disaffected lady trembled.—In a moment — [rap, rap,] was distinctly heard to come from under the table. “There!” exclaimed I, exultingly, to the affrighted woman, “didn’t I raise ’em?” “Ah, but perhaps it is an evil spirit,” returned the credulous one. “We’ll see anon,” I replied. A few knocks to my question, told me it was the spirit of my dead-and-gone grandma’am. “Ask her if she is happy,” suggested the conjurer. “*That* would be a foolish question,” said I, “why, my grandma’am was one of the salt of the earth, sir; I’d rather ask her something that I don’t already know.”

But the spirit had other “business and desires” upon its hands, it appeared,—for after rapping out to me that she could n’t stay to say anything that night, but to my question when and where, promised she would meet me at the same place again, after the lapse of six days, grandma’am’s sprite flew off in a twinkling, leaving the course clear for the rest of the company — and I took my departure for home, after fooling away two hours and a half, and lightening my pocket of one shekel of silver.

A LENIENT DAMSEL.

 ONE summer I visited a friend in the northern part of New Hampshire; he was a good, pious man of the free-will persuasion—I always liked those people—his family, too, all rejoiced in the faith, especially the daughter, a buxom girl, inside of twenty. She wished to visit a relative, and I cordially invited her to go with me in my buggy wagon.

It was a powerful warm day—the sun poured down upon us his double-distilled essence of Promethean caloric, nearly “dissolving us into dew,” or something more limpid. Under such a sun and circumstances, of course, the sooner we got to our stopping place the better;—but we can’t always have things exactly as we’d like them, so we must e’en lose our way, and ride some three or four miles more than we should. At length we got right, and were congratulating ourselves that we were in a fair way to be at our journey’s end shortly,—frail hope — alas! how uncertain, fragile and brittle are our joys, things in general and carriage fixings in particular, here below, and especially up in New Hampshire! for in descending an awful steep hill—smack! went our off breeching hook, “short as a pipe-stem,” letting the carriage down upon the haunches of the animal, which operation the *critter* did n’t seem to relish any more than did myself.

Here's a muss, sure enough, I exclaimed, as I waited upon the lady out of the wagon, it's a good bit of space now to the foot of the hill, and a good mile, Quaker measure, to the tavern and blacksmith's. The sun poured down its very best triple heat, and the perspiration rolled down my countenance like miniature Niagaras. "Our armies swore terribly in Flanders," and it might be, I did *something* in that way, on this occasion. After considerable trouble, leading the animal, zigzag, we soon reached the foot of the hill — our greatest difficulty being then over, we had little or no detention, and were soon at the tavern. I gave the team up to the ostler, with orders to get a blacksmith to repair damages, then waited upon the lady into the house. By great good luck, the boniface chanced to have the materials for punch — I soon had one — fixed right — and did n't it go in the right place? That punch!

"Rich, more sweet than Juno's milk!"

It would surely have made, under these circumstances, a teetotaller forswear his pledge! Of course, with such a streak of luck — finding manna in the wilderness, I was quite pacified — yes, actually happy, for

"Sweet is pleasure after pain!"

And if it was not "lovely Thais sate beside me," the damsel was comely and fair to look upon, at least.

As soon as I had got pretty well soothed down, I told the maiden, that, perhaps I had given her offence

in my outburst of passion, when I "unpacked my heart with words," not wholly sacred, and that I hoped and trusted she would excuse me; as I was not in the habit of doing thus, especially in the presence of a lady.

I saw by her benign countenance, that the good creature, as is commonly the case with the gentler sex, did look with mercy's eyes upon my transgression; for, with the sweetest expression and the sugariest tone imaginable, she told me that she did n't approve of such speech and expressions, in general, of course,—howbeit, in this provoking case, she thought that my conduct was, not only pardonable, but perfectly justifiable.

A CLEAN SWEEP.

GAMBLING has a tendency to corrupt any good mind, no matter how little soever it may be indulged in. It is a selfish, sordid excitement—not an amusement, turn it and look at it how you will.

I shall never forget a story that my good old aunt once told me, when I was a child, about a gang of gamblers, who were found, one Sunday, snugly ensconced, down a dry vat of a rum distillery, playing at cards for money! From that day to this, a pack of these gamblers' tools, always, to me, seems to savor of New England rum. But to my tale.

A few months since, a certain deacon of Amesbury, who owned a mill, happening to be passing near it, one Sunday, overheard voices, which proceeded from the race-way; he walked cautiously closer, and peeping into the abyss, saw a round dozen of youngsters, seated close to the great wheel, at a game of cards, with a pile of coin and a jug in their midst. The deacon crept gingerly into the mill, and looking down from out of the window over the wheel, shouted, "Clear the race-way, boys! the gate is coming up!" If a shell had been dropped in the midst of this squad, with a burning fusee upon its vent, they could not have dispersed more suddenly—they scattered like a flock of frightened sheep, leaving their imple-

ments, the money and their jug of grog, behind. The deacon, as soon as he saw the heels of the last delinquent upon the embankment, clear of danger, hoisted the gate, when a flood of the pent-up waters, gushed, rushed, roared and tumbled adown the sluice—the mighty wheel turned, creaking and thundering upon its big axle—a deluge of the rushing tide sped through the race-way, and in a single moment, the "primers" of Satan, the jug and the coin, were on their journey towards the broad Atlantic, never to return, of course!

"Thus fare all these attributes of Beelzebub!" exclaimed the good miller, with a smile of satisfaction, as he shut down the gate,—and, Amen! most heartily respondeth CYMON!

SPICING IT HIGH AND DOING IT BROWN.

NO matter whether it was at the east, west, north or south part of this city, where Daddy H. dealt out groceries and grog, so long as he did it—accommodating his customers with common or uncommonly choice spirits, as it best suited their tastes, purses, or fancy, and increasing his stock of dimes thereby. Daddy H. was an epicure in liquors, and as good wine needs no bush, so, thought he, pure cognac, St. Croix, and Hollands requireth not the aid of condiments to make it go down, albeit he kept the different essences for flavoring his inferior liquors.

One day, two wags, who knew the man, called upon this dealer in wet and moist goods, and asked for two glasses of the best cognac. A bottle of the *pure* was set before them, with tumblers and a pitcher of water. After pouring out their liquor and tempering the ardor thereof with the cool Cochituate, the imbibers called for sugar—it was produced, but with a look from the epicurean dispenser of drinks, as if he thought that his customers were not of the most refined taste, touching spirits. “A little *Stoughton* now, if you please,” urged one of the party; “and I’ll have the same,” chimed in his companion. It was an awful look that the grocer gave, as he added the elixir to the—in his opinion, already spoiled liquor. He bit his

lip, and muttered to himself, “What shocking bad taste some folks do have!” “Now, sir,” exclaimed one of the cruel customers, as he sipped a little of the compound, “some peppermint, if you please—that’ll fix it about right, I think.” Daddy H. snatched up the bottle of warming essence—jerked a goodly portion of the Menthean extract into the tumblers—then, with a most malicious flash from his eyes, snapped out, “There, by thunder, I ’spose you ’ll want me to spit in ’t, next!”

A BAIT.

SAMMY HIGGINS was wont to visit the widow Muggins at sundry times and oft—albeit, he was slow at making a point. The widow was right glad to receive the man Sammy, but nevertheless was sorely displeased at his tardiness in making known his desires.


Now the man Sammy wot not of the widow’s anxieties, nor did he set his whole heart upon the woman, but he loved right well to sit and smoke his pipe beside the window.

One evening, after a long absence, Sammy hied to the widow’s whereabouts; but as he crossed the

threshold of her domicile he was amazed beyond measure, for lo, and behold! the odor of burnt tobacco, even the Virginia plant, saluted his nostrils; whereupon, the man Sammy did question the widow Muggins touching the fumes of the weed which did fill her apartment. Then did the cunning woman open her mouth, and thus make speech: "I was weary, my love, in waiting for thy sweet company, with which whilom thou wert wont to bless me withal; so anon, in order to remind me of thyself, I didst procure the fragrant weed, and, laying it straightway upon the coals, it did forthwith send out its sweet-smelling savor to gladden my heart, teaching me to think of thee!"

As soon as the widow had spoken these words, Sammy Huggins did fly into the widow Muggins's open and willing arms; he did forthwith make an avowal which was most graciously received, and, ere the month was wasted, they twain, by the aid of Parson Hummins, were made one flesh.

A CLIMAX.

 PARTY of gentlemen were journeying towards certain celebrated sulphur springs in Virginia, at which two rival houses were located some little distance from each other. The landlord of one of these houses chanced to be in the coach with this party, and he tried his best to persuade the company to put up at his hotel. After naming the abundant facilities, advantages, comforts and luxuries his domicile possessed over that of his rival, he was asked by one of the company if there was any very particular objection to be urged against the other house, and if so, what was the first and most important.

"Obj-e-c-t-i-o-n-s!" drawled forth our Boniface, sneeringly; "Objections! why, gentlemen, the air about them 'ere premises is chuck-full o' brimstone — you can scarce catch your breath — 'tis enough to stifle you; then the water they use to cook with is full on't — you can taste the sulphur in everything — yes, you can smell brimstone all around and all over the house — up stairs, down stairs, in the parlor, dining-room, sitting room, and in your sleeping room, — and, by thunder! sirs, when your bill is presented I rather guess then you 'll begin to smell ——!"

SCRAPS FROM MY SKETCH BOOK.

A DESCRIPTION of the scenery among the White Mountains — the Notch in particular — is altogether out of the power of my feeble pen. The heaven-kissing mountains, the cloud-capped hills, the stupendous precipices, the craggy cliffs, the mighty forest, the silver cascade, the gushing Saco, the winding brook, the purling rivulet — I leave for some one mightier than myself to describe; and I will tell you my stage-coach adventure:—

Going from Conway to Dover, N. H., my fellow-passengers in the stage consisted of a superannuated old man, whose phiz resembled the one which peeped

“’Tween Priam’s curtains at the dead of night,”

a single lady on the winter side of fifty, who looked like one of the Weird Sisters in Macbeth, and a buxom girl of sixteen who sat opposite me. While the old gentleman amused himself by chewing his tobacco in silence, and the spinster busied herself by taking snuff out of one of Bell’s paste blacking boxes, I whiled away the hours by glancing occasionally at sweet sixteen.

She was beautiful; her delicately chiseled features, her soft blue eye, clear as the ethereal tint; a ruddy glow of health usurped her cheek, like

“The rich sunset ’neath Italia’s sky;”

and, to crown all these charms, a full rounded form,

of which Juno might be proud. She won my attention. Who was she? where could she be going? — to the factory? I hope in my soul, no; for, if so, she is going like a lamb to the slaughter. It is wicked — ’tis down-right inquisition to put such young and tender beings in a Factory. Should she go there, her manners will be corrupted — in a few short years those charms will fade away. Instead of breathing the pure mountain air, she rises early, toils late, for a small pittance, and inhales into her delicate lungs the nauseous hot air, pregnant with cotton dust, and the fumes of whale oil. She pines away; a sickly pale now comes over her fair cheek,

“Like lawn being spread upon the blushing rose.”

She spends all her savings, the produce of many a tedious day, for medical attendance. It is of no avail. Consumption, with his iron grasp, has her fast. The thoughts of home rush on her soul; she sees her kind parents, with her brothers and sisters, seated around the happy fire-side. How her soul yearns to be among them; ’tis impossible; she is too feeble to walk across the room, much more so to ride a hundred miles over a mountainous road. She has neglected writing home to acquaint her parents with her indisposition, thinking she should soon recover; ’tis now too late; despair enters her bosom, pierces her youthful heart, as she lies on a wretched bed in the crowded garret of a factory boarding-house. Grief bursts her tender soul; she lifts her longing eyes towards hea-

ven; breathes a fervent prayer, then closes them forever. And that fair form is now "compressed beneath the clods of the valley!"

No, no,—she cannot be factory girl. Let me think! yes I! have it now. She is a young boarding school miss; her kind, indulgent parents have fitted her out, and sent her down to the Quamphegan Academy; that's it. How could I have been so mistaken? I wish she would speak. Such sounds as would come from those lips must be like

"Earth's deep, sweet music."

Just as I was about to interrogate her, an accident relieved me from the task; for on going down a steep hill, a band-box fell from the coach, when the *angelic creature* exclaimed, "Hallo therè, driver, you've lost my bandbox; you're the carelessest critter ever I seed—now you may jest start yerself arter it!"

THE DYING FISHERMAN.

"The ruling passion strong in death."

IT was a tempestuous night. The angry winds howled and uttered forth their unearthly moans. Old ocean roared, and lashed Plum Island's sands in wildest fury; and all nature seemed in uproar!

In a rude hut beside the flats of Joppa—lies stretched upon his bed, the manly form of one of old ocean's children. He hears the raging wind, the pelting rain and hail, and the Atlantic's roar,—but he heeds them not.

And why should he? He was born and cradled upon its rough billows; the whistle of the storm was his lullaby.

And now, he lies awaiting the coming of the King of Terrors. Hark! The old South clock has hammered out the last stroke of twelve. See! The dying fisherman has leaped from his couch, and stands erect in the middle of the floor!

The old nurse stands back aghast!

Lo! he has seized his garments—the very habiliments in which, full many a time and oft, he has followed his vocation.

Now he is fully equipped; with gigantic strides he rushes into the desolate street. With clenched fists at his mouth, in lieu of a trumpet—he stands in attitude, and roars in thunder tones, which might be heard above the din of the enraged elements—"HERE'S CLAMS!" then fell the honest fisherman lifeless on the ground.

SCRAPS FROM MY SKETCH BOOK.

"A chiel's amang ye takin notes."

NEAR-SHIRT is the *euphonious* appellation of a snug little settlement of honest farmers, some five or six miles from Quamphegan, Me. They have one store, a school-house, and a house of worship. A son of Ethiopia fills the sacred desk. Strange to say, but his people almost worship *him*. He eats, drinks and smokes with them,—and if report speaks truly, they sometimes smoke the pipe from his mouth.

As a matter of curiosity in these parts, I went to hear him hold forth, one Sunday; such a looking *colored* clergyman I never saw before. As I entered the church and saw him sitting in the pulpit, it reminded me of a passage in Tam O' Shanter, "There sat auld Nick." His forehead sloped backwards, to an angle of forty-five degrees; the top of his head, which resembled a bell-pear, was almost an island, his capacious mouth extending very nearly round it; his nostrils were terrible; an enormous pair of woolly whiskers graced his ebony phiz, reaching under his chin; his eyes, as he turned them skyward, resembled two new tin pans; he looked awful! After he had muttered a prayer, read a hymn and helped the choir to convert it into music, he commenced operations on the sermon,—and the way he extemporized to the sinners, and warned them to flee from the coming wrath, was a pattern worthy to be followed by all lukewarm

preachers among the "white-faces." He exhorted them to "keep clear of dem parnishus doctrines, dat sez you can go to hebbun on de wide smooove wode, wid silver slippers on. Radder gess dey well get mistaken if dey blebe in dat doctrine; gess how dey will find out dey will hab to go de crooked way, ober a stony wode wid *brogans* on dere trotters, dat's vot dey vill!"

A SLIGHT MISTAKE.

AUNT NABBY, maiden sister of Captain D., the grocer-man, kept her brother's house, and occasionally tended in his store. Her brain was a trifle shattered—that, with a swig now and then at the cognac, was very apt to upset her equilibrium, and strange mistakes would often occur.

One day, a poor, but very honest woman, came into the store with a handful of silver change, which she told the captain she had found in sifting a half-peck of meal, bought of his sister that morning. On questioning Nabby, it turned out that she had thrown in the coin to even the scales!

But the strangest freak of Nabby's aberrations happened once upon a Thanksgiving day. The captain had returned from church with an invited guest for dinner. The cloth was laid,—then the caulks from the oven-lid were removed,—the oven was opened, and the goose and pudding were taken out—but alas! and alack-a-day! the viands came forth as they were put in—untouched by caloric. Nabby had forgotten to heat the oven!

EPISTLE FROM NORTH SCITUATE TO THE BOSTON POST.

NORTH SCITUATE, or "Old Sittywate," as the grandsires and grandames call it.

"Here I've 'scaped the city's stifling heat,
Its horrid sounds and its polluted air."

But the breach is not wide enough yet,—for at the very place where I am domiciled, which is located upon a bye-road—a package of quack medicines, a magazine of the fashions for July and August, and a bundle of yellow-covered novels have just arrived, and are lying upon the very table where I'm now writing, waiting the arrival of the proprietor, a lady visitor from the city.

"O, for a lodge in some vast wilderness!"

By Jupiter! I'll get out of the way of this trash before summer is out—for, I'll fly to the outskirts of New Hampshire, and there, where

"Through the clouds, Chocorua's peak doth rise,
And lift its granite forehead to the skies!"

I pray I may get from the sight and sound of this vile stuff—these dregs of civilization!

The vegetation here is doing well, and the fields, gardens and damsels are

"Blooming with rosy smiles!"

This, you must know, is one of the oldest towns in the Bay State; nearly surrounded by the salt water; it is a very healthy place, and the people being frugal and temperate—no apothecary or doctor being very near—they generally live to a ripe old age. They are too fond of the dimes to squander them away upon medicines and such *luxuries*.

They have a queer way of doing *some* things here,—instead of paying away fifty or one hundred dollars to a doctor, apothecary and nurse for a family event, as we poor fools do in the city,—five dollars for an old lady who serves in the capacity of mid-wife, nurse and maid of all work, pays the whole bill—roots and herbs included!

The only book she consults is the Farmer's Almanack; and when it is "full sea," she takes her chance, and all is right! "Natura duce," for ever!

Commend me, likewise, to one of their methods of making wills—wills, such as no disciple of Black-

stone would dare undertake to rip up. An old lady, for instance, is about finishing up for this world; her kith and kin are called around her bedside, together with three disinterested witnesses; the testator, propped up by a pillow, then goes on with the items:—“A stocking full of silver dollars to be divided such and so—a quart, or half-peck of halves and quarters, thus and so—(be it known, the people here are all thrifty)—her furniture, wearing apparel, and other nick-knacks, so and thus.” The moment the testator “goes off,” the recipients take their bounties, and go each on their own way, rejoicing!

They are generally an honest people, and somewhat godly withal, having a good supply of meeting-houses of different creeds—one, the unitarian, sporting a tall steeple—

“Like a pencil on the sky!”

which the waggish “salts” here have christened “the sloop.”

Many people, however, do their own worshipping at home, as it comes somewhat cheaper. One of these parsimonious saints, in a morning prayer, begged the powers above to “cure ma’m’s cough!” For she had tried flax-seed tea and “thorough-wax,” and it had done no good. And once, in saying grace at table, this same man craved a blessing upon all the food set before them, “except the apple sairce, *that* we got at Deacon Widgin’s, and don’t need it!”

“Old Sittywate” can boast of raising *one* poet, at

least,—Woodworth, the author of that exquisite gem, “The Old Oaken Bucket,” sprung to light a mile or two from my whereabouts. A poet in these parts, among these matter-of-fact people, “whom no airy forms or phantoms of the imagination clothe—whom nought but the music of the smiling, chinking heap, or the sight of the quickly convertible bank bill delight,” is like manna in the wilderness. Yes, Nature, in one of her freaks, created a poet here! ’Twas the daughter of Olympia, who

“Broke the plough-boy’s morning dream,
Led him o’er woody hill and babbling stream,
Lured his young foot in every dale that rung,
And charmed his ear in every bird that sung!”

A SQUALL.

“List ye landsmen all to me,
Messmates, hear a brother sailor
Sing the dangers of the sea.”—*Tom Dibdin.*

NOTHING is more amusing, especially to an old salt, than the mistakes of a green hand in nautical technicals.

Many years ago, one Captain Clapp skippered a “pinkey” out of Newburyport. One season, hands were scarce—and this captain was forced to take up with two very green ’uns, who had never been “on the great deep, nor done business on the mighty wa-

ters." The first day out, everything went on smoothly; the taunt schooner glided along under a good steady breeze, like a dolphin. The second day, all things looking fair,—the skipper, after stationing one of the men forward on the look-out, and the other at the helm, went below to take a *siesta*. An hour had scarcely elapsed, when a squall came up in a twinkling—striking the pinkey upon her quarter. Wh-izz! went the schooner through the water, with the velocity of lightning!

"I swow, Jake! she's mad, she foams at the mouth!" said he at the look-out.

The man at the helm didn't understand the use of the tiller rope, so he was obliged to quit his hold, and let the vessel have her own way.

"Well, Sam," said he, "the *riddlin' stick* has took command o' the quarter-deck, guess we 'll call the capt'n."

Just at that instant, the schooner got into the trough of the sea—over went both masts—the sea stove in her bulwarks, taking the binnacle in its course, as the captain popped his head out of the companion way.

"Captain Clapp," said the helms-man, "guess you'd better come up *now*; here's the old serpent to pay, the masts are gone, the ropes have got in a tarnel snarl, the riddlin'-stick has took command of the quarter deck—and, by darn, we've lost the *tabernacle* overboard!"

THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

THE present year is about making its exit, and we feel as if we were bidding adieu to an old acquaintance. As we take a retrospective glance at the hours gone by, since this year first shone upon us, many a tear of joy and of sorrow will burst forth in spite of our philosophy. Sweet memory will bring to light many a bright halcyon hour. But all is not joy here below; a few sprinklings of sorrow will surely serve to fill memory's cup; and with many—very many—'twill form, alas! the largest portion. There sits a bereaved mother; her only daughter, young and lovely, the comfort of her old age, the pride of the neighborhood, has been cut down by death. Physicians did their utmost—her friends watched by her night and day—all could not save her, but

"Like a lilly drooping,
She bowed her head and died!"

Where is that young man who was the very life of the young circle? "Where be his jibes now? his songs? his flashes of merriment?" Gone? gone forever! His body now reposes in yonder cemetery, and his spirit has returned to Him who gave it! Many can tell their tale of sorrow; husbands have lost their wives—wives their husbands; near and

dear friends have been separated by death's impartial dart; but why should we murmur?

"Could tears revive the dead,
Rivers should swell our eyes, —
Could sighs recall the spirit fled,
We would not quench our sighs."

Now is a goodly time to make resolutions for our conduct the coming year. Let the old toper throw down the inebriating glass for ever. And ye moderate drinkers! shun the intoxicating cup as you would a basilisk! make a resolution never to touch the infernal liquid more. Young men and maidens! set down some good resolutions for the forthcoming year, so that you may be wiser and better at the close thereof.

Ye middle aged! your sands have half run out! if you have not lived as you ought to have lived — ask pardon for the past, and live purer and holier for the remainder of your lives.

Ye whose heads are silvered over with age! whose faces are

"Ploughed by the share of years!"

remember that you stand upon the very brink of the grave, and, after a few more rising and setting suns you will,

"Upon this bank and shoal of time —
Jump the life to come!"

then, if you have lived an honest, virtuous and righteous life, you will, when the hour of dissolution draweth nigh, exclaim,

"Oh death, where is thy sting!"