

# MARTINSBURG GAZETTE.

By Edmund P. Hunter.]

MARTINSBURG, (VA.) WEDNESDAY MORNING, MAY 2, 1838.

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## POETRY.

### VIRTUE.

By S. WOODWORTH.

Know this one truth, enough for man to know,  
Virtue, alone, is happiness below.—Pope.

But what is virtue? 'tis to keep  
Each passion under strict control,  
Nor let the wily tempter creep  
Into the garden of the soul.  
It is to conquer selfish pride,  
And each inordinate desire;  
To take the scriptures for our guide,  
And speak and act as they desire.

O, what is virtue? 'tis to love  
Beyond all things of time and space,  
Him who descended from above,  
To save our rebel race;  
It is to love the words he spoke,  
Which none on earth e'er spoke before;  
His burden and his yoke to take,  
And meekly bear them, as he bore.

O, what is virtue? 'tis to prize  
Another's interest as our own;  
In joy or grief to sympathize  
For bliss received or pleasure flown.  
It is to keep the mind and heart  
From every selfish motive free;  
To walk by Truth's unerring chart—  
It is, in short, to be like thee.

## MISCELLANY.

From the Farmers' Register.

### THE PERSIMMON BEER DANCE.

Some years ago, I rode in the night to visit a patient, and as I passed the house of Mr. Samuel Poe, in the lower end of Prince Edward, I heard the tones of a banjo, and was told by the old gentleman, (Mr. Poe), that his servants had brewed a barrel of persimmon beer, and he gave them the privilege of having what they called a "beer dance." Curiosity induced me to ride to the door, accompanied by Mr. Poe, and another gentleman. And here we saw rare sport! "An unco sight!" Not, however, such a sight as Tam O'Shanter saw when he peeped into "Kirk-Alloway," for the dancers there were "warlocks and witches; here they were Virginia slaves, dancing jigs and clapping 'juber,' over a barrel of persimmon beer. It occurred to me, that if Tam could have made his appearance about this time on his gray mare Meg, the scene would have frightened Maggie more than the "bleeze" of Kirk Alloway; and Tam might have roared out "weel done Cutty Sark!" a thousand times, and the torch lights would not have been extinguished.

The ball was opened with great ceremony by singing a song known to Virginia slaves by the name of "Who-zen John, who-za."

"Old black bull come down de hollow,  
He shake hi' tail, you hear him bellow;  
When he bellow he make de river,  
He paw de yearth, he jar de quiver.  
Who-zen John, who-za."

This was a sky rocket thrown out, as a prelude to the grand exhibition, and will give the reader some idea of what is to follow. Those who could not get seats in the house, took their stand outside, peeping in the door and through the logs, making remarks on the dancers; and here I will observe, that there was a complete Babel jargon, a confusion of tongues!

"Down the road, come show me de motion."—"Set to your partner, Dolly."—"Cut him out, Gabe."—"Yonder come de coal black horse."—"Sal does put her foot good."—"The yellow roan's up! hear how he lumbers! he's a real stormer, ring-clipper, snow-belcher and drag-out."—"Congo is a scrounger; he's up a gum, and no bug-eater, I tell you; he carries a broad row, weeds out every thing—hoes de corn, and digs de taters."—"Hello in there, I wish you all sen' us out some 'simmon beer."—"Molly look like kil-dee; she move like handsaw—see how she shake herself."—"Lor! see how Aggy shake her foot! she ken pull de whip-saw down."—"Nick? come here and see Ben cross hi' bow legs! look at hi' mouf! when he grin, hi' mouf and teeth like hen-ness full o' eggs."—"Nick? I reckon if Tamar's cat stay in there much longer, they will mash her guts out; her skin 'ont hold peas."—"Come here, Gabe; come if you please—Jackson's Dick is dancing with Ellington's Nance! see how she quivers! Now Nance! Try Nance!—She does but look purty.—When she sets and turns, she is like a plecter—and she is fine form, back. Dick shan't have Nance; I'll kick him high as the meat house first." [Sings.] "She bin to the north, she bin to the south, she bin to the west, she bin so far beyond the sun, and she is de gal for me."—"Dick had 'nt no business dancin' with Nance—he ain't a man of gumption. I tried him, and he can't be made to understand the dramatical part of the function, the function of the fundamental, and the imperially of detrimental things. Gabe? Dick's a fool, and you may tell him Sambo says so: he is knock-knee'd and ugly enough to cut Gumbo."—"Well, I know that; sing on Sambo."

"I went from the great-house, down to the kitchen, To get a not of light wood to go a fishing, To treat granny Dinah;

I went to the stable, I catch master gray horse, I clap the saddle pon him and he trot like de 'nk care, He do 'nk care, he do 'nk care.

Having become tired of this out of door conversation, we concluded to view the group in the house. Here the banjo-man was seated on the beer barrel, in an old chair. A long white cow tail, queued with red ribbon, ornamented his head, and hung gracefully down his back; over this he wore a three-cocked hat, decorated with peacock feathers, a rose cockade, a bunch of ripe persimmons, and to cap the climax three pods of red pepper as a top-knot. Turning his banjo, grinning with ludicrous gesticulations and playing off his wild notes to the company. Before him stood two athletic blacks, with open mouth and pearl white teeth, clapping Juber to the notes of the banjo; the fourth black man held in his right hand a jug gourd of persimmon beer, and in his left, a dipper or water-gourd, to serve the company; while two black women were employed in filling the fire-place, six feet square, with larded persimmon dough. The rest of the company, male and female, were dancers, except a little squat wench, who held the torch light. I had never seen Juber clapped to the banjo before, and you may suppose I looked upon such a novel scene, with some degree of surprise. Indeed I contemplated the dancing group with sensations of wonder and astonishment! The clappers rested the right foot on the heel, and its clap on the floor was in perfect unison with the notes of the banjo, and palms of the hands on the corresponding extremities; while the dancers were all jiggling it away in the merriest possible gait of heart, having the most ludicrous twists, wry jerks, flexile contortions of the body and limbs, that human imagination can divine.

"The whole world is a ball we find,  
The water dances to the wind;  
The sea and sky, at night and noon,  
Rises and dances to the moon.

The earth and planets round the sun,  
Still dance; nor will their dance be done,  
Till nature in one blast is blent;  
Then may we say the ball is ended."

The rude ball set to Juber, corresponds admirably with the music and actors in this wild fantastic dance. While the clappers were laboring in the performance of their office, they responded at the same time to the notes of the banjo.

"Juber up and Juber down,  
Juber all around de town,  
Juber dis, and Juber dat,  
And Juber roun' de 'simmon vat.  
Hoe corn, hill tobacco,  
Get over double trouble, Juber boys, Juber.

Uncle Phil, he went to mill,  
He suck de sow, he starve de pig.  
Eat de 'simmon, gi' me de seed,  
I told him, I was not in need.  
Hoe corn! hill tobacco!  
Get over double trouble, Juber boys, Juber.

Aunt Kate? look on the high shelf,  
Take down de husky dumplin',  
I'll eat it wit' my 'simmon cake,  
To cure the rotten belly-ach.  
Hoe corn! hill tobacco!  
Get over double trouble, Juber boys, Juber.

Raccoon went to 'simmon town,  
To choose the rotten from de soun,  
Dare he sot upon a sill,  
Eating of a white-poor-will.  
Hoe corn! hill tobacco!  
Get over double trouble, Juber boys, Juber.

When supper was announced, the banjo-man was first served; then the clappers and beer bearer, and lastly, the beaux and their partners. Each had a huge loaf of larded persimmon bread with a gourd of beer.

Thus ended the beer dance, and as I left the house, I thought to myself, that Virginia slaves were the happiest of the human race—and I still think so.

"The learner is happy, nature to explore,"  
The fool is happy that he knows no more."  
Solomon, the wisest man, says—"in much wisdom, there is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow."

The beer dance, I have attempted to describe, is a faint representation of what actually occurred. It requires an abler pen to do it justice; I feel mortified that I cannot give a more vivid and glowing description of these black beaux, who acted so conspicuous a part with their partners in the persimmon junket. The broad grin, the smile of the little squat wench, seen through her torch light, the humid lip, the twist of the tongue, the white teeth, the oblique look, the glance of the eye, the toss of the head, the quaint bow, the curved shins, the bandy leg, the nimble jig, the affected air of the wench, the profuse perspiration, the cloud of dust, the lurid room, the phiz of the banjo man, the banjo's tum, tum, tum, and Juber's song and clap, would call forth the combined talents and lively imagination of a Wirt, an Irving, a Burns, an Addison and Dryden. And if a northern abolitionist, with his pocket filled with inflammatory documents and resolutions, could have witnessed such a scene in Virginia, he would, in my opinion, have consigned them to the flames; his great love for the blacks to the contrary notwithstanding.

In conclusion, I offer no apology for introducing in your columns, and bringing before your intelligent readers, such a novel, rude production, as the beer dance. We are to derive from

such scenes in this life, much useful instruction; the poet, divine, statesman, philosopher, and all mankind, may be benefitted by looking down in life, in order to explore the dark corners of nature.

## NEWS, POLITICS, &c.

From the St. Louis Bulletin.

THE RAFT IN RED RIVER.—The obstruction originally occupied a space of upwards of two hundred miles; and there is sufficient evidence that it has existed for ages before the discovery of the country, while its banks exhibit indubitable proof, that it once extended not within fifty miles of the confluence of that river with the Mississippi. The annual increase has been estimated at two miles; and once formed, the serpentine course of the stream forbids all possibility of removal, except by artificial measures, or the slow process of decay. In some places the raft is condensed to an astonishing depth, and forms what is called "the sunken raft;" a single strong log removed will sometimes liberate hundreds. The raft region may now be considered under three divisions; that from which the raft is entirely removed, extending one hundred and forty miles from the commencement; that in which the raft is cut up and pulled in pieces, and not floated off—for which nothing is wanted but a strong current, which must immediately take place—thirty-three miles in extent; and that, lastly, which has not yet been commenced. The water expelled from the channel by the raft into the lakes, parallel to the banks as the obstruction is removed, turns and deepens the bed of the stream. At the commencement of the raft there is little or no current.—This has added much to the labor in removing the obstruction; and many of the logs removed, have floated back subsequently by a rise in the Mississippi. The removal now of a few yards of solid raft causes a fall of eighteen inches above it, and a rise six feet below. There remains only about four miles of the raft to be removed, and when the channel is once clear, the current will be powerful and deep, and the banks on either side will be lofty and firm. Capt. Shreve declares, that all can be accomplished in three months, after a suitable appropriation from Congress is made.

The magnitude of this undertaking, and the results which must ensue from its accomplishment, cannot be too highly appreciated. The river is navigable for more than two thousand miles above the raft, and through a region unrivaled in fertility. Though now thinly settled, it is rapidly populating—hundreds await the removal of the raft as a signal for entering the country—and all its vast resources and natural wealth must soon be developed. The result of this undertaking once involved in doubt, as well as the permanent advantages which must ensue, are no longer problematical. The indefatigable industry, the untiring enterprise—the indomitable perseverance, and the enlarged and truly scientific designs of Capt. M. Shreve, the projector and accomplisher of this noble national work, can never be estimated beyond their merits. His history is identified with that of the empire of the west; and his fame will endure so long as the magnificent streams with which his name is associated, shall continue to roll on their voluted waters to the deep.

STRAWBERRIES.—As soon as your beds are bare in the spring, spread over them a slight covering of straw, and set fire to it. This will consume all the decayed leaves, etc., left last season, and leave the whole neat and clean. Then spread on a little fine manure from the yard, or ashes, (which answers quite as well); and then a covering of chaff, say two inches thick. This method is said to bring the plant and fruit forth earlier; it makes the latter large and of better quality. It keeps the fruit clear and ripens it finely. The burning over is recommended by Dr. Miller, of Princeton, and other experienced cultivators.—The use of the chaff is practised by the editor of the Southern Agriculturist, (he uses rice chaff), who last year gathered from half an acre of plants 48 bushels of the finest fruit. It was sold for 25 cents a quart; and yielded therefore the aggregate sum of \$360.—Vermont Farmer.

We are happy to have it in our power to state that Mr. POINSETT, whose illness we mentioned in our last, is entirely out of danger, and will soon be able to attend to the duties of his office.

Mr. JENIFER, of Maryland, who was confined on his estate, by severe indigestion, has returned to his duties in the house of representatives.

Mr. HUNTER, of Ohio, has also so far recovered from his indisposition, as to be able to attend in the house.—Niles Register.

From the National Intelligencer of April 18.

The reader who takes the trouble to run his eye over the minutes of yesterday's proceedings in the Senate will observe that Mr. GRUNDY has failed to inspire the members of that body with all that indignation which has fired his own breast at the audacious omission, on the part of the Bank of the United States, to call in its five dollar notes, respecting which delinquency so grave a legal argument was made in the Executive Message at the commencement of this session. The honorable Senator in fact appears to be a little puzzled what to do with his bill; whilst the Senate is placed, in respect to it, in the attitude, scarcely compatible with its dignity, of a certain domestic animal with a hot chestnut in its paws. The distinguished member who introduced the bill having made his speech in favor of it, finding no one else disposed to follow his example, was himself not disposed to take a decision upon it, though pressed to do so by Mr. CLAY, who suggested that, if no one was ready to speak, it was possible that all were ready to vote upon it. Several of the political friends of Mr. GRUNDY, however, successively raised their hands against it, and the question upon its passage was therefore postponed. It is probable, we think, that this attempt, to deprive the country of all the little that remains of the great convenience and accommodation afforded to the People by the issues of the late Bank of the United States, will signify fail in Congress, and that the Judiciary will be saved the trouble of passing sentence of condemnation upon it.

COMPLIMENTAL.—The Albany correspondent of the Globe is "wrothy" at the contemptuous treatment of the Sub-Treasury bill by the House of Representatives, and hits the party in the House some very hard knocks.—"In truth," says the writer, "I am continually struck with surprise, if not absolute dismay, in noticing how great a proportion of our laws, and some of them of the greatest consequence, are passed by a bare quorum in the House of Representatives. Even to obtain this, the Sergeant-at-arms is obliged to go in search of the transient boys in the galleries of the Senate, or the rotundo, or the library of Congress, where they will be found gallanting the ladies, cackling like amorous old roosters, or coo cooing round and round them, like cock pigeons."—Alex. Gaz.

The Administration demands of Congress authority again to issue ten millions of Treasury notes. Mr. CAMBRELENG, the leader of the party in the House, declares that if it is not done speedily, the wheels of Government must stop.

Our Government wages a most bitter war against the credit system and paper money—insists that they are frauds and delusions—and does every thing in its power to destroy them. Yet this same glorious Government begs for a huge dose of this very credit and paper money, to save it from expiring!—Columbia Telescope.

From the Norfolk Beacon.

Baltimore has the honor of discharging the first shot against the commercial independence of the South.—Knowing the impregnable ground on which the South stands, the American does not assail it by the legitimate methods of warfare, but resorts to hue and cry, and to positive, although unintentional, we are sure, misrepresentation. It charges upon the "prime movers" of commercial independence a design "to build up a Southern interest distinct from that of the other portions of the National Union,"—a charge wholly unwarranted by the resolutions of the Convention, which breathed the finest spirit toward our Northern brethren; by the general reasoning of the report of Gen. Hayne, and by the unqualified declarations of the members of the body, and of the presses which sustain their cause.—The American talks of "the utter impossibility of carrying out the measures proposed." And in faith what are these said measures which are branded with "impossible?" Merely to send a bale of cotton directly to Liverpool and get Birmingham wares in return, instead of calling at a Northern port and paying to the tune of fifty per cent. on the articles sold and purchased during the visit. It is not "impossible" for the South to build up the Northern towns—this is quite a simple affair; but the moment the South looks nearer home, every thing is impossible. The American thinks it doubtless that the best way to get a sluggard to believe there is a lion in his path, is to state the fact without qualification. It talks of a "complete and disastrous failure," and consoles itself in its efforts to keep the nose of the South to the grindstone, with the

reflection that it (the American) is not classed among the number of self-styled Americans, whose patriotism is bounded by the Potomac or the Hudson, the wheat growing districts of the Northern and Middle States, the manufacturing townships of the Eastern States, or the rice and cotton producing savannahs of the South; it goes for the country, and the whole country one and indivisible in prosperity and adversity." The American began by misrepresentation, and pursues with abuse. What right has that journal to impugn the patriotism of men whose characters stand unimpeached and unimpeachable, and whose only crime is that they seek to enrich their native land with the wealth that springs from its bosom? The American goes for the whole country—not as it ought to be—but as it is—that is, with Southern commerce ruined, and Southern wealth almost wholly appropriated to Northern purposes; a patriotism not loftier and certainly more convenient and profitable than can be attributed to the citizens of the South, who wish to establish a direct trade with Europe, according to the showing of the American.

The American then charges upon the Report and resolutions of the Convention, as "breathing a spirit of total estrangement between the Southern and Northern interests, the latter being treated as subversive of and uncongenial with the former." This charge is unjust, unwarranted and untrue.—There is not a sentence that will authorize such a construction. The American has certainly not read the report.—It takes for granted that the South ought to be kept down, and that every effort to raise herself is foul and bloody treason. It is ready to curse the South for the least motion, as the laborer did the eel that writhed while he was skinning it. We venture to assert that no candid man, who is not interested in Northern commerce, can draw an unfavorable inference to the Union from the report of the Convention.—As for ourselves, we go for the Union one and indivisible, now and forever, but not for the whole country unchanged and unchangeable.—We wish to see the South doing for herself what the North has done with so much profit.—We wish the Southern states to sell where they can sell dearest, and to buy where they can buy cheapest—in other words, to act as free agents in commerce as in agriculture—to husband their resources—to build up their own cities—to stand forth firm in their proper strength, and in all their fair proportions, and under the banner of that Union which sprung from commercial necessity, to assert and maintain their plain and palpable interests on all occasions and at every hazard, their motto being "THE COMMERCE OF THE SOUTH—not as it has been—not as it is (as Baltimore would have it) but as it ought to be." There is no treason in this that any honest man need be ashamed of.

SKETCH OF THE ACTS  
Passed by the General Assembly of  
Virginia, at the January  
Session, 1838.  
[CONTINUED.]

92. An act amending the laws concerning attachments against absconding debtors; provides that when such attachments shall be levied upon live stock or other property liable to perish, or to become materially impaired in value, or which may be expensive to keep, the court may order the officer to sell the same, at such time and place, and on such terms as they may prescribe, and makes the officer accountable for the proceeds, under the penalties for non payment of the same, that he is liable for sales of property to satisfy judgments upon attachments.

93. An act to change the place of holding a separate election in the county of Mason; from the house of Henry Harvey to the storehouse now occupied by Atkinson & company in the village of Buffalo.

94. An act to amend an act, entitled, an act to raise money by lottery to build a bridge across North river at or near Gratton's ford in the county of Rockingham, passed January 20th, 1832.

95. An act to incorporate the Henrico exploring and mining company; to mine for coal, iron and other minerals, with a capital not less than \$50,000 nor more than \$500,000.

96. An act to amend certain acts establishing separate elections in the towns of Waterford and Middleburg in the county of Loudoun; authorizes the elections to be hereafter held at the house of Mrs. Paxton in Waterford, or of Thos. J. Nowland in Middleburg, or at such other houses in said towns as the commissioners may select.

97. An act changing the names of Virginia Smith and others to that of Armstrong.

98. An act to authorize a separate election at Sandy bottom in the county of Middlesex.

99. An act concerning the processioning of lands in the county of Bedford; authorizes the court of said county to cause the lands in the county to be processioned whenever it shall appear to them necessary.

100. An act to provide for the payments of the state subscription to the stock of the Charleston and Point Pleasant turnpike company; authorizes the board of public works to borrow the sum necessary therefor.

101. An act to supply the deficiency in the appropriations to the Western and Eastern lunatic hospitals for the past fiscal year.

102. An act to authorize two separate elections in the county of Amelia; one at the tavern of John J. Jeter in Painville; the other at Jones' tavern at the Cross-roads in the lower end of the county.

103. An act concerning the embezzlement of records; provides that if any person shall hereafter steal or fraudulently erase, alter, secrete or destroy any record or part of a record in any court of law or chancery, he shall be guilty of felony; if a slave, shall suffer death, and if free, shall be confined in the penitentiary not less than two nor more than ten years.

104. An act authorizing Joseph Tomlinson to establish a ferry across the Ohio river.

105. An act to incorporate the Scottsville lyceum.

106. An act to amend the act incorporating the Tuckahoe and James river rail road company, passed March 27th, 1837; authorizes an increase of the capital of the company until it amounts to \$100,000, and allows a further time of one year to construct their road.

107. An act to amend the act, entitled, an act to incorporate the city of Wheeling in Ohio county; makes sundry alterations in the charter of the city, and authorizes the corporation to subscribe for ten thousand shares of the stock of the Baltimore and Ohio rail road company.

108. An act authorizing the sale of certain personal estate belonging to the children of Rebecca Pearis, deceased.

109. An act authorizing the sale of the lands of Peter Zeluff in the county of Nansemond.

110. An act to authorize a separate election in the county of Mason; to be held at the residence of Adam Fisher in the upper flats in said county.

111. An act to authorize Samuel Taylor to convey the interests of his grand-children in the tract of land called Flatlick.

112. An act to incorporate the Mansfield manufacturing company; to manufacture cotton, wool, hemp, iron, brass and steel, with a capital not less than \$20,000 nor more than \$100,000.

113. An act regulating and restraining the terms upon which credits shall be allowed by merchants, tradesmen and others to the students of the Universities and Colleges of the state; prohibits such persons from crediting students or others for their use, directly or indirectly, for any thing in the way of their trade, business or occupation, without written permission from the officer of the institution duly authorized by its laws to give the same; or from lending them money or giving them letters of credit, or from authorizing them in any way to contract a debt; prevents the recovery at law or in equity from the student, or his parent or guardian, of any thing sold or lent, or of any debt contracted; forfeits the whole value of the thing sold or lent, or the amount of the debt contracted, to the University or College, and imposes a penalty of twenty dollars for each offence; the forfeitures and penalties to be recovered by actions of debt, case, information or indictment. The offence is declared to be a misdemeanor, punishable as at common law, and to be deemed a breach of good behaviour, any magistrate having power to bind the offender to appear before the next superior court to answer therefor, or upon failure to enter into recognizance, to commit him to jail. If any tradesman or other person offending is carrying on his trade under a state license, such license is forfeited, and the person disqualified from carrying on such trade, &c. for one year under any other license. Prosecutions to be commenced within five years and not after; the act to be given in charge to the grand juries where the colleges are situated, and take effect from the first September next.

114. An act amending the statute of jeofails; provides that all judgments, (whether entered as office judgments, or upon verdicts after writs of enquiry for damages), rendered in any circuit superior court for default of appear-