EXTRACTS FROM "PROGRESS,"

A SATIRICAL POEM BY THE WITTY J. G. SAXE.

MACHINERY.

Now saw-mills grate in every forest nook,
Now spindles hum beside each mountain brook;
Through virgin forests locomotives walk,
And prairie flowers are crushed beneath the rail;
Where ocean rolled so trackless once and free,
The age of prose stalks forth and maps the sea,
And the swift lightning—once celestial fire—
Does drudgery, in harness, on a wire;
While patents fill the air, bestride the wave,
And dog us from the cradle to the grave;
Machines that rock asleep our infant cry,
Machines that wait upon our latest sigh.
We wait by telegraph our love's young dream;
Live by machinery, and die by steam.

SPIRIT-RAPPINGS.

Prosaic after death, our spirits then
Invent machinery to talk with men;
And, rapping from the world beyond, disclose
New depths of dullness and eternal prose.
No more the fairy queen, "in times of night,
Is lulled in flowers with dances and delight;"
No elves by moonlight tread their dusky round,
And trace green circles on the dew-dropped ground;
No spooks haunt churchyards and no corpse lights burn;
No goblin checks the butter in the churn;
And young America laughs to scorn
The good old devil, with his tail and horn—
Poetic follies of a younger age!
We deal in acts more prosy and less sage;
For Shakspeare's spirit visits earth to tell
How he and Washington are very well;
And Lindley Murray, from the body free,
Can't make his verbs and nominatives agree;
Ben Franklin raps an idiotic dream,
And Webster scrawls vile twaddle by the ream;
The splendid knave, Lord Bacon, has turned fool,
And Penn's great soul is busy keeping school;
Well may the LIVING poet heave a sigh
To think his spirit, stooping from the sky,
When he is dead can rap at mortal call
Bad rhymes and wretched metre on the wall;
Well may the hero shudder in despair,
Whose soul can choose to animate a chair;
And the great statesman sinking in the tomb,
To rise and wheel a table round a room.

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Who knows how soon we, too, must join these hosts
Of silly, dull, disreputable ghosts?
How soon our friends and relatives must shed
Some decent tears, and cut our spirits dead?
And who will work for character or fame,
If his own ghost can ruin his good name?

PICTURE OF CONGRESSMEN.

Degraded Congress! once the honored scene
Of patriot deeds; where men of solemn mien,
In virtue strong, in understanding clear,
Earnest, tho' courteous, and tho' smooth, sincere;
To gravest counsels lent the teeming hours,
And gave their country all their mighty powers.
But times are changed; a rude degenerate race
Usurp the seats, and shame the sacred place.
Here plotting demagogues with zeal defend
The "people's rights," to gain some private end.
Here southern youtos, on folly's surges toast—
Their father's wisdom eloquently boast;
(So dowerless spinsters proudly number o'er
The costly jewels that their grandams wore)
Here would be Tullys pompously parade
Their turmid troops for simple "Buncombe" made,
Full on the chair the chilling torrents shower,
And work their word pumps through the allotted hour.
Deluded "Buncombe!" while, with honest praise,
She notes each grand and patriotic phase,
And, much rejoicing in her hopeful son,
Deems all her own the laurels he has won;
She still dreams how brother members fled,
And left the house as vacant as his head!
Here rural Chathams, eager to attest
The "growing greatness of the mighty West,"
To make the plainest proposition clear,
Crack Priscian's head and Mr. Speaker's ear;
Then closing up in one terrific shout,
Pour all the "wild oats" furiously out.
Here lawless boors with ruffian bullids vie,
Who last shall give the rude, insulting "lie,"
While "Order, order," loud the chairman calls,
And echoing "Order," every member bawls;
Till rising high in rancorus debate,
And higher still, in fierce envenomed hate,
Retorted blows the scene of riot crown,
And big Lycurgus knocks the lesser down.

Ye honest dames in frequent proverbs named,
For finest fish and foulest English famed,
Whose matchless tongues 'tis said were never heard
To speak a flattering or a feeble word,—
Here all your choice invectives ye might urge,
Our lawless Solons fittingly to scourge;
Here, in congenial company, might rail
Till quite worn out, your croaking voices fail—
Useless, indeed, for once compelled to yield
In wordy strife, ye vanquished, quit the field.

How to Enrich a Garden.—A few years ago I had occasion to occupy a new garden. It had been worn by continued cropping without manuring, till it would not produce half a crop of anything. I had no manure to put upon it. I could have bought open barnyard manure, that had been washed and bleached through the year till most of the salts and all the urine was gone, but I thought it would not pay well. Nor could I any better afford to cultivate a garden at the halves. There was a half acre in the garden. I planted about one-third of it to white sugar beets. The remainder to corn, potatoes, peas, beans, squashes, melons, cabbage, tomatoes, onions, &c. There was one thing that I could do. I had a family of five, three adults and two children, one an infant. I placed a half hogshead, convenient for receiving the dirty slops of the family, including the urine of the chambers. This was filled about once a day through the week, and two or three times on Mondays.

My method of applying it was this: at evening I began at one end of the garden, and with a pail and dipper I threw it upon the hills and beds of everything I had planted, till the tub was emptied. The second evening I began where I left off the first, and continued on till the tub was again emptied. So I continued till I had gone over the whole garden.

I continued to repeat the process through the entire season, or until the garden had become so matured, as to need no food. The first time going through the garden, as the seeds were not up, I used a large watering pot, with a coarse nose The second time through I used the pail and dipper, and applied the liquid around the young plants. As the plants became large and nearly covered the ground, I applied the liquid to the ground wherever it was naked.

And now for the result. I had a neighbor, Dr. C., a competitor in the gardening line, that summer. His garden joined mine, the same size and the same quantity of soil. He had plenty of open barn-yard manure and plenty of time to work his garden. He often boasted of having the best garden in town, and thought he should have the best, notwithstanding mine. But no sooner were the gardens both well up, than the doctor began to show signs of suspicion that he should be beat.

About the first of July he came into the garden and said, "I have come to inquire into the secret of your power over the vegetable kingdom. The rapid growth of your garden is a great mystery to me. Your garden was plowed once, mine was in better order, and besides, had plenty of manure. Mine also had a little better attention than yours, and now the 1st of July yours is certainly thirty if not fifty per cent ahead of mine. Tell me what you have done to it."—"Well, doctor, come with me into my wood-house," said I. "There, that tub, with the help of my good wife, contains all the secret there is about it. I have been feeding my garden just as you do your pigs." "Well, now, I see what you have been doing all summer, and I wondered why you should be doing that when there has been plenty of rain. Now I see the mystery."

That garden, Messrs. Editors, had the reputation of being the most thrifty and the most productive of any garden in the country. That was my first experiment with the waste water of the family. And as that was applied to a half acre of worn out land for only a part of four months in in the year, I came to the conclusion that had the whole been judiciously applied one entire year, it would have been sufficient to keep, in a high productive order, two acres.

But in this estimate I have not included the excrement from the privy. My opinion was then formed, and has been confirmed by later experiments, that the manure from the family would be sufficient to enrich as many acres, for all the purposes of agriculture, as there are members in the family, and this, too, exclusive of the absorbents, to be used. But, by a judicious use of absorbents, the amount could be easily doubled or quadrupled even. And this would be the true way of saving and using the liquid. With the expense of one-half ton of guano, in permanent fixings, any farmer could make from his house one ton a year through several generations. It will certainly pay.—[Ex.

Virginia Railroad Tunnels.—The Richmond Whig gives the following extract from a letter relating to the progress of the work at the Blue Ridge Tunnel, Va:—

The whole perforation now is 3,601 feet wide, viz: 1,830 on the West side, and 1,771 on the East. This makes, for the year, 749 feet, which, however, is not a proper criterion for the future progress, as about one month should be deducted in consequence of a turnout of long duration. Since that time, that is in seven months, there have been excavated 492 feet, being a little over 70 feet per month. There remains on this day 672 feet. The rock on the East side, where it used to be excessively hard, has changed for the better; but that on the West side has taken its place. Through material like this, which dulls drills after a few blows, an advance of 70 feet per month is very creditable to the men, who are well chosen, experienced hands.

The main Tunnel, however, was not the object of my great solicitude. I feared at one time that the Brooksville Tunnel, through the most treacherous rock imaginable, might take longer than the principal one; but I have now the satisfaction to say, that, taking advantage of a short time, during which the impending mass ceased falling, we passed, at last, successively through this most perilous portion of the work; and that it is now secured so strongly by timbers, that there is an almost certainty of its being completed early in June, if not before. The strength of the protection was very severely tested lately, by an immense fall of rock, about one hundred cubic yards, from a height of 120 feet, which compressed the logs and brush piled up on the top of the timbering and arch to deaden the shock of any such fall, which it did effectually—blowing out by the compression of air the lamps in the Tunnel, which, together with the rumbling noise of the descending mass frightened the men inside, as may well be imagined, but caused no damage whatever; on the contrary, it served to prove the vast strength and safety of the work, and will now serve as an additional shield.

Rotation of Crops in the Garden.—It is the custom of many, who have small vegetable gardens, to plant the same crops in the same spots year afteryear. This may be done, and good crops may be obtained, if the land is deeply trenched and thoroughly manured every year.—But without these precautions, crops will almost certainly degenerate. The onions, very likely, will become maggoty and rot, and the peas fail to fill out well, and the cabbages show small heads. Though we manure abundantly, and work the soil two spits deep, we find it of great advantage to change the locality of the crops every year, with few exceptions. Asparagus cannot very well be changed.

It is now time to make your plants for the garden for the next season, and it will be found an advantage to change the locality of every other crop. Manures should be adapted to the various crops you propose to raise. Certain kinds of plants require a good deal of ammonia, such as onions, carrots, tomatoes, celery, &c.—These should be treated to guano, night soil, or hogdung. Let a certain portion of the garden be allotted to them, and the manure trenched in, as soon as the season will allow. This may be called plot No 1.

In No. 2 we would raise potatoes, peas, beans, beets, and corn. On this you should put an abundant supply of vegetable matter, if the soil is not already well furnished, and a mixture of guano and superphosphate of lime. If you have not these, a compost of cow dung and old turf or muck will prove a good substitute. The pea is a lime plant, and a top dressing of slacked lime pays well.

On No. 3 put no guano, night soil, or hog-manure. Here you will raise turnips, cabbages, and the brassica tribe of plants, which are sure to be club-footed with those nitrogenous manures. We have found home-prepared superphosphate an excellent manure for these plants For all the root crops in the garden, use the trenching spade, and make your soil at least eighteen inches deep. It is a slow process, but pays better than any other. The quantity of roots that may be raised on a few square rods, thoroughly worked, is astonishing to one who has only ploughed his garden six or eight inches deep.—American Agriculturist, March 14.

Artificial Marble.—Mr. Benjamine Hardinge, of Cincinnati, has made a valuable discovery in synthetic chemistry, by which he is enabled to produce an artificial marble from common pebbles and sand. It is stated by the Express Messenger that he is about to erect in or near the City of Montreal a model palace, to be built entirely of marble and precious stones. The stones for the walls, which are now molding, are formed of silicates in combination with meneral earths and pebbles, and angular spots of granite variegated with mineral oxides. The roof will be a lava of chrystalized silicates of lime and whits alumina, resembling the snow crust. The floore to be of the same material, colored in mosiac with oxides of minerals.

The style of architecture will be unique. The pillars, pilasters, columns, capitals, cornices, architrabes, mantels &c., will be of agate, asper, perphyry, &c., with colossal statuary of snow-white marble. The inside finish of the walls will be of porcelain, in landscapes, with ceiling of fresco of porcelain, colored in rosewood and zebrawood, inlaid with pearl. The tables both tops and frames, will be of sapphire and amethyst, embedded with bands of opal, others of lapis-lazuli, chalcedony, onyx, set with garnet, topez, ruby and cornelian. Others with entire frames of blood stone moulded in rich patterns of alto relievo, with tops of onyx, and other chalcedonic formations.—[Ex.

Gun-Cotton.—Inquiries having been made of us lately as to the use of gun-cotton, and whether it could take the place of gunpowder, we have obtained the following information on the subject from the Smithsonian Institute, viz: Gun-cotton cannot be made with anything like the same uniformity in strength as gunpowder, and its explosive property diminishes on being kept for any length of time. It can be used with safety in the discharge of fire arms, but not with as much safety as powder. Its cost, weight for weight, is a little more than gunpowder, but owing to greater strength, force for force, it is cheaper. The Governments of France, Prussia, Austria, Russia and England have made a great number of experiments on the use of gun-cotton in fire arms, and in all cases the reports of the engineers engaged in making the experiments were against its adoption in the place of gunpowder. In blasting rocks it is used extensively. The objections to its use are the inequality of its action compared with gunpowder; the effect on the gun is greater: its projectile force varies with the compression of it in the gun; it attracts more moisture; alters slowly from loss of acid; explodes under some circumstances at 154 deg. Fahrenheit; the large size of the catridges, &c.—[Washington Star.

Husband Politeness.—"How seldom do we meet with people, united by the intimate relations of husband and wife, brother and sister, parent and child, who are habitually courteous—that is to say, unselfish towards each other. Most unusual is it to meet a husband and wife whose manner towards each other is at all what it ought to be. All the formality assumed in company does not veil the disrespectful, and contemptuous, familiarity of more private life. We have seen many men who would throw away cigars at the approach of a strange lady, but who would never hesitate one moment to make their wife's sitting-room smell like a bar-room; and though we should think it a badly arranged home, where no arrangements are made to keep people's indulgences from inconveniencing each other, and her a bad wife, who allowed no place for cigar-smoking still, we do not consider that he acts with true gentlemanly spirit towards his wife who will give the whole house a smell of stale tobacco, rather than walk ten steps, even if his wife be so truly a lady, and acts in so genuine a spirit of self-sacrifice, that she does not let it be seen that she is sacrificing."—[Ex.

Effects of Light.—Dr. Moore, the celebrated metaphysician, thus speaks of light on body and mind: "A tadpole confined in darkness would never become a frog; and an infant being deprived of heaven's free light, will only grow into a shapeless idiot, instead of a beautiful and reasonable being. Hence, in the deep, dark gorges and arvines of the Swiss Valais, where the direct sunshine never reaches, the hideous prevalence of idiocy startles the traveler. It is a strange, melancholy idiocy. Many citizens are incapable of any articulate speech; some are deaf, some are blind, some labor under all these privations, and all are mis-shapen in almost every part of the body. I believe there is, in all places, a marked difference in the healthiness of houses, according to their aspect with the sun, and those are decidedly the healthiest, other things being equal, in which all the rooms are, during some part of the day, fully exposed to the direct light. Epidemics attack inhabitants on the shady side of the street, and totally exempt those on the other side; and even in epidemics, such as ague, the morbid influence is often thus partial in its labors."

Cheap Building Materials.—A correspondent writes us from Syracuse, N. Y., that a Mr. Richard P. Thomas, of Tompkins county, is building in that city a three-story dwelling and store, the walls thirty-five feet high, and building thirty by sixty-five, of a new material that does not cost over one-third as much as brick and mortar. The walls are composed of stone-cutter's spalts or chips, coarse gravel, sand and lime, mixed into a mortar, at the rate of one part of lime to eight parts of the other ingredients. Moveable molds are set to form the walls, and the mixture shoveled in and left to harden, and then the mold is raised for another course. Wooded frames are inserted as the work progresses, for doors and windows; and it seems that stone caps are not required, since the whole mass hardens into a sort of artificial stone. The walls are finished off with a sort of plastering, outside and in, or may be furrowed and lathed, if desired, as well as brick walls.

When such materials are abundant, it is thought that the plan is worthy of greater attention.—[N. Y. Tribune.

A Novel Telegraph Meeting.—The directors of the New York and Wasington Magnetic Telegraph Company were to have had a meeting in this city last week, but were prevented by the obstructions on the railroad. This did not, however, prevent the directors from communicating with each other, for the Baltimore Sun says:—

"At the appointed hour the President took the chair in Philadelphia, and the Diredtors in Washington, Baltimore, Wilmington, and New York promptly answered to the call of the roll, when the business commenced. Resolutions were proposed, and motions were made in one city, and seconded and debated in the others, with as much promptness as though all had been present in one room. In the course of about two hours the business was all transacted, a dividend declared, and the meeting adjourned."

The Drought in the North.—The blighting effects of a continuation of the present dry weather begins to be seriously foreboded by the people in all sections of California. The Shasta Courier of March 22d, says:

The atmosphere is still, clear and cloudless—the distant ranges of the Sierra Nevada are almost as distinctly visible as they were last summer, and there is no sign nor token visible which leads us to suppose that a change for the better will soon take place. For more than two months has the cry of water! rain! rain! been heard in every part of California. At first it was principally from the miners, but of late it has been taken up by every class of the community, and now the farmers, ranchmen and merchants join alike in the prayer for rain. The agriculturalists have commenced to suffer by the drought.

Improvement in Copal Varnish.—English experimenters have discovered that gum copal was composed of two ingredients, one of which was easily dissolved in oil and in spirits of turpentine, while the other ingredient could not be dissolved in either, and if not got rid of, will make the varnish cloudy, or of a brown tinge. The method adopted, is to distil the gum and thereby drive off the insoluble part which is condensed in a suitable vessel and saved, while that which remains behind is left to cool. That is perfectly soluble in cold or warm oil and spirits of turpentine, and thus makes a superior varnish.—[New England Farmer.

Ancient and Modern Cities.—London is now the greatest city in the world, and far surpasses all the great cities of antiquity. According to Gibbon, the population of ancient Rome in the height of its magnificence was 1,200,000; Nineveh is estimated to have had 600,000; and Dr. Medhurst supposes that the population of Pekin is about 2,000,000. The population of London, according to recent statistics, amounts to 2,500,000, 414,722 having been added to it during the last ten years. The census shows that it contains 308,722 inhabited and 16,389 uninhabited houses.—[Ex.

"Up to Time."—The daily trains of the Sacramento Railroad make their trips between Folsom and this city with great regularity. As an instance of their punctuality and speed, we may mention that on yesterday the cars left Folsom at fifty-eight minutes past 4 o'clock, (two minutes before their set time) and reached Sacramento in fifty-five minutes thereafter—distance twenty-two miles. The stoppages of the train consumed fifteen minutes, leaving for running time but forty-three minutes.—[Sac. Union of Mar. 15.