

The Examiner

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND NEWS.

EDWARD WHELAN]

This is true Liberty, when Free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES.

[EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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MOON'S PHASES.—JULY, 1856.

New Moon 2d day, 4h. 51m. morning. E.
First Quarter 10th day, 2h. 43m. morning. N.W.
Full Moon 17th day, 4h. 51m. evening. E.
Last Quarter 24th day, 10h. 22m. morning. S.W.
New Moon 31st day, 4h. 29m. evening. W.

Literature.

(From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.)

WHERE HAST THOU BEEN, MY BEAUTIFUL SPRING?

BY EDWARD CAPERN.

The author is a rural postman, or letter-carrier, trudging thirteen miles a day, not excepting Sunday, between Bideford and Buckland Brewer, and supremely happy in the visits of the muse, and revenue of half of a guinea a week.

Where hast thou been, my beautiful Spring?
To the sultry south, on the swallow's wing;
Kissing the little kidnapped slave,
Ere borne away on the deep blue wave;
Brushing the tear from the mother's cheek,
As she wept for her child at Mozambique?
Else whence comest thou with this potent charm,
Chaining the winds to the frigid zone,
Making the breast of nature warm,
And stilling old Winter's undertone?

Where hast thou been, my beautiful Spring?
Away with the honey-bee wandering,
Sipping the nectar of fabled Cashmere,
Sporting amid the Turk's parterre,
Quaffing warm Araby's balmy breeze,
And spicy scents of the Ceyloness?
Else whence comest thou with the odorous breath,
Chafing the cheek to a rosy bloom,
And scattering the poisonous air of death,
By flinging abroad a rich perfume?

Where hast thou been, my beautiful Spring?
Up, 'mid Heaven's music revelling?
For the tones of thy song from the greenwood bush,
The lark in the sky and the mountain thrush,
Speak as if it were given to thee
To list to scarpic minstrelsy.
Aye, there thou hast been. Not sunny France,
Or old Italia's land of song,
Can furnish such notes from the poet's dance,
As the melody poured from the musical tongue.

Where hast thou been, my beautiful Spring?
Plucking rich plumes from the parrot's wing,
Robbing the clouds of their rainbow crest,
Bathing thyself in the glorious west,
Robbing thy form in the peacock's hues,
And gathering pearls from the orient dew?
Else whence comest thou, with this proud array
Of beauties to sprinkle the russet wood,
Those Lent-lilies bending as if to pray,
And hyacinths bringing the margo of the flood?

And tell me whence comest, my beautiful Spring,
Each star of the earth, each odorous thing
These white-fringed daisies with golden-dipped eyes,
These butter-cups gleaming like summer-lit skies,
These violets adorned with rich purple and blue,
These primroses fragrant and innocent too;
And lastly, the sweetest and richest, I ween,
Of all thy fair daughters, my beautiful Spring,
The budding that stood all thy pathways with green,
Say, where were they gathered to shake from thy wing?

THE CYCLE OF THE SEASONS.

The topic we have chosen for the present chapter is so intangible, that the moment we essay to grasp it, it is gone. Although impalpable it is yet real, for, like the circumambient atmosphere, it is ever present with us, although unseen. If we attempt to symbolise it, we fail fully to portray it, and yet images are its only mode of illustration. It is both the longest and the shortest, the swiftest and the slowest; the most divisible and the most indivisible; the most regretted and the least valued; without which nothing can be done; yet, that which devours everything, and gives existence to everything. It is the most paradoxical, yet the simplest of elements. Strictly speaking, it is never palpable, yet it is ever present; a constant succession, an unfathomable duration; the most momentous benefactor to man, yet seldom estimated according to its worth.

It is the account current with all, in which more are found bankrupt than wealthy, when the balance sheet is demanded. It marks the rising and the setting sun, spreads over us the black veil of night, and gilds with gladness the face of day; it rolls on the revolving seasons, chronicling the deeds of centuries; watching over the birth of infancy, the ardent aspirations of youth, toiling manhood, and tottering steps of the infirm and aged—his sorrows, loves, and cares, nor forsakes him so long as life shall last. It is always the friend of the virtuous and true, a tormenting foe to those who abuse the gift; to the former, it is redolent of fragrant and pleasant memories,—to the latter, of gloomy remorse and despair.

"It rolls away and bears along
A mingled mass of right and wrong;
The flowers of love that bloomed beside
The margin of life's sunny tide;
The poisoned weeds of passion, torn
From dripping rocks, and headlong borne
Into that unhorizoned sea—
Which mortals call eternity!"

And such is that mysterious myth, named Time, who measures our allotted span, from the cradle to the coffin, mingles our joys and griefs in the chalice of life, and then terminates it with this scythe,—

"A shadow only to the eye,
It levels all beneath the sky."

Time is but a name; it is what is done in time that is the substance. What are twenty-four centuries to the hard rock, more than twenty-four hours to man, or twenty-four minutes to the ephemera? "Are there not periods in our own existence," writes an ingenious thinker, "in which space, computed by its measure of thoughts, feelings, and events, mocks the penalty of man's artificial scale and compresses a lifetime in a day."

"I asked an aged man, a man of cares,
Wrinkled and curved, and white with hoary hairs;
"Time is the warp of life," he said. "Oh tell
The young, the fair, the gay, to weave it well."
I asked the ancient, venerable dead—
Sages who wrote, and warriors who bled—
From the cold grave a hollow murmur flowed—
"Time sowed the seed we reap in this abode."

I asked a dying sinner, ere the tide
Of life had left his veins: "Time," he replied,
"I've lost it—ah, the treasure!" and he died.
I asked the golden sun and silver spheres,
Those bright chronometers of days and years:
They answered—"Time is but a meteor's glare,"
And bade me for eternity prepare.
I asked the seasons, in their annual round,
Which beautify or desolate the ground;
And they replied (no oracle more wise):
"'Tis Folly's blank, and Wisdom's highest prize."
"Time sadly overcometh all things, and is now dominant,
and sitteth upon a sphinx, and looketh into Memphis and old Thebes, while his sister, Oblivion, reclineth semi-somnolent on a pyramid, gloriously triumphing, making puzzles of Titanian erections, and turning old glories into dreams, History sinketh beneath her cloud. The traveller, as he paces amazedly through those deserts, asketh of her, Who builded them? and she mumbleth something, but what it is he knoweth not."

Loeke is of opinion that a man, in great misery, may so far lose his measure, as to think a minute an hour; or, in joy, make an hour a minute.

Shakespeare expands the same idea, where he says—"Time travels in divers paces, with divers persons; I'll tell you who Time ambles withal, who Time trots withal, who Time gallops withal, and who he stands still withal. He trots hard with a young maid, between the contract of her marriage and the day it is solemnized; if the interim be but a seignight, Time's pace is so hard, that it seems the length of seven years. He ambles with a priest that lacks Latin, and a rich man that hath not the gout—for the one sleeps easily, because he cannot study; and the other lives merrily, because he feels no pain; the one lacking the burden of lean and wasteful learning—the other knowing no burden of heavy, tedious penury; them Time ambles withal. He gallops with a thief to the gallows—for, though he go softly as foot can fall, he thinks himself too soon there. He stands still with lawyers in the vacation—for they sleep between term and term, and then they perceive not how Time moves."

Time is portrayed with wings to indicate his rapid flight, and if he strew our pathway with life's spring flowers, he also brings, too swiftly, its wintry frosts and desolations. He is also represented with a scythe, to notify that he mows down all alike—the young, the refined and the vulgar, the good and the bad.

"Even such is Time that takes on trust
Our youths, our joys, our all we trust,
And pays us but with age and dust;
Who, in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days."

The earliest expedient for reckoning time seems to have been the sun-dial. Allusion to its use is to be found in Holy Writ. It was called by the ancients *scintillarum*, from being marked by shadow. This instrument was in vogue among the Romans; we have an account of one being placed in the court of the Temple of Quirinus.

Several of the Grecian astronomers and mathematicians constructed dials. Thales is said to have made one; as also Aristarchus and Anaximenes, of Miletus. Herodotus informs us that the Greeks borrowed the invention from the Babylonians. The first sun-dial used at Rome was in use about three hundred years before Christ. Before the use of these instruments in the "Eternal City," there was no division of that day into hours; nor does that word occur in the Twelve Tables. They only mention sun-rising and sun-setting, before and after mid-day. According to Pliny, mid-day was not added till some years later, an *accensus* of the consul being appointed to call out that time when he saw the sun from the Senate house, between the Rostra and the place called *Græcoastasis*, where the ambassadors from Greece and other foreign countries used to stand.

The *Mesopora*, or water clock, was introduced by Scipio Narsica at Rome, 157 B.C. It served its purposes in all weathers, while the dial, of course, depended upon the sun. Sun-dials are occasionally still to be seen in Europe.

"I count only the hours that are serene," is the motto of an old sun-dial near Venice. A capital conceit to dispel dulness and discontent. Life is sure to be much brighter if we look at the sunny side of it.

There is a dial in the Temple, London, upon which is inscribed the admonitory line (a good hint for loiterers), "Begone about your business."

The Chinese have been accustomed, as early as the ninth century, to have watchmen posted on towers, who announced the hours of the day and night by striking upon a suspended board. A similar custom still remains among the Russians. Alfred the Great measured his time by the constant burning of wax torches or candles, notched for the hours. In some parts of the East people measured time by the length of their shadow. Consequently, if you ask a man what time of day it is, he will stand erect in the sun and measure his shadow. There is allusion to this in the seventh chapter of Job: "As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow." Hour glasses were first invented at Alexandria, 150 years before the Christian era.

The monks of old, finding the time hang heavy on their hands, devised some curious expedients to get rid of it. The Abbot of Hirscham (*temp.* 11th century) constructed a time-measurer somewhat similar to our clocks; the machine being different from the sun-dial and the water-clock. It not only pointed out the hours, and exhibited the motion of the earth and other planets, but emitted also a sound, to give an alarm, for the purpose of awakening the sacristan to matins and vespers. Clocks, moved by wheels and weights, also began to be used in the monasteries in Europe about the eleventh century.

In 1232 a curious clock was sent by the Sultan of Egypt to the Emperor Frederic II. "In the same year," writes an old author, "the Saladin of Egypt sent by his ambassadors, as a gift, a valuable machine, of wonderful construction, worth more than five thousand ducats. It appeared to resemble internally a celestial globe, in which figures of the sun, moon and planets, formed with great skill, moved, being impelled by weights and wheels, so that, performing their course in certain and fixed intervals, they pointed out the hour, night and day, with infallible certainty; also the twelve signs of the zodiac, with certain appropriate characters, moved with the firmament, contained within themselves the course of the planets."

We learn that, in 1288, an artist furnished the famous clock-house near Westminster Hall with a clock, to be heard by the courts of law. This clock was considered, during the reign of Henry VI., to be of such consequence, that it was consigned to the keeping of William Warby, dean of St. Stephen's, together with the pay of six pence *per diem*, to

be received at the Exchequer. Four years later, 1292, a clock was placed in the cathedral at Canterbury; it was purchased at a price equivalent to four hundred pounds. In 1523, the clock of St. Mary's, Oxford, was furnished out of fines imposed on the students of the university.

THE MODERN MOLOCH.

The question proposed by little Paul, in *Domby and Son*, is suggested by the caption of our chapter—"What's money?" The reply of many would doubtless be the same as that returned to the young querist referred to—a mere mercantile one—namely, that it is currency, specie, and bank notes, or gold, silver and copper. But this did not suffice for little Paul; he repeated his inquiry—"I mean, what's money after all?" This is the question we propose to discuss in an illustrative way. First as to its *material*. Gold and silver, styled the precious metals, are both pure, ductile and malleable, and unaffected by most conditions of atmosphere. They are of intrinsic and positive worth, and were therefore adopted as the standards of value, to represent all commercial exchanges.

The *Numismatic Journal* states, in reference to the attempt to establish the true origin of coins, that according to the *Parian Chronicle*, a record of the third century before Christ, Phidon, king of Argos, in order to facilitate commerce, stamped silver money in the islands of Ægina, in the year before Christ, 895. Now as Homer existed immediately prior to this epoch, and makes no mention of coined money, whilst he does mention the system of barter, we may infer that it was unknown in his time; for it is impossible to imagine a writer, by whom no art or science has been overlooked, to have passed over so useful an invention as stamped coin, had it existed. In the time of Lycurgus, which followed that of Homer—certainly not later than a century, though there is some difficulty in ascertaining a more positive date, it is equally certain that gold and silver coin, as money, existed in Greece, as proved by his law prohibiting their use in Sparta, and substituting iron: probably rings, similar to the iron ring money of the early Celtic nations, of which specimens have been discovered in Ireland. This brings the introduction of coins between the epochs of Homer and Lycurgus, in fact to the precise period assigned to the invention of Phidon; and the coins of Ægina, from the rudeness of their devices, and imperfection of their execution, may fairly be supposed to be of the age in question. This, compared with the assertion of the *Parian Chronicle*, the silence of Homer, and the law of Lycurgus, seems fairly to authenticate the claim of Phidon, and to establish the origin of the first *current money* as having occurred nearly nine hundred years before the Christian era, in the island of Ægina.

Numa Pompilius caused money to be made of wood and leather—hence the Latin word *Pecunia*; afterwards bits of copper, marked according to weight, were stamped with figures or images. Money, as to its name, is derived from *Juno Moneta*, the Roman Temple where it was coined 260, B. C.

The most ancient Jewish coins represented a *pot of manna* on one side, and *Aaron's blossoming rod* on the other; the inscription being in Samaritan.

Jewish shekels were 1s. 7d.; a talent was 3,000 shekels, or £342 8s. 9d. sterling.

The Egyptians did not coin till the accession of the Ptolemies, nor the Jews till the age of the Maccabees, of the date of about 500 years before Christ.

Athelstan first established a uniform coin in England. The Egbert silver coins were *shillings, thrims, pennies, half-pennies, farthings*. Gold coin was introduced by Edward III., in six-shilling pieces, nearly equal in size, but not in weight, to modern sovereigns. Nobles followed at 6s. 8d., and became the lawyers' fee. Edward IV. coined *angels*, with a figure of Michael and the Dragon.

Money had its equivalent in salt in Abyssinia—a small shell called *cooney*, in Hindostan—dried fish in Iceland—and wampum among the North American Indians. Nails were formerly in use in Scotland, as we learn from Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.

The three principal mints in the world are those of London, of the United States, and of Paris. The total coinage during 1853, according to the *London Economist*, was as follows, in pounds sterling; Paris, £14,901,702; London, £12,066,008; United States, £11,101,120. The total amount of this in dollars is \$193,644,150.

To lack money, it has been remarked, is to lack a passport or admission ticket into the pleasant places of God's earth—to much that is glorious and wonderful in nature, and nearly all that is rare, curious and enchanting in art.

Hood's lines suggest a little moralizing:
"Gold! gold! gold! gold!
Bright and yellow, hard and cold,
Molten, graven, hammered, rolled;
Heavy to get, and light to hold;
Hoarded, bartered, bought and sold;
Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled;
Spurred by the young, but hugged by the old,
To the very verge of the church-yard mould;
Price of many a crime untold;
Gold! gold! gold! gold!"

What has not man sacrificed upon the altar of Moloch? his time, his health, his friendship, his reputation, his conscience, and even his life itself, and all its great issues. Rightly used, money is the procurer of the domestic comforts and luxuries, as well as of the necessities of life, but when inordinately cherished and coveted, it becomes the bane of happiness and peace. In the affair of marriage, how much of disaster has it superinduced—how much of infelicity has it entailed upon the domestic relations. Instead of surrendering to Cupid, how many have been led captive by cupid, vainly dreading of *heart's ease* when they have shown their preference to *marry gold*. But money cannot purchase love, or virtue, or happiness. A philosopher has said, "though a man without money is poor, a man with nothing but money is still poorer." Fuller wisely insists that it is much better to have your gold in the hand than in the heart. A man's character is often indicated by his mode of using money.

A vain man's motto is, "win gold and wear it"—a generous man's, "win gold and share it"—a miser's, "win gold and spare it"—a prodigal's, "win gold and spend it"—a broker's, "win gold and lend it"—a fool's, "win gold and end it"—a gambler's, "win gold and lose it"—a wise man's "win gold and use it."

Of all the evil propensities to which human nature is subject, there is no one so general, so insinuating, so corruptive, and so obstinate, as the love of money. It begins to operate early, and it continues to the end of life. One of the first lessons which children learn, and one which old men never

forget, is the value of money. The covetous seek and guard it for its own sake, and the prodigal himself must first be avaricious before he can be profuse. This, of all our passions, is best able to fortify itself by reason, and is the last to yield to the force of reason. Philosophy combats, satire exposes, religion condemns it in vain; it yields neither to argument, nor ridicule, nor conscience.

"I riches read,

And deem them root of all disquietness,
First got with guile, and then preserved with dread;
And after spent with pride and lavishness,
Leaving behind them grief and heaviness.
Infinite mischiefs of them do arise;
Strife and debate, bloodshed and bitterness,
Outrageous wrong, and hellish covetize,
That noble heart in great dishonor doth despise."

This love of money, which Holy Scripture tells us is "the root of all evil." Jeremy Taylor describes as a vertiginous pool, sucking all into its vortex, to destroy it. That this love of gold is the master passion of the age, few will question. It is "the age of gold;" the auriferous sands of the Pacific for the western hemisphere, and those of Australia for the eastern, are incessantly pouring out their treasures to feed the insatiate cravings of avarice. The liturgy "on Change" seems to read—Man's chief end is to make money, and to enjoy it while he can. The votaries of Mammon, however, do not enjoy their possessions—they have no leisure, in their ceaseless, toilsome efforts, to augment their fortunes. A contemporary observes, with great justice:

"Many a man there is, clothed in respectability, and proud of his honor, whose central idea of life is interest and ease—the conception that other men are merely tools to be used as will best serve him; that God has endowed him with sinews and brain merely to scramble and to get; and so, in the midst of this grand universe, which is a perpetual circulation of benefit, he lives like a sponge on a rock, to absorb, and blot, and die. Thousands in the great city are living so, who never look out of the narrow circle of self-interest; whose dialogue is their arithmetic; whose Bible is their ledger; who have so contracted, and hardened, and stamped their natures, that in any spiritual estimate they would only pass as so many bags of dollars."

It is indispensable, in some cases, that men should have money, for without it they would be worth nothing. This, however, offers no apology for the universal scramble after money. Is this money-mania the highest development of our vaunted civilization?—the *summum bonum* of human existence? the *Ultima Thule* of human effort?

"The plagio of gold strikes far and near,
And deep and strong it enters;
The purple cymar which we wear,
Makes madder than the centaurs;
Our thoughts grow blank, our words grow strange,
We cheer the pale gold-diggers,
Each soul is worth so much on 'Change,
And marked, like sheep, with figures."

"Men work for it, fight for it, beg for it, steal for it, starve for it, lie for it, live for it, and die for it. And all the while, from the cradle to the grave, Nature and God are ever thundering in our ears the solemn question—"What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" This madness for money is the strongest and the lowest of the passions; it is the insatiate Moloch of the human heart, before whose remorseless altar all the finer attributes of humanity are sacrificed. It makes merchandise of all that is sacred in human affections, and even traffics in the awful solemnities of the eternal world."

"Gone, the spirit-quickening leaven,
Faith, and love, and hope in heaven—
All that warmed the earth of old,
Dead and cold,
Its pulses flutter;
Weak and old,
Its parched lips mutter,
Nothing nobler, nothing higher
Than the unappeased desire,
The quenchless thirst for gold!"

Money is a very good servant, but a bad master. It may be accused of injustice towards mankind, inasmuch as there are only a few who make false money, whereas money makes many false men.

Mammon is the largest slave-holder in the world—it is a composition for taking stains out of character—it is an altar on which self sacrifices to self.

"How many a man, from love of pelf,
To stuff his coffers, starves himself;
Labors, accumulates and spares,
To lay up ruin for his heirs;
Grudges the poor their scanty dole,
Saves every thing except his soul;
And always anxious, always vexed,
Loses both this world and the next!"

Shakespeare defines the sordid passion as—
"Worse poison to men's souls,
Doing more murders in this loathsome world,
Than any mortal drug."

In the words of Johnson, it is the
"Wide wasting pest! that rages unconfined,
And crowds with crimes the records of mankind;
For gold, his sword the hireling ruffian draws,
For gold, the hireling judge distorts the laws;
Wealth heaped on wealth, nor truth nor safety buys,
The dangers gather as the treasures rise."

"A miser," observes Hazlitt, "is the true alchemist, the magician in his cell, who overlooks a mighty experiment, who sees dazzling visions, and who wields the will of others at his nod, but to whom all other hopes and pleasures are dead, and who is cut off from all connection with his kind. He lives in a splendid hallucination, a waking trance, and so far it is well; but if he thinks he has any other need or use for all this endless store (any more than to 'swell the ocean') he deceives himself, and is no conjuror after all. He goes on, however, mechanically adding to his stock, and fancying that great riches is great gain—that every particle that swells the heap is something in reserve against the evil day, and a defence against the poverty which he dreads more the further he is removed from it, as the more giddy the height to which he has attained, the more frightful does the gulf yawn below—so easily does habit get the mastery of reason, and so nearly is passion allied to madness." This is the turn the love of money takes in cautious, dry, reclusive and speculative minds. If it were the pure and abstract love of money, it could take no other turn but this.

"The wretch concentrated all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down