This image of BACCHUS was carved in 1776.

This image of BACCHUS [illegible]

THE

STORY OF BACCHUS,

AND

CENTENNIAL SOUVENIR.

BY

BRIGHAM PAYNE.

"What though no tower its ruined form uprears,
Nor blazoned heraldry, nor pictured hall,
Awake the 'memories of a thousand years:'
Yet may we many a glorious scene recall,
And deeds long cherished in the hearts of all
Who hail thee mother; yet from mountain gray
And forest green primeval shadows fall
O'er lake and plain. The journeying stars survey
No lovelier realm than thine, free-born Hesperia!"

GEORGE H. COLTON.

With Illustrations.

HARTFORD, CONN.:
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1876.

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TO

MY FRIEND,

THE FAITHFUL CUSTODIAN OF THE BACCHUS IMAGE,

THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED,

AS A SLIGHT TOKEN OF HIS ACKNOWLEDGED WORTH,

AND A DESIRE TO

CONTINUE A LONG EXISTING FRIENDSHIP,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

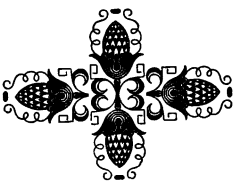
PREFACE.

In the preparation of this book the principal object has been to give to the public the "Story of Bacchus," in a reliable and permanent form; to this end we have been to the trouble of having the biographical histories of the "four prisoners" verified by comparison with the official records of the British government, through J. E. MURCHISON, Whitehall, London.

We will not, however, deny an honest ambition to contribute something of interest to the reader, in remembrance of the glorious era of which the year in which we write is the accepted centennial anniversary. If we shall have accomplished thus much, our satisfaction and reward will be complete.

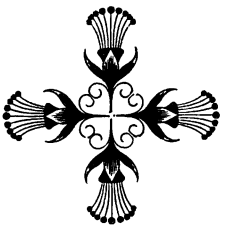
BRIGHAM PAYNE.

AUG. 1, 1876.



CONTENTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS.



THE STORY OF BACCHUS.

BY BRIGHAM PAYNE.

THE war waged a century ago for the independence of the American Colonies, was beyond all question one of the most remarkable contests in the history of the world. It was remarkable in that it was a contest of a few comparatively feeble colonies against the strongest nation of the earth; it was remarkable in that it brought to the surface men, else unknown, previously unheard of, who proved to be heroes, and whose names still live and will live while the world stands; it was remarkable for the number of its hard-fought battles and their results; it was remarkable for the vigor, enthusiasm, endurance, and patriotism of the colonists; and it was most

remarkable of all in its final termination—that termination being, as all the world knows, the complete vanquishment of the British armies, and the complete independence of America. Of the marvelous results which followed, which still exist, and which are, by the blessing of Providence, to continue, it is not necessary here to speak at any length. The little colonies have, in a century, grown to be a country which leads the van of nations; the flag, once despised, is respected wherever on earth it floats; the sails, once few in number, now gleam on all waters; its commercial interests, once so feeble, are now surpassed by none; it has given to the world the most remarkable and useful inventions; and the names of its great and honored sons are household words.

While this great contest was one of the most remarkable, it was also one of the

most romantic and historically picturesque in the world's record. Its whole narrative is crowded with romance. What more romantic than the midnight ride of Paul Revere, starting from the shore opposite Boston, at the gleam of the signal light in the tower of the old South Church, and dashing through village streets, across rural lanes, over deserted highways, sounding every where the note of alarm, and rousing the country people to arm for the approaching fray? What more wildly romantic and picturesque than the escape of General Putnam from the pursuing British dragoons, by dashing down the rocky slope at Greenwich, in this instance "daring to lead where none dared to follow"? What more grandly romantic and picturesque than Washington's passage across the Delaware, in the darkness of night, among the floating blocks and floes of ice? What more

touchingly and sadly romantic, than the story of Capt. Nathan Hale, the "Martyr Spy," the immortal words of whose dying message to his compatriots—"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country,"—were the conception of the purest patriotism and sublimest devotion to country which the world ever saw,—or that of John Andre, the heroic young British officer, whose early death was demanded by the stern necessities of war, while it was lamented by those who could not but approve its justice.

The whole history of the memorable struggle is full of romance, and there can not but be much that history has not recorded. Much of this romance lives only by tradition, but of some there remain visible and tangible tokens. We have still, in a sense public property, the old South Church in whose tower the warning lanterns were

hung; and the old bell at Philadelphia, upon which the hands of age, at the bidding of the voice of youth, rang out the signal of the adoption of the Declaration; and there are here and there preserved among our countrymen, emblems not public,—swords which have a history; muskets about which cling some romantic tale; portions of uniforms, bullet-pierced and blood-stained perhaps; fragments of shell, each and all of which have their story. And it is to one of these visible and tangible emblems of the romance of the Revolution that we wish to draw attention in this article, sketching briefly its strange origin and curious history, from the authentic and reliable data which close research and patient injury have brought to light.

Few residents of the goodly city of Hartford, Connecticut, and few strangers passing through its principal thoroughfare,

have failed to notice in the window of Mr. A. E. Brooks' place of business, a quaint and curious figure carved in wood. It is the image of Bacchus, the jovial god of wine; naked, fat, chubby, and seated astride a cask, holding in front and resting on the cask a basket of fruits,—grapes, lemons, pears and plums, being among the varieties. Grape leaves cover the crown and back of the head, and the hair is composed of clusters of grapes. The figure is painted a buff or flesh color, the eyes are black, the basket brown, the fruit of its appropriate natural color, and the cask is of a dark red, with black hoops. The face of the image is striking in its expression, and the whole figure, in view of the rude tools with which it was carved, is remarkably life-like and artistic. There are dimples in the cheeks and chin, a roguish look in the eyes, and a jovial half-smile on the parted lips. One arm

half-encircles the basket, and the hand of the other arm rests upon the fruit. The image is twenty-six and one-half inches high, and the keg is twenty-one inches long. The whole is cut from a solid log of pine, and was supposed to be all in one piece until a few years ago, when Mr. Brooks, the owner, had the keg bored at each end in order to introduce faucets, and found that three hoops at the front of the keg and two at the back had been added to the block, which otherwise is entirely solid. Well, this quaint and curious figure is an emblem of Revolutionary romance, and has its strange and eventful history. In the year 1776, on the 10th of June, there was captured by the Americans in Long Island Sound, a British ship, the "Bombrig." Among the prisoners there taken, were four of special interest in this sketch.

The first, Edward Sneyd, was the commander of the ship, and was born in the village of Hadlow, in Kent county, England, in July, 1740. On the 14th of November, 1754, at the age of fourteen, he joined H. M. S. "Belvidere," at Plymouth, England, as a midshipman, and served in this vessel for four years on the China station. On his return to England he was drafted to H. M. S. "Hannibal," the hulk of which now lies in Plymouth harbor, and having served in this ship for three years, on the Spanish coast mainly, was again drafted to H. M. S. "Asia," in which vessel he distinguished himself, and was promoted to be sub-lieutenant, and afterwards lieutenant. After serving in these capacities on board several of the royal ships, he was appointed commander of H. M. S. "Bombrig," which was commissioned at Portsmouth, in the month of Decem-

ber, 1775, and after cruising about a short time on particular service was dispatched to the American coast, where the commander is said to have distinguished himself until the capture of his vessel as above set forth.

The second person, John Coggin, boatswain of the "Bombrig," was born of Irish parents at Killegan, County of Meath, Ireland, in March, 1731, and was, on entering the royal navy at Portsmouth in July, 1750, described as a farm laborer. He served in several of His Majesty's ships with such fidelity that he rose to the rank of boatswain and as such joined the "Bombrig" under the command of Sneyd, with whom he had before sailed.

The third, John Russell, was born of English parents near Ramsey, Hampshire, England, in November, 1749, and was apprenticed to a carpenter, and having

served his full time, entered the dock-yard at Portsmouth, in April, 1772, where he remained until the Bombrig was commissioned at that port, and then joined the carpenter's crew of the ship, proceeding to America as before related. A fine figure-head was in those days the *sine qua non* of a vessel, and a ship's carpenter must have been practiced in the art of designing and carving such work, to have been considered qualified for the position, and as Russell had served a full-time apprenticeship, it is to him, undoubtedly, to whom the credit of this production—the statue of Bacchus—is mainly due.

The fourth and last man was William Cook, who was born in March, 1744, near Great Yarmouth, England. He joined the royal navy at Chatham, Kent, in 1771, and having served a full commission of four years on board H. M. S. "Cocka-

trice," on the China Station, was drafted to Portsmouth, to join the "Bombrig," as an able-bodied seaman, and with her came to America. These four men, as has been said, were among the prisoners taken when the "Bombrig" was captured. Of the fate of the other prisoners taken at the same time nothing is known, but these four were taken to old Windham, (famous in history, as the scene of that marvelous "Battle of the Frogs,") and were confined there in Windham jail. There they lay in durance through weary months. Strangers in a strange land, they were yet not wholly friendless, for the ever-tender heart of woman took pity on their captive condition, and extended to them tokens of kindness and sympathy. The Widow Carey, the landlady of the tavern on Windham Green, had compassion on the lonely prisoners, and her heart went out to them

in kind words and her hands with temporal favors.

Who the Widow Carey was we know not, but it is safe to assume that her heart was as big as the capacious fire-place which yawned in her inn, and as warm as the fires which glowed therein. It is likewise tolerably safe to assume that the feelings of the Widow Carey toward the prisoners, were those of pity rather than affection, for we know that the widow married none of them, but became afterwards Mrs. John Fitch. Possibly however the somewhat hasty departure which the prisoners afterward took, nipped in the bud a growing sentiment which might have blossomed into a matrimonial alliance between the commander and the widow. Be all that as it may, two things are certain, one that the widow was kind to the prisoners, and the other that the

prisoners were grateful to the widow. And to show their gratitude and appreciation of their friend in a tangible form, they, with nothing but their jack-knives for tools, carved out that quaint and curious figure, concerning which this sketch is written, and presented it to their benefactress, who put it up as a sign in front of her inn. What there was in their situation and circumstances to suggest to those captives a figure of Bacchus, does not appear. The reason for the generally stout, English look about the figure is evident enough, when the nationality of the makers is considered, but why the jovial god of the vine should suggest himself to them is not so evident. Was it by force of contrast, as parched travelers in the desert deceive themselves with illusions of flowing streams and placid lakes, and as starving men dream of groaning

tables of luxurious viands? or were they so well treated by their captors that Bacchus himself, figuratively speaking, was sometimes allowed in their company? or did they, simply knowing the Widow Carey's occupation, design it as the most appropriate gift for her. Whatever their views, they wrought well what they set themselves to do, and made for their benefactress a very neat, expressive, and appropriate gift. Little they dreamed then, as they wrought upon it, that the war, in the fortunes of which they had early fallen captive, would result in the defeat of their nation, that the colony within whose borders they were confined would become one of the states of a great republic, and that the image which they carved would be kept for a century, and attract the curious attention of thousands of people, and that because of their work, their names, and histories

would be searched out, recorded, and remembered, where otherwise they would have been "unknown and unnoticed."

But whatever their thoughts, the image was completed and presented to their benefactress. Evidently the captives sighed for freedom, for in a brief time, less than six months after their imprisonment, they managed to escape from the jail and made their way toward Norwich, where they secured a boat, and true to their national instincts, and for which, perhaps, they have not received sufficient credit from their countrymen, endeavored to escape to Long Island and rejoin the British forces.

Poor fellows! their earthly freedom was of short duration! on the Sound, their boat was overset, and all except Coggin were drowned, and he was recaptured. In the Connecticut *Gazette*, Vol. XIX, No. 681, published at New London, on Friday,

November 29th, 1776, appears the following paragraph:

"Tuesday night last, one John Coggin, late boatswain of the 'Bombrig,' (who with the three other prisoners lately broke out of Windham jail), was found on board a brig in this harbor. He gives the following account of said prisoners, viz: that the night after breaking out of jail, they, with the help of one Lewis, who was taken in a prize vessel, [which was captured in New York harbor by a party under command of Capt. Nathan Hale, early in June, 1776; the vessel, or sloop which it properly was, lay near the New Jersey shore, and was under the protection at the time, of the sixty-four guns of the British war ship "Asia," in which Commander Sneyd is herein mentioned as having previously sailed], stole a canoe near Norwich landing, with which they attempted to cross the

Sound to Long Island, but at the entrance of the Race, near Gull Island, the canoe overset, when all of them except Coggin were drowned. Their names are Edward Sneyd, (late commander of the Bombrig,) William Cook, John Russell, and—Lewis."

It is to be presumed that Coggin's story was true, and that his comrades perished as disclosed, although he might possibly have invented the tale for the sake of ending a search after his companions, and throwing their pursuers off the track. But inasmuch as the official records of the British government, from which the previous sketch of the lives of these men was compiled, say that nothing has been heard of the prisoners since the capture of their vessel in June, 1776, it is possible that they were drowned as reported by Coggin, and that they did not rejoin the British as some accounts say, the more so as Sneyd

was an officer of ability and of high rank, and would have been certain to have rejoined the navy or been afterward heard of, if alive.

But while the men died their work survived. The quaint figure of Bacchus, carved by the prisoners and by them presented to Widow Carey, remained as a sign in front of her tavern on Windham Green until, as before stated, she married Mr. John Fitch, when it was removed to the "old Fitch tavern." It was afterward, in 1827, sold by the heirs of Mr. Fitch, to Lucius Abbee, the landlord of the Staniford House, and was then enthroned on the branch of an old elm hard by. In 1840 it passed into the possession of Mr. Zaphney Curtis, and remained in the family until 1856, when a cloud dimmed the sunshine of its prosperity. The September gale blew it from its elevated

position on the great elm to the ground, the fall breaking one of its arms and otherwise injuring it. That fall came near ending Bacchus' days. He was put, not into the hospital as he deserved, but into the wood-house, and for three years lay in dust and gloom, and doubtless ere this would have been used for firewood, had not he been spied out by sons of Mr. William Cummings, who begged their father to purchase it. The negotiations were not protracted, and for the pitiful, paltry sum of twenty-five cents, poor Bacchus was purchased. This was the hardest of all, but the adage that "the darkest hours come just before dawn," was true in his case. His transfer for a paltry quarter, was the turning point in his career. Thereafter came brighter days. The figure was taken to Willimantic, was repaired by M. S. Bowdish, and painted first by Charles

Lillie, and afterward by George Bottom, who put it into its present shape. It was purchased of Mr. Cummings by its present owner in 1859, was taken to New York for a few weeks in 1864, to be gazed at by the denizens of the metropolis, and was brought to Hartford in 1872. For two years—1862 and 1863—it stood upon a bar, while ale was drawn from a faucet at one end of the keg, and porter from a faucet at the other end, people coming long distances to quaff a brimming draught from Bacchus' keg, and through historical wood. Since then its duty has been ornamental, rather than useful.

There are many anecdotes related of Bacchus, but this sketch would become too extended were it to include more than two or three, which belong to its different situations, and which refer to its own identity exclusively. While ensconced in

the big elm tree in front of Mr. Zaphney Curtis' tavern, some wag is said to have inserted a clay pipe into one corner of its mouth, which became a target for the boys of the village to stone. This proceeding Mr. Curtis used to resent in a most determined and warlike spirit, and sometimes to the discomfiture of his assailants.

A lady seeing it on board the train, the head only being visible, on its return from New York City, in 1864, supposing it to be a living dwarf, or malformation, became quite excited over its presence, and indignant that it was allowed to occupy a place in a public conveyance. But her pacification was complete when the image and its history were politely explained to her by the gentleman in charge, and she acknowledged the surrender with the classical expression, oh, my!

An old woman leaning upon a cane,

passing leisurely up the street one day, by the window where Bacchus may be seen, stopped before the image and exclaimed, "Why, that is Bacchus; I have not seen him for years and years." She was unknown to those standing by, and it was supposed that she had known the work in her early life, and was happy to once more gaze upon the familiar figure. At all events, she manifested the greatest interest and emotion as she moved on repeating, "for years and years."

Mark Twain's Old Traveler is no myth. Similar spirits crop out in every walk of life. Not long ago a couple of men were seen standing in front of Bacchus, while one more wise than the other was heard to explain to his companion the object of their inspection. "Why," said he, "that is Bacchus. Don't you know about Bacchus? Why, he is something about war, and you

can always get a good drink wherever you see him." Not a very intelligent description of the central subject, but at the same time it partakes less of the poetical license than would at first sight appear.

Such is the history, and has been the life and experience of the Bacchus image. And if we may be allowed to still further endow him with spiritual capacities, by a figure of speech, one may imagine, as he looks at the half-laughing face, and happy expressive eye, that the representative of the jovial god is saying to himself, as he looks out upon the passers by—"Lo, I have seen this country grow from a sapling to a great tree; I have been in darkness and gloom myself, but I have come out into the sunshine; young as I look I am older than the oldest man who walks about these streets." Yes, true. A hundred years ago this image was brought out in the little

old town of Windham, at that time a place of no mean importance; but, owing to a decided tendency of people and capital to concentrate in cities, a force which Bacchus even has been compelled to obey, it has, like nearly all New England country towns, of late years declined in population and influence. It is situated in one of the easternmost counties of Connecticut, being twenty-eight miles north of New London, fourteen miles from Norwich, thirty miles east of Hartford, and forty-four miles west of Providence, R. I. It was originally settled in the year 1689, by an Englishman who had served under Cromwell, and fled to this country when Charles II ascended the throne. At the breaking out of the Revolution it contained a population of 3800 inhabitants, and was a strong hold of democracy, and we believe has kept its record tolerably

clear to the present time. To this place, picturesque and beautiful in all that nature can do to please the most exacting taste, there came one lovely June evening the four champions of King George, of whom we have written. One may easily imagine the excitement and commotion which such an event would occasion in a village like it, full of the strictest religious notions, and with public feelings aroused to the highest degree in favor of a war for freedom from British rule. But it is after all purely an imaginary picture. Of all who participated in the scene not one is left. The years alone have been sufficient to end their earthly careers. Many land-marks even of those days have passed away.

The old historic jail, built of wood, has decayed and mouldered to earth, the spot of its location long lost.

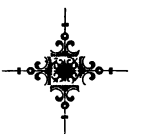
The majestic old elm in which Bacchus

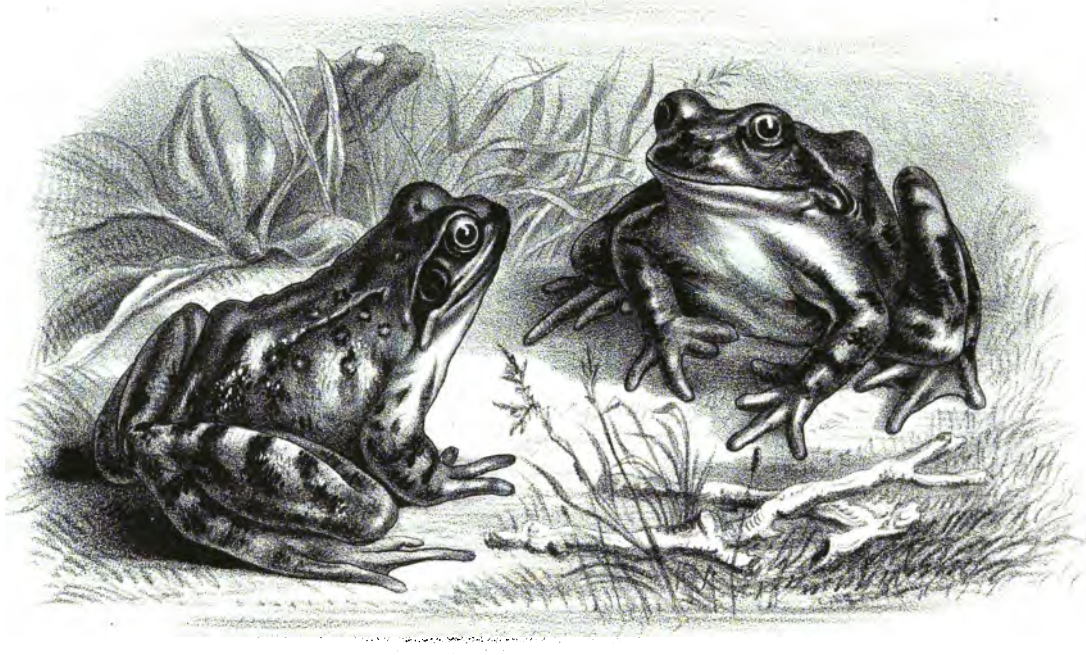
kept watch and ward for so many years, no longer sways its lithe limbs in the breezes of heaven, or furnishes shade in which man and beast may be refreshed; its outstretched branches have been gathered up, its trunk riven asunder, and whatever of romance, or inspiration, or pleasurable emotion its stately presence in its native earth might have excited, for its connection with the things which we chronicle, are gone forever. Time, arbitrary and inexorable, has transformed what man has not in the ancient town so that little of its early condition is to be now seen. It is an interesting, and to those advanced in life, a solemn thing, to go back to the days in which Bacchus first invited the weary traveler to widow Cary's hospitality. It is indeed a thing to stir the heart and to bring out the finer feelings of our natures to stand by this image to-day and go back over the inter-

vening period of time, from the present to the New England summer time when Russell set to work with the help of his companions to carve this figure, which in this Centennial year becomes a historical relic worthy, for its historical associations, a place beside other emblems of the early years, in the archives provided and maintained for their preservation. Interesting, too, are the thoughts that mingle together as we draw the curtain of the past and review with the mind's eye this eventful period. A hundred years! Look back upon the world. Change is written upon every thing. Nations have gone down—empires have crumbled—dynasties been ignored—old administrations have given place to new ones. In our own land wonderful triumphs have been won. The war which made us free established a system which grows fairer and stronger with each

recurring cycle and promises to increase in its excellence, benefits, and purity, over and beyond the time to which statues of wood, brass, and marble can endure—a goodly heritage of a people worthy of their ancestral sires.

THE BATTLE OF THE FROGS.





Windham Frogs before the battle in 1758.

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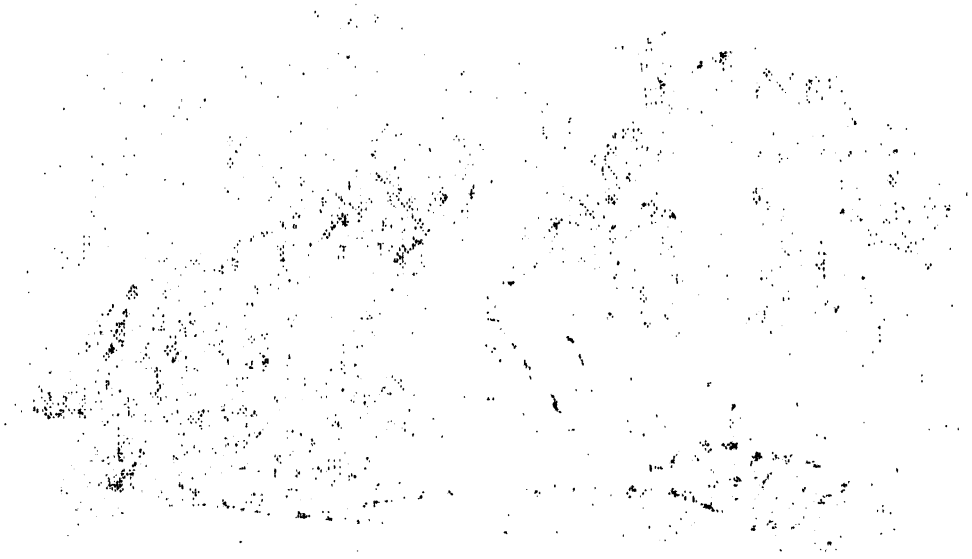


...am Frogs before the battle . 1758.

THE BATTLE OF THE FROGS,

AT WINDHAM, IN 1758.

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM L. WEAVER, IN 1857.

THE town of Windham has been rendered famous for all time, by a memorable event which occurred within its borders about a hundred years ago, when the inhabitants were greatly alarmed and frightened by some unusual demonstration among the bull-frogs.

This really singular affair has obtained a wide-spread notoriety, and the story of the Windham Frogs is well known all over the country. Indeed, the fame of it has been so extended, that a citizen of the town can hardly go so far from home but he will hear something about bull-frogs if his place of nativity is known.

This occurrence has been celebrated in song, and sung in rhyme and doggerel of all kinds of measure and metre; it has found a place in grave history; the most exaggerated accounts have obtained credence in some quarters; various traditions and anecdotes in relation to it have been remembered with remarkable tenacity, while it has afforded an inexhaustible theme for the indulgence of wit and pleasantry at the expense of the inhabitants of the town.

We may presume the actors in the scene did not wish to hear much about it, nor always relish the jokes and jibes to which they were subject, but their descendants have received the ridicule which has been showered upon them from all quarters, with great good nature. They have laughed with those that laughed at the ludicrous aspects of the affair, and have

not been disposed to get angry with those who were inclined to "poke fun" at them on this account. In fact, they have accepted the bull-frog as a device, have stamped his image on their bank-bills, and were it in the days of chivalry, their heraldic devices and coats of arms would blazon with bull-frogs.

Before noticing the different accounts and traditions relating to the affair, or attempting any explanation of it, a few facts will render the subject more intelligible to those unacquainted with the geography and topography of the town.

Windham is situated in the eastern part of Connecticut, about thirty miles from Hartford, and was at the time of the occurrence, (1758,) and for many years subsequent, the most important town in that section of the State. It had been settled about sixty years and contained a thousand or more inhabitants.

The village of Windham is located on a hill or considerable elevation, which rises to its highest point a short distance east of the public green, called, "Swift Hill," because the residence of the celebrated Judge Swift was situated on it.

From the summit of this hill, the ground gradually descends eastward to the Frog Pond, which is just a mile from Windham village on the Scotland road. The intervention of this hill may in a measure explain the confusion of noises heard at the time of the alarm, which appeared to many to be in the air. The Frog Pond, or rather pond of frogs, at the time of the occurrence, was a moderate sized mill-pond, caused by damming a small stream. The pond is somewhat larger now than formerly, caused by raising the dam, and when full, covers a surface of about twenty acres. This pond was of a marshy kind,

well adapted to the taste of frogs, and must at the time have contained a large number, of all sorts and sizes, with excellent voices. It is not necessary, however, to suppose it contained as many as Peters, in his History of Connecticut, would have us believe; for, at a moderate estimate, his account would give more than *five millions;* but there were enough to make a great deal of "noise and confusion" when they became excited. There are not probably as many frogs in the pond now as formerly, yet there are a "few left." A friend, sometime since, fishing in its waters, had a powerful bite, when he "hauled in" and found he had caught a big bull-frog.

It was, according to most accounts, in the month of June or July, 1758, on a dark, foggy night, the wind easterly, with an atmosphere favorable to the transmission of sound, that the event happened.

It was past the midnight hour, and the inhabitants were buried in profound sleep, when the outcry commenced. There were heard shouts and cries, and such a variety of mingled sounds, which seemed to fill the heavens, that soon roused the people from their slumbers and thoroughly alarmed the town.

To the excited imaginations of the suddenly awakened and startled inhabitants, it is not strange that some thought the day of judgment was at hand, while others supposed that an army of French and Indians was advancing to attack the town.

We are not about to draw upon the imagination, to depict the scenes that then and there transpired, as others have done, our only object being to give such facts and incidents as will enable the reader to arrive at a correct solution of the affair. But the alarm and turn out of the whole

town at the dead hours of night, the darkness and confusion in consequence, the cries and screams of the terror-stricken women and children, the running hither and thither of the half-naked inhabitants, the continuance of the strange and perfectly unaccountable noises, must, without any exaggeration, have produced a scene, in common phrase, "more easily imagined than described."

It should be remembered, that it was then comparatively a new country, and during the time of the French and Indian war that resulted in the conquest of Canada. Col. Dyer* had just raised a regiment

*Col. Eliphalet Dyer, the same for whom the frogs called so loudly, was one of the most eminent men in the town and State. He was agent for the Colony to England, member of the first and second Congress, Chief Justice of the State, &c. It is related of him, that on one occasion his arrival in the city to attend Congress was greeted with shouts of laughter; when alighting he discovered the cause of merriment to be a monstrous bull-frog, dangling from the hinder part of his carriage, appended probably by some wag on his route.

to join the expedition against Crown Point, and many of the brave men of the town belonged to it, and were at this time on the banks of Lake George, under the heroic Putnam, battling with their savage foes.

Many incidents of the fright are related, and the names of some of the prominent men of the town have been immortalized by this affair, but we do not choose to give any, except such as are brought out in the following accounts and ballads, and those are probably pure fictions, or greatly exaggerated.

Towards morning the sounds began to die away, and order and quiet was restored to this unusually peaceful town. To those who took the trouble to go to the pond — and we presume many did go the next day — the scene of the disturbance was manifest. Dead frogs by hundreds, some

say thousands, were lying on the shores of the pond or floating on its surface, either killed in battle, or by some dire catastrophe. The mortification and chagrin of the citizens, when the facts became known, may well be imagined, and we presume they never heard the last of it. To be frightened half out of their senses by a parcel of contemptible bull-frogs, was too ludicrous an affair not to make them the butt of ridicule ever afterwards.

That the people of Windham were aroused from their midnight slumbers; that the town was thoroughly alarmed and many terribly frightened; that there was great confusion and consternation, caused by some extraordinary tumult among the frogs, as has been stated, all this is undoubtedly true; but the occasion of this unusual outcry in frogdom, the *why* and *how* of it are not so clear, there being

many versions and explanations of the affair.

The account of Peters, given in the following pages, in his *veracious* History of Connecticut, which has probably been more widely published than any other, is that the frogs finding their pond becoming dry, left in a body for the river, and were so numerous that, in his own language, "*They filled a road forty yards wide four miles in length*," and the noise and clamor made by them in passing through the town at midnight, caused the alarm. This account has obtained extensive belief, especially abroad, and the first ballad following is founded upon it. The absurdity and evident exaggeration of this statement are truly laughable, and were it not that his narration has been, and still is considered by many, a veritable history of the affair, it would be unworthy a moment's notice.

Mr. Peters resided at Hebron, Conn., only about a dozen miles from Windham, soon after the occurrence; he had evidently been in the town and describes its appearance; he might then have easily obtained the facts; his account is *apparently* candid, and were there nothing else incorrect or untrue in his book, his statements, however wonderful, would seem to be *founded* on fact.

But his whole book is most grossly and unpardonably inaccurate and reckless in its statements, besides its downright falsehoods. As a specimen or two of his incorrectness, he says the Frog Pond is *five miles* from Windham, whereas it is only *one;* that it is *three miles* square, when it never was a fourth of a mile in extent.

From this and other exaggerated statements with which his book abounds, it is plain that no reliance whatever can be

placed on his account, clergyman though he was, unless sustained by other testimony, and his object probably was to make out a *large story* to add to the attractions of his book.

There are, however, some traditions that the frogs left the pond and started *towards* the town and were met by the "armed men," and a battle, or rather a massacre *did* take place, when the frogs were slaughtered without mercy by the enraged inhabitants, whose slumbers had been so much disturbed. But these accounts seem to be all founded on the statement of Peters, or ballads based on the same.

The other and more favorite theory is, that there was simply and literally a "battle of the frogs," or a fight among themselves, caused by a short supply of water, owing to a severe drought which had prevailed. This view of the matter is fully set forth,

suitably embellished, in the account given in the following pages, and first published as a preface to the song, entitled "Lawyers and Bull-frogs." It is probably more generally believed by the present inhabitants of the town than any other, as giving the most rational explanation of the affair; yet it is not by any means established, as we shall see.

Supposing the facts and particulars would be better known, and the traditions more reliable by those living in the immediate vicinity of the pond, we have taken some pains to learn the views of those on the spot, as obtained from their fathers, living at the time of the occurrence.

The Frog Pond was then owned by a Follett family, and the premises have been in possession of their descendants ever since. The privilege is now owned by Abner Follett, Esq., who has very kindly

given the writer of this article his views of the affair, founded on traditions preserved in the family. He says that his father, though young, remembered the occurrence, was on the ground at the time, and he has often heard him relate it.

These traditions are briefly as follows: The event occurred in the month of JUNE, though whether O. S. or N. S., Mr. Follett does not know. The pond was not dry, nor had there been any drought, as is so generally believed; there was plenty of water at the time in the pond, it being supplied by a never-failing stream. The frogs did not leave the pond, as many now suppose, and there was no evidence of fighting, though many dead frogs were found about the pond next morning, yet without any visible wounds. The outcry was loud and very extraordinary, the noises seemed to fill the heavens, and are described as thun-

derlike. Some near by declared that they could feel their beds vibrate under them, yet knowing from whence the sounds came, and that they were made by the frogs, they were not frightened, as were the inhabitants of the village. The real cause of the outcry is unknown. Various opinions were entertained at the time; some attributed it to disease, as so many dead frogs were found on the shores of the pond.

Such is the substance of Mr. Follett's statement, and coming so direct, and from such a source, is entitled to the greatest weight. To those who know Mr. F., it is unnecessary to say that nothing exaggerated or savoring of romance would be stated or entertained by him. No man has had better opportunities to learn the facts; no one, we think, would be more likely to discard all fiction, and if these statements can not be credited, we can place no

reliance on any traditions relating to the affair.

From the lapse of time since the occurrence, the few reliable facts preserved, and the conflicting accounts, it is not so easy to decide positively as to the cause of the disturbance.

It occurred when newspapers were scarce, and no account, so far as we can learn, was published at the time. It is very certain that the sounds heard were not the *ordinary* croakings of the frogs, for their usual notes could hardly be heard a mile, under favorable circumstances; besides, their common sounds would not have caused alarm, or attracted any particular attention. It must have been something unusual and very extraordinary to have produced such an excitement.

The statement of Peters, and others, that the frogs left the pond, is rejected, not only

from its inherent improbability, but as not warranted by the circumstances, or sustained by the most reliable traditions.

The other and more favorite theory is, as has been stated, that owing to a severe drought, there was a short supply of water, and that the frogs fought among themselves for the enjoyment of what remained.

The writer, with many others, has believed that the frogs *did* have a fight, that they "fought like dogs," and that many did not live to fight another day.

This view would certainly seem to be inconsistent, or at least not sustained, by the account of Mr. Follett. If the occurrence was in June, it is not probable that there was a drought so early in the season, and if there was no drought, the cause universally assigned as the origin of the fight did not exist. Yet notwithstanding these statements, we think the possibility of a

fight is not absolutely precluded, though rendered less probable. But if the frogs did not have a fight, what caused them to make such a terrible outcry? Was it a disease, as suggested by some, at the time? It is hardly probable that an epidemic would have been so sudden in its attack, have produced so great mortality, and have been so soon over.

Was there a shock of an earthquake, or some convulsion of nature in connection with the affair that proved such a catastrophe to the frogs? The jarring thunder-like sounds would indicate that it is possible, yet there are no facts or traditions besides to warrant such a supposition. Were there thunderings and lightnings, and were the frogs somehow affected and killed by electricity? There is nothing to justify such a conclusion. What was it then that killed the frogs? The two facts

undisputed are, that there was an unusual outcry and a large quantity of dead frogs found about the pond next morning, which, taken together, we think plainly indicates that the noise had some connection with the death of the frogs. It has been suggested that when the frogs make the most noise, they are in the highest state of enjoyment, and if the traditions are correct, the sounds made were of the same *kind* as heard from frogs on ordinary occasions. This would show that they were having a high time, were very happy, and therefore vociferous; perhaps striving with all their might to excel each other. But in this case, what killed the frogs? Is it possible that it was the excitement or over-exertion on that memorable night?

We may tax the imagination to any extent, yet if the frogs did not fight among themselves, we are left entirely to conjecture

as to the cause of the disturbance. But, will frogs fight? We believe they are not naturally very belligerent, yet like other inoffensive creatures, they *can* and sometimes *do* fight, and it is also said that the big ones will destroy and eat up the little ones. Some facts with regard to the habits and peculiarities of frogs, would be interesting, and perhaps help solve the difficulty, but we can only allude to them.

That a frog is not exactly a fighting animal, is shown from the fact that he is not possessed of any formidable means of offense or defense, and has no teeth, only a hard membranous gum, extending around the mouth. Their mode of combat is peculiar. They grapple each other with the fore paws, get hold with their mouth, and when firmly fastened together, will kick with their hind feet at the most vital parts. Besides their capacity for making

their usual sounds, they will, when injured, at times, utter a cry like that of a young child. We should suppose that in this mode of fighting they would make a good deal of fuss and noise, and it *is* a fact that while so engaged they do sometimes cry out or "squall," as a person remarked who had often observed them. In such a contest the strongest would most likely prove the victor, and as the frog is rather tough-hided, death by such a process might not leave any visible wound on the victim. It has been suggested that had there been a battle, there would have been profound silence, but we have it on good authority, that frogs do at times, when engaged in fighting, make more or less noise; yet whether they would, or did, make such a racket as was heard on this occasion, while having a general melee, is a question. But as frogs *will* fight, and

do sometimes make a noise when engaged in combat — even if there was no lack of water in the pond, and no cause known for a conflict — can we not more rationally account for the outcry, and the dead frogs, by supposing that for some reason or other, there *was* a battle, than on any other hypothesis?

But we can devote no more space to the consideration of this "strange eventful history." It was certainly one of the most remarkable events that ever occurred in the country, the like of which was never known before or since. With the facts and speculations given above, and the accounts following, we leave our readers to form their own opinions of the occurrence, and its cause.

As many have a desire to preserve the old songs and traditions relating to this affair, the writer has collected the following

accounts and ballads, which are "Curiosities of Literature" in their way, and presents them as amusing relics of the olden time, in a style and form suitable for preservation.

THE WINDHAM FROGS.

BY REV. SAMUEL PETERS.

[The following marvelous account of the Windham Frogs, is extracted from Dr. Samuel Peters' General History of Connecticut.

Mr. Peters resided at one time in Hebron, Conn., previous to the Revolutionary War, and living so near the scene described, and it being so soon after the event happened, it is rather strange that he should give such an exaggerated account of the affair.

But Dr. Peters was a decided Tory, and found it convenient to leave for England soon after the breaking out of the war. In 1781, he published in London his famous History of Connecticut, in which he attempted to show up the people of the colony, with their manners, customs, laws, &c., in no very enviable light. This extract is a fair specimen of its correctness. No wonder President Dwight called it "a mass of folly and falsehood."]

"Windham resembles Rumford and stands on the Winnomantic River. Its meeting-house is elegant, and has a steeple, bell and clock. Its court-house is scarcely to be looked upon as an ornament. The

township forms four parishes, and it is ten miles square. Strangers are very much terrified at the hideous noise made on summer evenings by the vast number of frogs in the brooks and ponds. There are about thirty different voices among them; some of which resemble the bellowing of a bull. The owls and whip-poor-wills complete the rough concert, which may be heard several miles. Persons accustomed to such serenaders are not disturbed by them at their proper stations; but one night, in July, 1758, the frogs of an artificial pond, three miles square, and about five from Windham, finding the water dried up, left the place in a body, and marched, or rather hopped, towards Winnomantic River. They were under the necessity of taking the road and going through the town, which they entered about midnight. The bull-frogs were the

leaders, and the pipers followed without number. They filled a road forty yards wide, for four miles in length, and were for several hours, in passing through the town, unusually clamorous. The inhabitants were equally perplexed and frightened; some expected to find an army of French and Indians; others feared an earthquake and dissolution of nature. The consternation was universal. Old and young, male and female, fled naked from their beds with more shriekings than those of the frogs. The event was fatal to several women. The men, after a flight of half a mile, in which they met with many broken shins, finding no enemies in pursuit of them, made a halt, and summoned resolution enough to venture back to their wives and children; when they distinctly heard from the enemy's camp these words, *Wight*, *Hilderken*, *Dier*, *Pete*. This last they

thought meant treaty; and plucking up courage, they sent a triumvirate to capitulate with the supposed French and Indians. These three men approached in their shirts, and begged to speak with the general, but it being dark, and no answer given, they were sorely agitated for some time betwixt hope and fear; at length, however, they discovered that the dreaded inimical army was an army of thirsty frogs going to the river for a little water. Such an incursion was never known before nor since; and yet the people of Windham have been ridiculed for their timidity on this occasion. I verily believe an army under the Duke of Marlborough would, under like circumstances, have acted no better than they did."

The following ballad is from an old Providence Gazette, and appears to be founded on Peters' account of the affair.

THE FROGS OF WINDHAM.

AN OLD COLONY TALE FOUNDED ON FACT.

By Arion.

When these free States were colonies
  Unto the mother nation,
And, in Connecticut, the good
  Old Blue Laws were in fashion,

A circumstance which there occurred,
  (And much the mind surprises
Upon reflection,) then gave rise
  To many strange surmises.

You all have seen, as I presume,
  Or had a chance to see,
Those strange amphibious quadrupeds,
  Call'd bull-frogs commonly.

Well, in Connecticut 'tis said,
By those who make pretensions
To truth, those creatures often grow
To marvelous dimensions.

One night in July, '58,
They left their home behind 'em,
Which was an oak and chestnut swamp,
About five miles from Windham.

The cause was this: — the summer's sun
Had dried their pond away there
So shallow, that to save their souls,
The bull-frogs could not stay there.

So in a regiment they hopp'd,
With many a curious antic,
Along the road which lead unto
The river Willimantic.

So they in sight of Windham came,
All in high perspiration,
And held their course straight t'wards the same,
With loud vociferation.

You know such kind of creatures are
By nature quite voracious;
Thus they, impelled by hunger, were
Remarkably loquacious.

Up flew the windows, one and all,
And then with ears erected,
From every casement, gaping rows
Of night-capped heads projected.

The children cried, the women scream'd,
"O Lord have mercy on us!
The French have come to burn us out!
And now are close upon us."

A few upon the first alarm,
Then arm'd themselves to go forth
Against the foe, with guns and belts,
Shot, powder-horns, and so forth.

Soon all were running here and there,
In mighty consternation;
Resolving of the town to make
A quick evacuation.

Away they went across the lots,
Hats, caps, and wigs, were scatter'd;
And heads were broke, and shoes were lost;
Shins bruis'd and noses batter'd.

Thus having gain'd a mile or two,
These men of steady habits,
All snug behind an old stone wall
Lay, like a nest of rabbits.

And in this state, for half an hour,
With jaws an inch asunder,
They thought upon their goods at home,
Exposed to lawless plunder.

They thought upon their hapless wives,
Their meeting-house and cattle;
And then resolv'd to sally forth
And give the Frenchmen battle.

Among the property which they
Had brought with them to save it,
Were found two trumpets and a drum,
Just as good luck would have it.

Fifteen or twenty jews-harps then
Were found in good condition,
And all the longest winded men,
Were put in requisition.

Straightway, in long and loud alarm,
Said instruments were clang-ed,
And the good old one hundredth psalm,
From nose and Jews-harp twang-ed.

Such as were arm'd, in order ranged,
The music in the center —
Declar'd they would not run away
But on the French would venture.

There might have been among them all,
Say twenty guns or over—
How many pitchforks, scythes and flails,
I never could discover.

The rest agreed to close the rear,
After some intercession,
And altogether made a queer
And curious procession.

Some were persuaded that they saw
The band of French marauders;
And not a few declared they heard
The officers give orders.

These words could be distinguish'd then,
"Dyer," "Elderkin," and "Tete,"
And when they heard the last, they thought
The French desired a treaty.

So three good sober-minded men
Were chosen straight to carry
Terms to the French, as ministers
Plenipotentiary.

These, moving on, with conscious fear,
Did for a hearing call,
And begged a moment's leave to speak
With the French general.

The advancing foe an answer made,
But (it was quite provoking,)
Not one of them could understand
The language it was spoke in.

So there they stood in piteous plight,
'Twas ludicrous to see;
Until the bull-frogs came in sight,
Which sham'd them mightily.

Then all went home, right glad to save
Their property from pillage;
And all agreed to shame the men
Who first alarm'd the village.

Some were well pleas'd, and some were mad,
Some turn'd it off in laughter;
And some would never speak a word
About the thing thereafter.

Some vow'd if Satan came at last.
They did not mean to flee him;
But if a frog they ever pass'd,
Pretended not to see him.

* * * * * *

God save the State of Rhode Island
And Providence Plantations;
May we have ever at command
"Good clothing, pay, and rations."

One good old rule, avoiding strife,
I've followed since my youth —
To always live an upright life,
And tell the downright truth.

After the Battle.

After the Battle.

THE FROG BATTLE.

ANONYMOUS.

[The following account of this singular event is undoubtedly much nearer the truth than the narration of Peters. It was published as an introduction to the ballad following.

The latter is said to have been composed by Master Ebenezer Tilden, of Lebanon, father of the somewhat noted Col. Tilden, of the same town. The most ancient looking copy the writer can find, has the following long and rather quaint title: "A true relation of a strange battle between some Lawyers and Bull-Frogs, set forth in a new Song, written by a jolly farmer of New England." This song, under the titles of "Lawyers and Bull-Frogs," and "Bull Frog Song," has been extensively published, and has been very popular. In fact, it has been considered *the* Bull-frog song. In it an attempt is made to hit off some of the magnates of the town, and we presume it was not very well relished by them on its first publication.

The *cause* assigned in it for the disturbance among the frogs, is of course purely fanciful, and the description of the scenes occasioned by the alarm, probably contains more poetry (or rather rhyme) than truth.]

— —

"On a dark, cloudy, dismal night in the month of July, A. D., 1758, the inhabitants

of Windham, a small town in the eastern part of Connecticut, (family prayer having been duly and reverently performed around each altar,) had retired for rest, and for several hours all were wrapt in profound repose — when suddenly, soon after midnight, the slumbers of the peaceful inhabitants were disturbed by a most terrific noise in the sky, right over their heads, which, to many, seemed the yells and screeches of infuriated Indians, and others had no other way of accounting for the awful sounds, which still kept increasing, but by supposing that the day of judgment had certainly come, and to their terrified imaginations, the awful uproar in the air seemed the immediate precursor of the clangor of the last trumpet. At intervals, many supposed they could distinguish the calling out of the particular names, as of Col. Dyer, Elderkin, two eminent lawyers,

and this increased the general terror. It was told me by my reverend grandmother, and I do not doubt the fact in the least, as it has been confirmed by many other aged and venerable *standbys* of the town, both male and female, that the minister of the parish, surrounded by his trembling family, fell on his knees in an agony of prayer, and, (as expressed in the verses which follow,) in his garden among the bean-poles, (but this probably is an embellishment of the poet,) and that by a simultaneous movement, a great proportion of the inhabitants resorted to the same expedient for succor. But soon there was a rush from every house, the tumult in the air increasing. Old and young, male and female, poured forth into the streets, "*in puris naturalibus*," entirely forgetful, in their hurry and consternation, of the nether habiliments, and with eyes upturned, tried to pierce the

most palpable darkness. My venerable informant, who well recollects the event, says, that some daring spirits, concluding there was nothing supernatural in the hubbub and uproar overhead, but that rather they heard the yells of Indians commencing a midnight attack, loaded their guns and sallied forth to meet the invading foes. These valiant heroes, on ascending the hill that bounds the village on the east, perceived that the sounds came from that quarter, and not from the skies, as at first believed; but their courage would not permit them to proceed to the daring extremity of advancing eastward, until they should discover the real cause of alarm and distress which pervaded the whole village.

"Towards morning the sounds in the air seemed to die away, and the horror-stricken Windhamites, discovering that no Indians made an attack, and that for that

time they had escaped from being called to their account, (a general impression prevailed for a time among the females and the more timid of the male population, that the day of judgment was at hand,) retired to rest, but not until the two robust Colonels had planted sentinels in every place where there was the least danger of an attack from the Indians.

"In the morning, the whole cause of alarm, which produced such distressing apprehensions among the good people of the town, was apparent to all who took the trouble to go to a certain mill-pond, situated about three-fourths of a mile eastward of the village. This pond — hereafter in the *annals* of *fame* forever to be called the FROG POND — in consequence of a severe drought which had prevailed for many weeks, had become nearly dry, and the Bull-Frogs it was densely populated

with, fought a pitched battle on the sides of the ditch which ran through it, for the possession and enjoyment of the fluid which remained. Long and obstinate was the contest maintained. Several thousands of the warrior hosts were found dead on both sides of the ditch the next morning. It had been remarkably still for several hours before the battle commenced, but suddenly, as if by a preconcerted agreement, every frog on one side of the ditch raised the war cry, COL. DYER! COL. DYER! *and at the same instant*, from the opposite side shouted the adversaries, ELDERKIN TOO! ELDERKIN TOO!

"Owing to some peculiar state of the atmosphere, the awful noises and cries appeared to be directly over their heads; and, considering all the circumstances, it is not at all surprising that many ludicrous, and even distressing events, should have

occurred on that eventful night, among the affrighted inhabitants of the city of 'BULL FROGS.'"

BULL-FROG SONG,

ORIGINALLY ENTITLED "LAWYERS AND BULL-FROGS."

Good people all, both great and small,
Of every occupation,
I pray draw near and lend an ear
To this our true relation.

'Twas of a fright happened one night,
Caused by the bull-frog nation,
As strange an one as ever was known,
In all our generation.

The frogs we hear, in bull-frog shire,
Their chorister had buried;
The saddest loss, and greatest cross
That ever they endured.

Thus being deprived, they soon contrived,
Their friends to send to, greeting,
Even to all, both great and small,
To hold a general meeting.

Subject and lord, with one accord,
Now came with bowels yearning,
For to supply, and qualify,
And fit a frog for learning.

For to supply immediately,
The place of their deceased,
There did they find one to their mind,
Which soon their sorrow eased.

This being done, the glorious sun,
Being down and night advancing,
With great delight they spent the night,
In music and in dancing.

And when they sung, the air it rung,
And when they broke in laughter,
It did surprise both learned and wise,
As you shall find hereafter.

A negro man, we understand,
Awoke and heard the shouting,
He ne'er went abroad, but awak'd his lord,
Which filled their hearts with doubting.

They then did rise, with great surprise,
And raised the town or city,
Although before unto the poor
They ne'er would show pity.

With one accord they went abroad,
And stood awhile to wonder,
The bull-frog shout appears no doubt
To them like claps of thunder.

Which made them say, the judgment day,
Without a doubt was coming;
For in the air, they did declare,
Was very awful drumming.

Those lawyers fees would give no ease,
Though well they're worth inditing;
To pray they kneel — alas! they feel
The worm of conscience biting.

Being thus dismayed, one of them said,
He would make restitution —
He would restore one-half or more —
This was his resolution.

Another's heart was touched in part,
But not pricked to the centre,
Rather than pay one-half away,
His soul, he said, he'd venture.

Then they agreed to go with speed,
And see what was the matter;
And as they say that by the way
Repenting tears did scatter.

They traveled still unto the hill,
With those men they did rally,
Then soon they found the doleful sound
To come out of the valley.

Then down they went, with one consent,
And found those frogs a-singing,
Raising their voice for to rejoice,
This was the doleful ringing.

Home those great men returned then,
Now filled with wrath and malice,
And mustered all, both great and small,
From prison and from palace.

Swearing, I say, thus in array,
To be revenged upon them;
Thinking it best, I do protest,
To go and fall upon them.

Then armed all, both great and small,
With guns and swords and hatchets,
The Indian king could never bring
An army that could match it.

Old Stoughton he ran and charged up his gun,
And flourished his sword in the air,
"But not being stout," he at last gave out,
And fell on his knees to prayer.

Then armed with fury, both judge and jury,
Unto the Frog-Pond moved ;
And as they say, a fatal day
Unto the frogs it proved.

This terrible night the Parson did fright
His people almost to despair,
For poor Windham souls, among the bean-poles,
He made a most wonderful prayer.

Lawyer Lucifer called up his crew,
Dyer and Elderkin, you must come too.
Old Col. Dyer you know well enough;
He had an old negro, his name was Cuff.

Now massa, says Cuff, I'm now glad enough,
For what little comfort I have,
I make it no doubt my time is just out,
No longer shall I be a slave.

As for Larabie, so guilty was he,
He durst not stir out of the house ;
The poor guilty soul crept into his hole
And there lay as still as a mouse.

As for Jemmy Flint, he began to repent,
For a Bible he had never known,
His life was so bad he'd give half he had
To old Father Stoughton for one.

Those armed men, they killed them,
And scalped about two hundred;
Taking, I say, their lives away,
And then their camp they plundered.

Those lusty frogs, they fought like dogs,
For which I do commend them;
But lost the day, for want, I say,
Of weapons to defend them.

Then with a shout they turned about,
And said we've now been crafty,
Our city's peace shall now increase,
And we shall dwell in safety.

Home those great men returned then,
Unto the town with fury,
And swore those frogs were saucy dogs,
Before both judge and jury.

I had this story before me
Just as I have writ it,
It being so new, so strange and true,
I could not well omit it.

Lawyers I say, now from this day,
Be honest in your dealing,
And never more increase your store,
While you the poor are killing.

For if you do, I'll have, you know,
Conscience again will smite you,
The bull-frog shout will ne'er give out,
But rise again and fight you.

Now Lawyers, Parsons, Bull-frogs, all,
I bid you each farewell;
And unto you I loudly call
A better tale to tell.

[The verses following were published in the "Boston Museum" in 1851, and it is supposed were written by a native of Windham.]

THE BULL-FROG FIGHT;

A BALLAD OF THE OLDEN TIME.

A direful story must I tell,
Should I at length relate
What once a luckless town befell
In "wooden nutmeg" state.

'Twas in the days of old King George,
The Dutchman, who did reign
O'er England, and her colonies,
And islands in the main.

The Frenchmen, in those troublous times,
With Indian tribes did strive
To shoot, and scalp, and tomahawk,
And burn our sires alive.

And many a village was burned down,
And many a shot and scar
To our forefathers oft was given
In the French and Indian War.

But the direst fray in all that war
To shake King George's crown,
Was when the BULL-FROGS marched by night
Against old Windham town.

These bull-frogs lived a mile away,
Beyond the eastern hill,
Within a rich and slimy pond
That feeds an ancient mill.

And there, at night, their concerts loud
Rolled up from stump and bog,
As bass and treble swelled the throat
Of bull and heifer frog.

But "on a time" the greedy sun
Had drunk their lakelet dry;
The reckless mill had drained it out,
With grinding corn and rye.

And they but met an angry glare,
When they reproached the sun;
Their bitter tears moved not a mill
Nor broke its heart of stone.

The drinking sun and mill had drained
A domain wide and rich
And *dissipation*, not their own
Brought the frogs to a narrow ditch.

Nature a living owed to them —
'Twas very plain — and yet
They watched in vain for clouds to come,
And *liquidate* the debt.

They often gasped and prayed for rain,
And she did oft refuse,
And each dark eve conviction brought
That she grudged them their *dews*.

At length, one night, when human kind
In sleep had settled down,
They had Shetucket rolling on,
Beyond old Windham town.

The murmur of that rushing stream,
Borne on the western wind,
Filled them with frenzy, and they left
Their native pond behind.

They sallied forth, a mighty host,
They swarmed upon the hill
Beneath whose front the village lay,
In slumbers deep and still.

And now Shetucket's gurgling roar
Came freshly from the wood,
And maddened them with strong desire
To leap into the flood.

They piped, and screamed, and bellowed forth,
In accents loud and deep,
Their frantic joy, and like the ghost
Of Banquo, "murdered sleep."

The villagers whose rest was slain
By this advancing crew,
Awaked from horrid dreams, in fear
That they'd be murdered too.

For ne'er did angry foemen raise
So loud and fierce a din —
Nor Scotch, nor Dutch, nor mad Malay,
Nor ancient Philistine.

The frightful sounds were now like yells
From painted savage grim,
And now — more terrible than that —
Like Cromwell's battle hymn.

Then forth the people rushed, to hear
Those noises rend the air ;
And some resolved to meet the foe,
Some, refuge sought in prayer.

Some thought the judgment day at hand ;
But their fears were banished quite,
By a funny black, who 'clared 'twas strange
That that *day* should come in the night.

And soon were gathered on the green,
Old Windham's valiant sons,
Some armed with pitchforks, rakes, or scythes,
And some with rusty guns.

And there, in hurried council met,
They trembled and stood still,
To listen to the cruel foe
Who thundered from the hill.

The fiendish jargon that so loud
From throats discordant rung,
They doubted not conveyed fierce threats
In French or Indian tongue.

But how their warmest blood was chilled,
To hear the foe demand
The lives of their best citizens—
Much noted in the land.

How quaked their very souls with dread,
As, mid the grievous din,
The foe, remorseless, bellowed forth
The name of "ELDERKIN."

Their very hearts within them died,
When, as the host drew nigher,
They heard resound, in guttural notes,
The name of "COLONEL DYER!"

But fiery Mars inspired a few,
Who stalwart were in frame,
To meet the enemy in fight,
His insolence to tame.

They girded on their armor strong,
They charged their guns with lead;
Their friends gave them the parting word,
And mourned o'er them as dead.

And then this gallant company
Marched boldly up the hill,
Resolved to quell the raging foe —
His fevered blood to spill.

They reached the spot from whence was heard
The fearful hue and cry,
And, though no murderous foe was seen,
They let their powder fly.

Ensconced behind a granite wall,
They poured a leaden rain
From blunderbuss and rusty gun,
At random o'er the plain.

But strange to tell, the stupid foe,
Returned no answering fire;
They only bellowed louder still
The name of Colonel Dyer!

And when another volley spoke,
And cut through thick and thin,
They bawled more loudly than before
The name of Elderkin!

The courage of the Windham men
Now rose exceeding high,
And so they blazed away till dawn
Lit up the eastern sky.

The enemy dared not assail
This valiant band at all,
But screamed and groaned and shouted still,
Behind the granite wall.

"Pe-*ung*," "pe-*ung*," "go-*row*," "go-*row*,"
"Chug," "chug," "peep," "peep," and "*tee-te*;"
"Cease firing, boys," the Captain said,
"The dogs desire a treaty."

Our heroes rested on their arms,
Till morning's light revealed,
The bodies of the prostrate frogs
Stretched out upon the field.

But when they saw their waste of shot
And fright had been in vain,
Some made a solemn vow that they
Would ne'er bear arms again.

And they all returned with wiser heads
To the heart of Windham town;
While the remnant of the frogs went home,
And soon the rains came down.

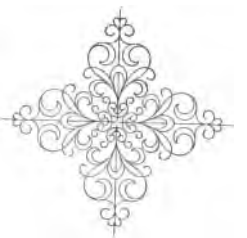
And at this day when evening shades
Envelope brakes and bogs,
The tenants of that pond rehearse
The battle of the frogs.

And to this day, each Windhamite
Unto his little son
Relates how on a summer's night,
The BULL-FROG FIGHT was won.

This tale is true, and years far hence
It must be *current* still,
For bull-frogs two are pictured on
Each current Windham bill.*

*See bills of all denominations on the Windham (Conn.) Bank.

THE CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION BUILDINGS.



THE CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION BUILDINGS.

By Brigham Payne.

THE eminent and much lamented Horace Greeley, on his return to America after visiting the World's Fair at London in 1851, in an article giving a general summary of his impressions of that Exhibition declared that, "the Crystal Palace remained to the end the greatest wonder of all." And such will undoubtedly be the intelligent judgment of thousands who shall have visited our own Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia, in reference to the wonderful buildings within whose walls so many treasures of art and

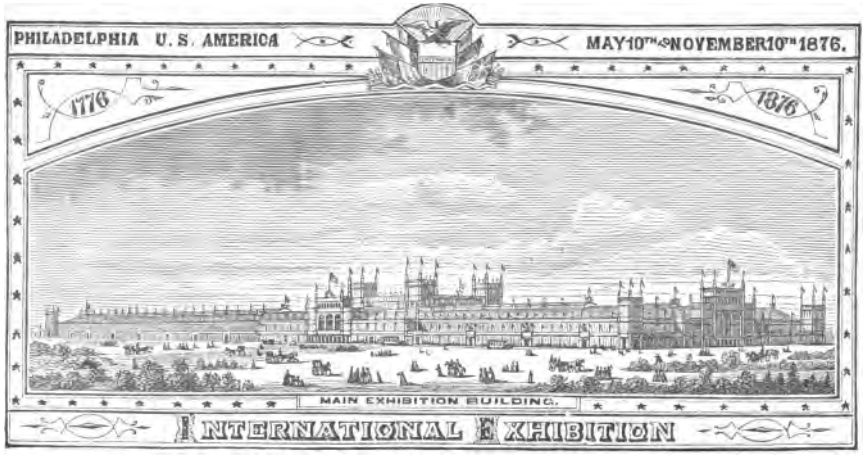
science, industry and nature are displayed. It cannot well be otherwise when we consider that for beauty of design and practical adaptability to the purposes required they have not been equaled, to say the least, in modern times. The cosmopolitan air presented by them is not the least satisfactory merit one feels disposed to acknowledge in them, while they in every aspect meet the advanced, critical taste of the age, and at the same time inspire the beholder with a profound sense of their great magnitude. Long after the glitter and pleasure excited by special exhibits have passed from memory it will be found that the delightful impressions made upon the mind by these imposing structures will endure, and for a life time with those who have become familiar with their grandest lessons.

With these convictions, and the encour-

agement of the publisher of this volume, by his liberality in furnishing the plates for the beautiful illustrations accompanying this article, we take pleasure in presenting to the reader the following descriptive memoranda relating to five of the principal buildings to which we have referred.

These buildings are located in Fairmount Park, on a plat of ground set apart for them, embracing about 236 acres, which is beautifully laid out with well paved avenues and walks, and adorned with trees, plants, and flowers.

On approaching these grounds from Philadelphia proper, the first building reached is the Main Exhibition Building, its southern front bordering Elm Avenue. It is in form a parallelogram 1876 feet long, and 464 feet wide, covering an area of nearly 22 acres. The interior height is 70 feet, the larger portion being


PHILADELPHIA U. S. AMERICA
MAY 10TH & NOVEMBER 10TH 1876.
1776
1876
MAIN EXHIBITION BUILDING.
INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

but one story. On the outside it is 48 feet from the ground to the cornice. At each corner of the building towers rise to the height of 75 feet; and in the centre at the corners of an elevated portion of the roof, 184 feet square, rise four other towers to the height of 120 feet. At the centre of the longer sides and at the ends, are projections respectively 416 feet and 216 feet in length. In these are located the main entrances, which are provided with arcades upon the ground floor, and central facades 90 feet high. There are also numerous side entrances. The ground plan of the building shows a central avenue 1832 feet long and 120 feet wide. On either side of this is another avenue of equal length, 100 feet wide. Between the central and side avenues are aisles 48 feet wide, and on the outer sides of the building smaller

aisles of 24 feet in width. Three transepts 416 feet long cross the building, and at their intersection with the longitudinal avenues make nine spaces, free from support, which are from 100 to 120 feet square. The materials used in the construction of the building, are iron, glass, and wood; and the interior walls and roof are tastefully decorated; the exterior is also embellished and ornamented with pilasters, appropriate cornice and other architectural decorations. Considered as a whole, or in detail, it is a structure eminently pleasing to the eye and understanding, and one could but wish that it might be permitted to remain, a perpetual token of the great exhibition it so fitly distinguishes.

Westward 550 feet from the Main Building, with its north front on the same line, and with its annexes also bordering Elm Avenue, comes Machinery Hall.


PHILADELPHIA U.S. AMERICA
MAY 10TH TO NOVEMBER 10TH 1876
INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION
MACHINERY HALL.

This building is really a continuation of the Main edifice, being in its general features a type of it, constructed of the same kinds of material, with corresponding ornamentations. It is also an immense parallelogram 1,402 feet long, and 360 feet wide. With its annexes it covers about 15 acres of ground. The greater portion of the building is one story high, the principal cornice outside being 40 feet from the ground, the interior height varying from 40 feet to 70 feet as measured respectively from the aisles and avenues. On each of the four sides are projections, and the main entrances are finished with facades 78 feet high. The ground-plan of the Hall shows two main avenues 90 feet wide, with a central aisle between, and an aisle on either side 60 feet wide. Each of these avenues and aisles is 1,360 feet long. At the

center of the building is a transept 90 feet wide; at the point of its intersection of the middle aisle is located the 1,400 horse-power Corliss Engine employed in driving the shafting to which is attached all the machinery requiring power, thus giving action and life to mechanical devices from nearly all the nations of the earth, with a harmony which the various civilized people of the world may well aspire to imitate in inter-communication and fraternal concord.

The third building, and next in importance, is Memorial Hall. It is located north of the Main edifice, and nearest to its eastern extremity. It is, architecturally viewed, the most pretentious and ornate of all the Exhibition buildings. It was erected conjointly by the State of Pennsylvania and City of Philadelphia, at a cost of $1,500,000, and is to remain

MEMORIAL HALL

a permanency for the object its name implies. It is designed in the modern Renaissance style, and is surmounted by a dome 150 feet in height, from the top of which rises a colossal figure of Columbia. It is 365 feet long, and 210 feet wide. The frieze around the entire building, and also all of its ornamentations, are tasteful and elaborate, and approach grandeur in places. The main entrance consists of three enormous arched doorways, each 40 feet high and 18 feet wide. Clusters of columns, crowned with designs emblematic of Art and Science, fill the spaces between these arches, and the massive doors of iron are relieved by bronze panels displaying the coats-of-arms of all the States and Territories of the Republic. At the base of the dome on the meridian angles are colossal figures representing the four quarters of

the globe; while four immense cast-iron eagles with wings outstretched cover the four angles of each corner pavilion. The ground-plan of the building shows numerous extensive quadrilateral halls and galleries, varying in size and height, furnishing 75,000 square feet of wall—space for the display of pictures, and and 20,000 square feet of floor—space for statuary. It is a structure, as a whole, calculated to impress the beholder with a feeling of earnest admiration, and is destined to become a shrine for devotees of Art and patrons of the beautiful.

Horticultural Hall stands north of Memorial Hall, and is also intended as a permanent feature of interest in Fairmount Park. It is in the Moresque style of architecture. The chief materials used in its construction are iron and glass, supported by marble and brick-work.

HORTICULTURAL HALL.

Decorated with polychrome frescoes and arabesques in the Moorish style, its appearance is decidedly charming, and affords a delightful contrast to the sober dignity imparted by the other buildings. The principal floor is occupied by the main conservatory, while on the north and south sides, respectively, are two forcing-houses for the propagation of young plants, covered by curved roofs of iron and glass which give grace of contour to the exterior of the building. The building is 383 feet long by 193 feet wide, and 72 feet in height. From its western entrance, ascending one flight of stairs, is reached a gallery which communicates with the promenade extending entirely around the outside of the building, from which picturesque views of the Schuylkill river and Exhibition grounds can be obtained.

Northward from Horticultural Hall stands Agricultural Hall, the last although not the least in interest and utility, of the great buildings under consideration. Possessing characteristics peculiarly its own, it may be said to belong to no decided style extant, and as Bayard Taylor says, "is indescribable." It consists of a nave 826 feet long, with three transepts crossing it at right angles, each of which is 540 feet long. The nave and transepts are formed by a framework of acutely pointed Gothic arches of wood. Looking from transept to transept the view reminds one of an immense Gothic Cathedral, and with its lofty and imposing air imparts an emotion of involuntary satisfaction. Viewed exteriorly, the beauty of its arching outlines will be a welcome relief from the common right-angle lines of ordinary structures,


1776 AGRICULTURAL BUILDING. 1876.

to those who have comprehended their elegance, and feasted upon the wonders of its exhibits.

And so will all the recollections of these buildings gladden the heart of every lover of art and admirer of true enterprise in the development of material things, and the successful organization and perfect triumph of the great display will be a hallowed memory and a world-wide glory to every individual American.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