

The Salt River Journal.

A. H. BUCKNER, Editor & Proprietor.

"AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM."

G. B. PRICE, Publisher.

VOL. 7—NUMBER 35.

BOWLING-GREEN, MO. SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 1840.

WHOLE NUMBER 347.

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Miscellaneous.

From the Lady's Book for April.

THE SABBATH.

BY THE HON. ALEXANDER EVERETT.

Of all the subjects that can be presented to the contemplation of the people at large, Religion is one in which they take the deepest interest. Of all the occupations in which they can be engaged, religious exercises are those which habitually produce in their minds the strongest excitement. If it were the object of a lawgiver, independently of any other consideration of expediency and duty, merely to provide the people with the means of agreeable occupation and amusement for a day of rest, he could not do it so well, if at all, in any other way, as by instructing them to devote it to religion.

Religion reveals to us the secret of our higher and better nature, lifts us above the common offices of daily life, into communion with the sublime Spirit, whose word created and whose incomprehensible essence infuses and sustains the universe. It teaches us that we are not, as the base theories of a detestable sophistry would represent us, merely a different order of the same race of beings, with the brutes that surround us, destined like them to pass an ephemeral life, and then sink into nothing, but that we possess within us the germ of a heavenly nature, for which death is only the opening of a new form of existence, and which will develop its faculties hereafter through countless ages of happiness or misery, accordingly as the opportunities for improvement afforded here have been improved or neglected.

Religion expands the intellect by familiarizing us with the most interesting questions in the philosophy of morals and mind. It enlarges the heart by repressing the selfish and encouraging the social and benevolent feeling. It checks our pride in prosperity and our depression in adversity, by impressing upon us the trilling importance of all our present interests when compared to those which belong to us as candidates for a higher state of existence. It consoles us under the agony of parting from those we love, by the reflection that we shall meet again in scenes of permanent happiness. In a word, it changes the universe from a chaos of confusion and misery, to a grand and beautiful creation, the fit residence and temple of the high and holy One, that inhabiteth eternity.

It is not in nature for those who believe these sublime truths to hear about them or think of them without the strongest excitement. What is there in the most absorbing affairs, the most exquisite entertainments, that can ever claim in this respect to come into competition with them.

What is there, or example in the table of the most highly wrought and beautifully written romance, which can be compared, for deep and absorbing interest, with the splendid history of creation and redemption, of which the record is the Bible, the scene, the universe the time eternity, God, superior beings and ourselves the subjects! Who ever complained of not being excited by the proceedings in a case at law, in which his property or life were at issue? In the case which is argued every Sabbath in the courts of God, there is more at stake than any earthly property or mortal life—our share in the inheritance of a better world, our happiness or misery throughout all eternity.

The highest minds of every age and country have exhausted the resources of language in expressing the delight with which they habitually dwell upon this subject. "I would rather," says Lord Bacon, "believe all the fables of the Talmud and the Alcoran than that this universal frame is without a Mind." Schiller in his beautiful hymn to Pleasure, represents her banner as waving on this sun-bright rock of Religion: with the monarch minstrel of Scripture, the being of God is a motive for general exultation and jubilee.—"The Lord reigneth: let the earth rejoice." He does not consider it a tiresome and gloomy employment of time to attend public worship. "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go up to the house of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God."

Will it be said that these are the high aspirations of superior minds, improved by every accidental advantage, but that they are above the comprehension of the mass of the people, who can only be excited and amused

by objects and pleasures of a purely sensual character? Those who entertain this opinion do great injustice to the mass of the people, and have formed a very inadequate conception of the dignity and elevation of the human character, even in its lowest estate. To all who have reflected on the science of government, and arrived at just conclusions, it is known that religion is the chief element which consolidates and holds together the fabric of society. In a great many countries, it is the force ostensibly and formally employed for this purpose: in others, as with us, it operates indirectly: but how would it produce the effect in either way, if the mass of the people were indifferent to it? It was said by Gibbon that the introduction of Christianity was one of the principal causes of the decline of the Roman empire. This was wholly false in fact; and sounder thinkers, reasoning on a directly opposite view of the subject, have agreed that the civilizing and consolidating influence of Christianity on the rude minds of the barbarian invaders of that empire, was the chief cause which formed the new political creations that grew up out of its ruins. "The kingdom of France," says Montesquieu, "was the work of the bishops," and we know that with the People at their head, they governed Europe for several centuries. In all this there was much abuse, but the very extent of the abuse proves the strength of the principle. If the mass of the people are indifferent to religion, how happened it that the whole civilized world was thrown into convulsions for a hundred and fifty years by the religious divisions of the Reformation; convulsions of which the great political revolutions of our own days are among the indirect results?

Or, to look more nearly at our own people, and the common experience of daily life, what are the books that circulate most widely through all the classes of the community? We know that when the popular works on any other subject are sold by thousands, those that treat of religion are sold by tens and hundreds of thousands. Would this be the case if the people did not feel a deep interest in the subject? It will perhaps be said that this difference is in part the effect of exertion. There are Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Missionary Societies, which are all busy in distributing religious books, and this is the reason why they circulate so widely. But why are there no such associations for the distribution of books on history, politics, and the other branches of useful knowledge? There is evidently no other reason excepting that the people take a much deeper interest in religion than they do in any of these subjects, interesting and important as they certainly are.

It is said that public devotional exercises are regarded by the people as gloomy or tiresome. How happens it then that in each of our large cities forty or fifty churches are regularly crowded every Sabbath twice and that often three or four times in the day? I had the pleasure, not long since, of attending an evening lecture in one of the largest churches in Boston where every seat up to the top of the pulpit stairs was occupied and every alley filled with persons standing, all listening with breathless interest to a sermon a full hour long. There were probably very few of this audience who had not attended church twice before on the same day, and not one who was under any obligation or compulsion to attend at all. In the less thickly settled parts of this country, where the means of assisting in the public exercises of religion are not supplied in the usual way, the inhabitants of considerable extent of territory collect together from time to time, and hold a permanent assembly of several days for this purpose, under the name of camp-meeting. Is it probable that crowds of people would congregate from distances of thirty, forty, perhaps a hundred miles, and engage by the week together in devotional exercises, if they felt no interest and took no pleasure in them?

Facts like these sufficiently prove that it is not considered by the public as a gloomy and tiresome employment of the Sabbath to devote it to religious exercises. Where the attention is deeply without being painfully engaged, the frame of mind is for the time agreeable; and I am far from being certain that any thing would be gained, even on the score of cheerfulness, by substituting a different method of observing the Sabbath, from that which is generally in use in this country. It has been my fortune to witness the celebration of this sacred festival in some of the capitals of Europe, where the greater part of it is regularly devoted to public sports, and where the theatres are open twice as long as on any other day of the week. I have seen the French peasants dancing under the trees on Sunday afternoons, in their holiday dresses—and I can say with perfect truth, that I know no place in which the return of the Sabbath is welcomed with so much interest, and the occupations it brings with it, pursued with such cheerfulness as in the metropolis of the Pilgrims, where it is wholly devoted to religion. Let any one walk the streets of Boston on a fine Sabbath morning when the bells are ringing and the whole population of both sexes, in their best attire, are repairing to their respective places of worship, and if the scene does not pro-

duce upon his mind a more pleasing impression than the tumult of a bull-fight, or the noisy mirth of a rustic dance, I can only say that his mental constitution is different from mine.

The following just and wholesome rebuke is from that interesting and spirited paper the St. Louis Pennant. If you can mend the manners of your brother knights of the quill, Mr. Pennant, their readers will not forget you soon.

PARTIZAN FURY.—Our political neighbors are growing as crusty and pugnacious as a parcel of hungry dogs over a carcass. We don't see how honorable men, of fine tastes and sensibilities, like the editors of this city, should consent to make gladiators of themselves, and beat and worry each other merely for the amusement of the crowd, or to promote the selfish views of political leaders. We wish to see the Press elevated and dignified in its character—devoid of scurrility and personality—and aiming constantly to refine and enlighten, rather than to blacken and defame. Although we agree with Jefferson, that "political discussions are the surge upon which the vessel of liberty rides," yet we do conscientiously believe that politics at the present day are carried too far. There is no necessity, in fact, that people should become personal enemies because they entertain different views of subjects of general importance—but, on the contrary, the utility of calm and moderate forbearance is by the very fact increased ten-fold. If men were left alone, with facts placed before them, they would scarcely ever fail to arrive at correct conclusions. But, as these things are now managed, the quiet, busy citizen, the greater part of whose time is spent in that best of all occupations, "minding his own business," is met by declamation, denunciation, blackguardism, scurrility, adulation abuse and clamor, until he becomes bewildered and distracted; and, if he do not go home in disgust without voting at all, he marches up to the ballot-box under a *squad-master*, and discharges the highest and most responsible duty of a freeman, in a frame of mind little calculated to consult his own honest convictions or the true welfare of his country.

In fact, if editors would but learn the truth, they would find that the great mass of their intelligent readers are disgusted with slang and eagerly seize hold of any thing like a little relief from this incessant recrimination.—There are some, to be sure, who rub their hands and seem delighted, whenever a blow is dealt, no matter by whom. There are those, also, who will travel fifty miles to see a fight between two pugilists: but the good or all will of such can be of but little consequence when compared to the opinion of the wise, the good, the benevolent, and the patriotic.

We conjure our political friends to keep cool; for, if they go on at this rate, they will certainly exhaust the boilers before election, and explode—truly a great loss to the community in general and themselves in particular.

From the Ohio Statesman.

A VOICE FROM THE HERMITAGE.

Below we publish the reply of the venerable Hero of New Orleans, the letter of a committee appointed by the last Legislature, inviting him to join the citizens of Ohio in celebrating the next anniversary of our National Independence:

HERMITAGE, May 11, 1830.

GENTLEMEN: I had the honor to receive, by due course of mail, your flattering communication of the 17th February last, enclosing the preamble and resolutions adopted by the Legislature of Ohio, by which I am invited to unite with them and the people of that State in celebrating the approaching anniversary of our National Independence.

An answer to this communication has been deferred thus long, because of my earnest wish to accept it, should the state of my health have continued such as to authorize the hope that I could perform the journey.—But finding that my strength has not latterly increased, I am constrained to give up the agreeable wish, and must request you to convey to the Legislature and people of Ohio my sincere regret that it will not be in my power to wait upon them in person, and thank them for the very distinguished honor they have paid me.

I shall ever feel a debt of gratitude to the people of Ohio for the many proofs they have given me of their respect and confidence; and it is increased by the cordial terms in which their Representatives on this occasion have been pleased to renew their approbation of my conduct whilst in public service. In a country like ours, free and intelligent, public opinion is the great lever by which the Government is held to its proper functions, and we are authorized, from all our experience, to look to it as the best guarantee that our institutions will as permanent as they have been hitherto glorious to the cause of popular liberty. To be assured that my conduct, when subjected to this exalted test, can bear the favorable judgment expressed by the Legislature of your State, is therefore an honor of the highest kind, and one to which I feel that I am indebted more to their kindness and liberality than any merit of my own, save that of an honest intention in all

my public acts to pursue fearlessly what I thought would conduce to the interest of my country.

It is particularly gratifying to me, gentlemen, to be assured by your Legislature that the grounds on which I rested my opposition to the encroachments of the money power are regarded with favor by the people of Ohio. The dangers of that power, now more evident because they are brought closer to the observation and business concerns of all classes of our citizens, form in my judgment, the only cloud in our political horizon. In all other aspects, the influences adverse to the genius of our institutions seem to have yielded to the demands of the people, and such, I doubt not, will be the case with those wielded by the money power as soon as the public voice has another opportunity of acting upon them. All that we have to do on this subject, is to persevere a little longer, maintaining the doctrines of the Constitution and the suggestions of common sense. We know that our fathers who framed the Constitution gave to Congress no power to charter a Bank, and we cannot err, therefore, in saying that if our Government had never departed from their example, we would have had none of the evils which now afflict us in consequence of bank suspensions, and an irredeemable paper currency. We know that if the Government deposited none of the money of the people with banks, these institutions would have no power to endanger the safety of the public treasure, or to influence, improperly, questions of public policy. We know that banks do not make money, but only circulate their paper emissions, which must be good or bad according to their capacity to redeem them with specie, and hence that there can be no confidence in them as long as they maintain the right to suspend specie payments at pleasure.

From such truths, it appears to me to be self-evident, that there is now no relief for the people but in the adoption of the Independent Treasury recommended by the present Administration of the General Government. By this plan, the financial operations of the Treasury will be simplified, and the people will have the strongest guarantee that the money which is raised from them by taxation will be applied according to the requirements of the Constitution. If, in addition to this reform in our financial system, Congress would, at the same time, pass a general bankrupt law, by which the banks which are now in existence, or may be hereafter chartered by the States, would be bound to make an equitable distribution of their effects to their creditors when they refuse to redeem their notes with specie, it cannot be doubted that there would be an end to the evils of a depreciated paper currency. These measures being adopted, but little time would be requisite to enable those banking institutions which are sound to regain the public confidence; and the labor of the country, the farming, manufacturing, and mechanic interests would soon revive: that credit system which is based on real capital, and which goes hand in hand with the labor and enterprise of our citizens, would be enlarged, not diminished, by the operation of these measures.

Congratulating you, gentlemen, on the bright prospects which are before us in respect to the adoption of a proper remedy for the existing disorders of our currency, and trusting that our country will soon be free from the withering influences of a money power which is not recognized by the Constitution or the true interests of our country, I remain, with sentiments of profound respect and gratitude to the people and Legislature of your State, and to yourselves,

Your friend, and fellow-citizen,
ANDREW JACKSON.

To Samuel Spangler, Dowry Utter, John E. Hunt, on behalf of the Senate.

To George H. Flood, Rufus P. Spalding, John H. Blair, Henry West, Edw. Smith, on behalf of the House of Representatives.

ELOQUENT AND SOUND ADVICE.—The following by Todd, is full of salutary advice. Its application to newspapers, may be made with equal propriety. Genius, or power of mind, is one of the noblest gifts of Heaven, and when perverted to the demoralization of mankind, and the encouragement of vice instead of the promotion of virtue, the responsibility to the possessor is indeed appalling.—[Phil. Enq.]

"Beware of bad books—never open one—they will leave a stain upon the soul, which can never be removed. If you have an enemy whose soul you wish to visit with a heavy vengeance, and into whose heart you would place vipers which will live, and crawl, and torment him through life, and whose damnation you would seal up for the eternal world, you have only to place one of these destroyers into his hands. You have certainly paved the way to the abodes of death; and if he does not tread it with hasty strides, you have, at least laid up food for many days of remorse. Those who print, sell and peddle such works to the young, are amongst the most awful scourges with which a righteous God ever visited our world. The angel of death can sheath his sword, and stay his hand in the work of destruction. But these wretches! they dig

graves so deep that they reach into hell.—They blight the hopes of parents, and pour more than seven vials of wo upon the family whose affections are bound up in the son who is thus destroyed."

SOMETHING SINGULAR.—There now lives within two miles of this place, a lady verging on her 70th year, who for 30 years and upward, has not visited this famous town. This lady is in good health and spirits, and has all the comforts of life about her. Within ten miles of this village, there is another old lady who has lived in her present neighborhood, for half a century, and never saw Edgefield Court-House in her life. She also is in good health, and could easily visit the place, if she wished to do so. Such a want of curiosity, is, perhaps, unparalleled. These females certainly do not inherit that restless spirit of curiosity, which is believed by some to be characteristic of the sex, from grandmother Eve. The Woodman has felled the forest around them, and towns and hamlets have sprung up thickly in their vicinity, but they "pass them by as the idle wind," and regard them not. Like a personage celebrated in classic story they are content to dwell on their ground.

"Along the cool sequestered vale of life,
They keep the soleless tenor of their way."

We can give an instance of quite as dominant a curiosity as in the two good wives, (or spinners, as the case may be) of Edgefield. There is a man living in this town who possesses all his locomotive, and other faculties, in as good a degree as ordinary men, who has not yet been to see the Rail Road, although he has never seen one, and the Road is only a quarter of a mile from his house—neither has he been on either the steamboats of the Line.—Wilmington (N. C.) Chronicle.

NECESSITY OF MENTAL CULTURE.—Contemplate, at this season of the year, one of the magnificent trees of the forest, covered with thousands and thousands of acorns. There is not one of those acorns that does not carry within itself the germ of a perfect oak, as lofty and as wide spreading as the parent stock; which does not enfold the rudiments of a tree that would strike its roots in the soil, and lift its branches toward the heavens, and brave the storms of a hundred winters. It needs for this but a handful of soil, to receive the acorn as it falls, a little moisture to nourish it, and protection from violence till the roots is struck. It needs but these; and these it does need, and these it must have; and for want of them, trifling as they seem, there is not one out of a thousand of those innumerable acorns which is destined to become a tree.

Look abroad through the cities, the towns, the villages of our beloved country, and think of what materials their population, in many parts already dense, and every where rapidly growing, is, for the most part, made up. It is not lifeless enginery, it is not animated machines, it is not brute beasts, trained to subdue the earth: it is rational, intellectual beings. There is not a mind, of the hundreds of thousands in our community, that is not capable of making large progress in useful knowledge; and no one can presume to tell or limit the number of those who are gifted with all the talent required for the noblest discoveries. They have naturally all the senses and all the faculties—I do not say in as high a degree, but who shall say in no degree!—possessed by Newton, or Franklin, or Fulton. It is but a little which is wanted to awaken every one of these minds to the conscious possession and the active exercise of its wonderful powers. But this little, generally speaking, is indispensable. How much more wonderful an instrument is an eye than a telescope! Providence has furnished this eye; but art must contribute the telescope, or the wonders of the heavens remain unnoticed. It is for want of the little, that human means must add to the wonderful capacity for improvement born in man, that by far the greatest part of the intellect, innate in our race, perishes undeveloped and unknown. When an acorn falls upon an unfavorable spot, and decays there we know the extent of the loss; it is that of a tree, like the one from which it fell; but when the intellect of a rational being, for want of culture, is lost to the great ends for which it was created, it is a loss which no one can measure, either for time or eternity.—[Edw. Everett.]

A LONG SLEEP.—The following is an extract from a letter received from Yorkshire, England:—"A remarkable circumstance now astonishes the people in this place. There is at present in the neighborhood of Huddersfield a man who has been sleeping for the last thirty-one weeks. Shots have been fired in the room in which he sleeps, and it was also suggested to open some of his veins, which was done; but every effort failed in rousing him, and yet his breath and pulse are going quite regular. It is said that the same individual has had two similar dozes before now: the first lasted for two months, and the second for five months."

A noble heart, like the sun, showeth its greatest countenance in its lowest estate.