

may of the pretended providential assignment of the African slave to bondage!

But, again, Mr. Chairman, I am opposed to the further extension of slavery, and in favor of the Ordinance of 1787, for the West and Proviso, as it is more recently called, because the South, today, is possessed of nearly 350,000 square miles of territory more than the North. This is an area sufficient, in the estimation of many intelligent men, to keep the slavery-propagandists constantly engaged in extending the institution for three hundred years to come. Though such be the fact, and though the South has, according to the positive declarations of some of her eminent men on this floor, controlled the Government for the last fifty years, yet they have the unblushing impudence to tell us, in the most emphatic terms, that should we rescind the Ordinance of 1787, which was unanimously passed by our fathers, they will dissolve the Union! Sir, does the perpetuity of this mighty Republic, constituted of thirty sovereign States, hang upon such a tenure as the carrying out the views, and complying with the selfish wishes, of the Southern portion of the Union? Sir, for one, do not believe that this Government can be overthrown, for the purpose of extending the institution of slavery; and I believe that when an attempt of this kind is made by any portion of the States, they will find that they are not without their God. They will find that we have a commander in the ship of state, who is not afraid to meet the crisis, and who will prove as true to his country, in the day of trial, as the noble Lawrence, in the day of the deck of his vessel, and his last words will be like his—"Don't give up the ship!"

THE NATIONAL ERA.

WASHINGTON, JUNE 20, 1850.

THE SOUTHERN PRESS.

This is the name of the new Southern organ in this place. It appeared last Monday, and is published as a Daily, Tri-Weekly, and Weekly. It is better tempered than the *Union*, less conservative than the *Intelligencer*, rather more extreme than either in its doctrines respecting Southern rights and interests.

The *Intelligencer*, noticing its appearance, avails itself of the occasion to magnify its own devotion to sectional interests. It says, "they" (the editors) "shall devote themselves to the true interests of the Union, and, above all, to those of the South, with more steadiness than this press has been able to do during the existence of fifty years, nobody will be more willing than the editors of this paper to congratulate them!"

It is interesting to see the *Intelligencer* in the interests of the South above those of the Union! Good Heaven!—is there any other place than "the South" in some people's geography? But, why feel surprised at the language of the Press, when we see both Houses of Congress acting on precisely this same geographical dogma?

We wish the Southern Press all the patronage it shall deserve. It is edited by Ellwood Fisher and E. De Leon, published by G. A. Sage and Her. H. Heath. So far as we understand, the editors believe that Slavery is the normal condition of humanity, and Freedom the exception; and they are just the men to prove this, if anybody can.

One thing, we are sure, will gratify them, as an indication of the sound feeling of this community on the subject of slavery. The *National Era*, a paper somewhat respectable for contents and appearance, pretty well domesticated in Washington, tolerably known, with a few contributors of ascertained merit, has not been favored with the slightest token of recognition by the old presses here, from the time of its birth. The reason is, that it believes in the Divine right of Human nature to Freedom: it is suspected of entertaining certain dogmas concerning Human Rights proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, and now and then broached in the North.

On the other hand, the "Southern Press" unfortunately as it is in its outward being, no sooner appears, than the old presses here, take off their hats and greet it as the most respectable personage. And the reason—highly flattering to their taste and good sense—is that the grand idea of the new organ is to be the *Divine right of Slavery*.

NASHVILLE CONVENTION.

The Nashville Convention, after a session of nine days, adjourned to meet again at the same place, six weeks after the adjournment of Congress.

Its proceedings have excited little interest. It was an abortion, and it is not worth a word of comment.

PROCEEDINGS IN THE SENATE.

The Compromise bill is gradually assuming a shape, adapting it more satisfactorily to the views of slaveholders. Congress is to interpose no obstacle to the introduction of slavery into the Territories. The Territorial Legislatures are prohibited from interfering against its introduction, but are permitted to pass police regulations to enforce its claims, should it be extended there. And, as if to encourage the slaveholders to emigrate their slaves, the Senate, last Monday, after a full discussion, resolved, by a vote of thirty-eight to twenty, that "when the said Territory, or any portion of it, shall be admitted as a State, it shall be received into the Union, with or without slavery, as their Constitution may prescribe at the time of their admission." The yeas and nays were as follows:

Yeas—Messrs. Atchison, Bogler, Bell, Benton, Berrien, Bright, Bates, Cass, Clay, Clemen, Cooper, Davis of Mississippi, Dawson, Dodge of Iowa, Douglas, Downs, Foote, Houston, Hunter, Jones, King, Mason, Norton, Norris, Prentiss, Pratt, Rankin, Schell, Shields, Sumner, Sturgeon, Turley, Underwood, Wales, Webster, Whitecomb, and Yates—38.

Nays—Messrs. Baldwin, Chase, Clarke, Davis of Massachusetts, Dayton, Dodge of Wisconsin, Greene, Hale, Miller, Smith, Upham, and Walker—12.

No amendment was agreed to.

Senators from the Free States voting in the affirmative: Bright, Cass, Dodge of Iowa, Douglas, Jones, Norris, Shields, Sturgeon, Whitecomb—Democrats, 9. Cooper, Webster—Whigs, 2.

The amendment was moved for several purposes. It was desirable to draw a distinct line between the Free Soil men and the old parties, so as to destroy, if possible, the influence of the former. It was important to have a provision in the bill which should give countenance to the idea that Slavery could legally exist in the Territories. It was an object to stimulate the immigration of slaveholders to the Territories, and therefore necessary to remove any apprehension in their minds, that they might be divested of their slaves if they went there. Although the amendment is an abstraction, although a Congress cannot bind the action of another, still it was of great importance to the slaveholders, to extort from the free State members a provision, which might serve as ground for the charge of bad faith against the North, should its Representatives hereafter, true to the interests of Freedom, resolve to discountenance the formation of slave States.

With a full view of all the bearings and the real significance of such a measure, Messrs. Webster, Cass, and their followers, gave it their zealous support!

By the Missouri Compromise line, the larger portion of the Territory then in dispute between Slavery and Freedom, though all of it was under the law of Slavery, was expressly set apart for the benefit of Freedom, and Slavery forever prohibited therein. By this Compromise bill, pushed forward under the auspices of Messrs. Clay, Webster, and Cass, the whole of a far larger Territory, though every portion of it is now free, is to be left utterly unprotected against Slavery, and the Senate solemnly announces that if the People of any part of it, on organizing a State, wish to introduce Slavery, they shall have that most holy privilege.

The whole procedure is infamous; and if tolerated by the People, will stamp them as a retrograde in civilization, more corrupt than any former period of their history. In the name of God and Humanity, how long shall these things be?

PROCEEDINGS IN THE HOUSE.

It is impossible to convey to those at a distance a true idea of the state of things in the House of Representatives during the last week. It contains a majority of at least forty in favor of the admission of the new State of California, as a separate measure, but their will is baffled by parliamentary expedients. In fact, one-third of the members, by the aid of rules made for the protection of the rights of minorities and the prevention of haste in legislation, is enabled to violate the rights of the other two-thirds, and prevent any legislation at all. There is no way provided by the rules of the House, of extricating itself from this condition of anarchy. It can be terminated only by the submission of the majority and the triumph of faction, or by force. If Force be resorted to, there is an end of our present form of Republican Government. The Constitution is superseded by the sword; the country is at once plunged into a revolution. If Faction triumph over the majority, the freedom of Congress is gone; the vital principle of a democratic representative government, that the majority should rule; is repudiated; the People's representatives no longer legislate in obedience to the will of their constituents, unless allowed to do so by a few men, who, taking advantage of parliamentary rules, may exercise a complete veto upon all legislation. In short, the National Legislature becomes the mere tool of faction, which will govern the country as absolutely as a despot who should require legislation to be the mere transcript of his will.

The mode of procedure now attempted by Southern men, has long been recommended by political economists at the South, usually distinguished for their moderation and firmness. They proceed on the assumption that, by preventing action upon the Appropriation bills, or any measure of general importance, and by obstructing any proceeding on the Slavery question till the demands of the South be complied with, the minority will be able to compel the North to submit—for, say they, the Northern People will yield, sooner than have the wheels of Government stop. Is it a fact, then, that the Northern People have more patriotism, more nationality, than the Southern? That they feel a deeper concern for the honor and good faith of the Government, and the reputation of the Nation abroad, than the Southern? Is it nothing to the Southern People, and everything to the Northern, that the Government should cease practically to exist? These journals pay a very poor compliment to their own section.

Suppose the North, sooner than see the cause of Republicanism disgraced by the cessation of Government, should yield to the demand of Faction, what a lesson to future malcontents, who may choose upon any other question to throw themselves into rebellion against the majority! If forty men may block legislation on one question, the same number may on another. The members of the minority that accomplish this year its unhallowed object by an abuse of the privileges secured to it by the rules of the House, may suffer next year vital detriment from a similar abuse by another minority.

Besides, they will gain nothing by such conduct. The American People are a practical, reasonable people. They will recognize the right of a minority to resist the action of a majority by arguments and votes, and by using parliamentary expedients as a delay action and secure time for due deliberation; but they will brand as factious, disorganizing, and revolutionary, such a use of these expedients as shall be manifestly intended to coerce a majority into absolute submission to a minority. The cause that is attempted to be sustained by such a policy must suffer in the public judgment.

People will naturally begin to calculate the value of a Government whose powers are sought to be controlled by a Sectional Interest. What, they will ask, is the use of a Union, under which no national law is enforced, till the demands of a minority be complied with? Why send representatives to the Federal Legislature, if they go there merely to register the edicts of the Slave Power? How is a Democratic Representative Government to be maintained by a Union of States, if the will of the majority, fairly expressed in constitutional forms, is to be thwarted by the factious opposition of a minority who will hankrupt the Government sooner than yield their views of policy?

For ourselves, we have no hesitation in saying, that if this policy of Obstruction, as it is called, is to become a usage whenever any question involving sectional considerations is concerned, the sooner the different sections of the country dissolve federal connection with each other the better for all. Union is worth nothing, if one interest is to possess a veto on all other interests; if the minority is to be suffered to impose an absolute check upon the majority. A necessity which should justify this would justify revolution.

COMMON SCHOOL REPORTS.

We have received the Third Annual Report of the Commissioner of Common Schools in New Hampshire; and also the Twentieth Annual Report of the Common Schools of Cincinnati—both documents of great value.

The New Hampshire report presents an encouraging view of the condition of common schools in that State. The Commissioner, R. S. Rust, appears to be a man of energy and deep devotion to the cause of popular education. In the discharge of his official duties he has travelled two thousand miles, delivered more than fifty public addresses, visited three hundred schools, and aided in conducting several institutes. As most favorable indications of the advancement of the cause of Education, he refers to the fact that the Legislature at its extra session increased the amount of money to be raised for the support of schools 30 per cent. on the sum previously required, and that a majority of the towns during the year 1849, voluntarily raised, by a tax on property, a sum nearly one-third larger than the former. It was important to have a provision in the bill which should give countenance to the idea that Slavery could legally exist in the Territories. It was an object to stimulate the immigration of slaveholders to the Territories, and therefore necessary to remove any apprehension in their minds, that they might be divested of their slaves if they went there. Although the amendment is an abstraction, although a Congress cannot bind the action of another, still it was of great importance to the slaveholders, to extort from the free State members a provision, which might serve as ground for the charge of bad faith against the North, should its Representatives hereafter, true to the interests of Freedom, resolve to discountenance the formation of slave States.

What a small provision is allowed to teachers under the common school system! It can never be so efficient as it ought to be, until better wages shall be given. The following table shows the amount of compensation, exclusive of board, in the States named.

State	Per month	Per year
Massachusetts	\$24.00	\$288.00
Connecticut	16.00	192.00
New York	14.00	168.00
New Hampshire	13.00	156.00
Vermont	12.42	149.04
New Hampshire this year gives	\$14.13 to males, \$5.95 to females.	

The whole number of school districts in the State is 2,137; whole number of scholars in the winter, 30,072; in summer, 64,036; male teachers, 1,316; female teachers, 807; whole amount of money raised during the year for the benefit of the schools, \$160,000.

In Vermont, the whole cost of schools is estimated at \$320,000. Female teachers are at the head of sixty-eight per cent of the schools.

The common schools of Cincinnati, Ohio, re-

fect honor upon that city; but it will require great exertion to make the means of education keep pace with the rapidly growing population. It is certain that they are now insufficient. The city is divided into twelve districts. The number of teachers, male and female, employed at the end of the year, was 124; the number of pupils enrolled at the same period, 11,544. The number of white children between the ages of 4 and 21, in 1849, was 33,548. The number of children between 4 and 16, is probably about 25,000.

Among the educational institutions provided at the public expense, are German and English schools, evening schools, and a central school, in which great advantages are secured for a thorough practical education.

We are glad to see the announcement by the Board that it is their intention to take measures, under the law of 1838, as amended at the last session of the Legislature, for the education of the colored people. It is justly remarked, that "they are taxed for every municipal, State, and county duty; they compose a portion of the masses of which our city is made up, and their character for good or ill must be formed among us. It is unjust to expect obedience to the laws, and a willingness to bear their share of the public burdens, unless we educate their minds, and their hearts; and we feel that it is not only our duty, but it should be our privilege to impart to this hitherto neglected and oppressed class the benefit of moral and intellectual culture."

It would be well for the good People of Washington to learn a lesson from these just remarks. They are apt to complain of the existence of a large class of free colored people here, although it seems to us that they are just as useful and well behaved as any class of people, with no more educational advantages than they have, would be. Instead of finding fault with them for their degradation, why not strive to meliorate their condition? Many of them are property holders, living in comfort and respectability. Their property is taxed, and taxed too for school purposes, while not a single school facility is extended to them?

Is this right? Ought we not to blush to take a portion of the taxes for their property, to provide for educating our children, while they are denied any aid in the work of educating themselves?

THE COMPROMISE—ITS SUPPORTERS AND PROSPECTS.

The weather is growing hot; Congress has been in session for nearly seven months; all the important business is to be disposed of; members are tired, unstrung, heated; what wonder that they begin to betray symptoms of irritability!

Just at the moment when they should be possessing their souls in utmost patience, all things seem to combine to disturb their equanimity, and render their sensibilities morbid.

We do not, however, concur with our neighbors of the *Union*, in the belief that there is any dangerous excitement in Washington. He seems to imagine that we are slumbering over a volcano; he feels the throbbing of its mighty heart, and shivers in apprehension of the moment when its agony shall find vent in an eruption. He tells the people abroad that they cannot conceive of the fearful excitement which prevails here; and he suggests that Congress should adjourn for three days to go to prayer. Better, he says, "would it be for Congress to take a recess of three days, for the members to talk calmly to each other, and take the sandals off their feet, and go together to the altar of the Almighty, and pray for a more compromising spirit to descend upon them, and for more fraternal affection, to preserve the union of their country?"

By the way, if anybody desire to be filled with the spirit of compromise, he must go to some other altar than that of the Almighty, who, as Thomas Jefferson said, has no attribute that can take part with the oppressor.

We are sorry to see the editor of the *New York Tribune* contributing his efforts towards getting up a panic. In one of his letters, dated at Washington, he says there are sixty disunionists in Congress! We should like to see them. Point them out—name them. If there be more than a dozen disunionists in the Capitol, we have studied the members to very little purpose. Men who were present during the debates on the Missouri question, and are now observing the proceedings of Congress, say that there is far less real feeling now than there was then.

A panic may help the passage of the Compromise. If the Union and other papers can only make the people of the free States believe that the Government is on the brink of ruin, Senators and Representatives from those States may be able to excuse themselves for their support of the measure, for it so happens that many of them are anxious to find some apology for voting in favor of it. We hope the good people will keep as cool as the weather will permit. Plenty of hard words may shall have, but no blows. Nothing terrific is mollified in Congress, although under the conjoint protection of hot weather and bad temper, the propriety of debate are occasionally violated by even gray-haired statesmen.

But panic making is not the only way of promoting the spirit of compromise. Once upon a time, as the chroniclers of Massachusetts tell us, a Carolina, at words points upon the question of slavery, entered into a business negotiation, the object of which was, that Massachusetts agreed to the importation of slaves for twenty years, and South Carolina agreed to permit Congress to pass navigation laws by a simple majority. From that time the Union has breathed the atmosphere of compromise. No great question can now be settled except on business principles. Politics have become mercantile, and issues involving human rights are determined by pecuniary considerations. For example, if Pennsylvania will abandon the doctrine of slavery restriction, and agree to throw open the Territories to slavery, the South will agree to tax foreign iron, so as to give that State the command of the home market. And if the people of Massachusetts will generously subscribe a memorial in favor of the Compromise bill—a memorial now circulating in that State—the Lowell manufacturers are assured, from distinguished sources in Washington, that in six weeks they could have a reasonable and satisfactory modification of the tariff! The following is the form of memorial in circulation:

To the Massachusetts Delegation in Congress: GENTLEMEN: The political state of the country, we think, justifies and demands the expression of our opinions on the subject of the proposed compromise, which we feel that the nation is in a dangerous position. We see on every side an unprecedented excitement of feeling, unfavorable alike to wise counsels and friendly dispositions; and even in Congress we think we perceive an alarming deficiency of the spirit of concession and mutual concision. We need not remind you that no controversy can be settled without a large measure of that spirit on both sides. That alone can restore to the opinions and wishes of those of your constituents who feel that the nation is in a dangerous position. We see on every side an unprecedented excitement of feeling, unfavorable alike to wise counsels and friendly dispositions; and even in Congress we think we perceive an alarming deficiency of the spirit of concession and mutual concision. We need not remind you that no controversy can be settled without a large measure of that spirit on both sides. That alone can restore to the opinions and wishes of those of your constituents who feel that the nation is in a dangerous position. We see on every side an unprecedented excitement of feeling, unfavorable alike to wise counsels and friendly dispositions; and even in Congress we think we perceive an alarming deficiency of the spirit of concession and mutual concision. We need not remind you that no controversy can be settled without a large measure of that spirit on both sides. That alone can restore to the opinions and wishes of those of your constituents who feel that the nation is in a dangerous position.

The paterfamilias in this memorial in favor of an "adjustment," as the *Union* terms the Compromise, is not to be mistaken. It is a reproduction of the sentiments of Mr. Webster, and belongs to the same family as the Boston and Newburyport Letters. We should like to know what kind of assurances concerning a tariff were given by certain Southern men to the agent of a large manufacturing company in Massachusetts, and his

friends, during their sojourn recently in Washington. The wealthy people of Massachusetts must feel highly honored at being put up for sale in the Southern market, for the benefit of the manufacturers of Lowell, and the conscientious tradesmen who have been recalled to a sense of their constitutional obligations by Daniel Webster.

Next considerations connected with the Texas boundary are relied upon as greatly favoring the passage of the Compromise. At first, Mr. Clay could not understand the policy of associating the question of the admission of Florida with that of the Texas boundary, and whether anything could be done in their behalf.

The Commissioners were Dr. Samuel G. Howe, so well and honorably known for his long and arduous labors in behalf of the blind, Judge Byington, and Gilman Keabell. The burden of the labor fell upon the chairman, who entered upon it with the enthusiasm, perseverance, and practical adaptation of means to ends, which have made him so efficient in his various modes of benevolence. On the 26th of the 3rd month, 1848, a full report of the results of this labor was made to the Government, accompanied by statistical tables and minute details. One hundred towns had been visited by the chairman, or his reliable agent, in which five hundred and seventy-five persons, in a state of idiocy, were discovered. These were examined, carefully, in respect to their physical as well as mental condition; no inquiry being omitted which was calculated to throw light upon the remote or immediate causes of this mournful imperfection in the creation of God. The proximate causes Dr. Howe mentions are to be found in the state of the bodily organization—deranged and disproportioned by some violation of natural law on the part of the parents or remote ancestors of the sufferers. Out of 420 cases of idiocy, he had obtained information respecting the condition of the progenitors of 359; and in all but four of these cases he found that one or the other of both their immediate progenitors had in some way departed widely from the condition of health; they were scrofulous, or predisposed to affections of the brain, and insanity, or had intermarried with blood relations, or had been intemperate, or guilty of sexual excesses.

Of the 555 cases, 420 were of idiocy from birth, and 135 of idiocy afterwards. Of the born idiots, 187 were under 25 years of age, and all but 13 seemed capable of improvement. Of those above 25 years of age, 73 appeared incapable of improvement in their mental condition, being helpless as children at 7 years of age. Forty-three out of the 420 seemed as helpless as children at two years of age, and 33 were in the condition of mere infants. Two hundred and twenty were supported in the public charge in almshouses. A large proportion of them were found to be given over to filthy and dissolute habits, gluttony, and lust, and constantly sinking lower towards the condition of absolute brutishness.

Those in private houses were found, if possible, in a still more deplorable state. Their parents were generally poor, feeble in mind and body, and often of very intemperate habits. Many of them seemed scarcely able to take care of themselves, and totally unfit for the training of ordinary children. It is the blind leading the blind; imbecility teaching imbecility. Some instances of the experiments of parental ignorance upon idiotic offspring, which fell under the observation of Dr. Howe, are related in his report. Idiots, children with cold, found with their heads covered over with cold poultices of oak bark, which the foolish parents supposed would tan the brain and harden it, as the tanner does his ox-hides, and so make it capable of retaining impressions and remembering lessons. In other cases, finding that the child could not be made to comprehend anything, the sagacious heads of the household, on the supposition that its brain was too hard, tortured it with hot poultices of bread and milk to soften it. Others plastered over their children's heads with mercury, to "solidify up the openings" in the head, and make it tight and strong. Others encouraged the savage gluttony of their children, stimulating their unnatural and bestial appetites, on the ground that "the poor creatures had nothing else to enjoy but their food, and they should have enough of that."

In consequence of this report, the Legislature, in the spring of 1848, made an annual appropriation of \$2,500, for three years, for the purpose of training and teaching ten idiot children, to be selected by the Governor and Council. The trustees of the Asylum for the Blind, under the charge of Dr. Howe, made arrangements for receiving these pupils. The school was opened in the autumn of 1848; and its first annual report, addressed to the Governor, and printed by order of the Senate, is now before us.

Of the ten pupils, it appears that not one had the usual command of muscular motion—the language body obeyed not the service of the imbecile will. Some could walk and use their limbs and hands in simple motions; others could only make slight use of their muscles, and two were without any power of locomotion.

One of these last, a boy six years of age, who had been stupified on the day of his birth by the application of hot rum to his head, could scarcely see or notice objects, and was almost destitute of the sense of touch. He could neither stand nor sit upright, nor even creep, but would lie on the floor in whatever position he was placed. He could not feed himself, nor chew solid food, and had no more sense of decency than an infant. His intellect was a blank; he had no knowledge, no desires, no affections. A more hopeless object for experiment could scarcely have been selected.

A year of patient endeavor has nevertheless wrought a wonderful change in the condition of this miserable being. Cold bathing, rubbing of the limbs, exercise of the muscles, exposure to the air, and other appliances, have enabled him to stand upright, to sit at table and feed himself, and chew his food, and to talk with slight assistance. His habits are no longer those of a brute, he observes decency, his eye is brighter, his cheeks glow with health, his countenance is more expressive of thought. He has learned many words and constructs simple sentences, his affections begin to develop; and there is every prospect that he will be so far renovated as to be able to provide for himself in manhood.

In the case of another boy, aged twelve years, the improvement has been equally remarkable. The gentleman who first called attention to him, in a recent note to Dr. Howe, published in the report, thus speaks of his present condition: "When I remember his former wild and almost frantic demeanor when approached by any one, and the apparent impossibility of communicating with him, and now see him standing in his class, playing with his fellows, and willingly and familiarly approaching me, examining what I gave him; and when I see him already selecting articles named by his teacher, and even correctly pronouncing words printed on cards—improvements do not convey the idea presented to my mind; it is creation; it is making him anew!"

All the pupils have, more or less, advanced. Their health and habits have improved, and there is no reason to doubt that the experiment at the close of its three years will be found to have been quite as successful as its most sanguine projectors could have anticipated. Dr. Howe has been ably seconded by an accomplished teacher, James B. Richards, who has devoted his whole time to the pupils. Of the nature and magnitude of their task, an idea may be formed only by considering the utter helplessness of idiocy—the incapacity of the poor pupil to fix his attention upon anything, and his general want of susceptibility to impressions. All his senses are dulled and perverted. Touch, hearing, sight, smell, are all more or less defective. His gluttony is unaccompanied with the gratification of taste—the most savory viands and the oil which he shares with the pigs excite no satiation him. His mental state is still worse than his physical. Thought is painful and irksome to him. His teacher can only engage his attention by strenuous efforts, loud, earnest tones, gesticulations, and a constant presentation of some visible object of bright color and striking form. The eye wanders, and the spark of consciousness and intelligence, which has been formed into momentary brightness,

INSTRUCTION OF IDIOTS.

Some five years ago, the Legislature of Massachusetts, at the suggestion of several benevolent gentlemen whose attention had been turned to the subject, appointed a Commission to inquire into the condition of the Idiots of the Commonwealth—to ascertain their numbers, and whether anything could be done in their behalf.

The Commissioners were Dr. Samuel G. Howe, so well and honorably known for his long and arduous labors in behalf of the blind, Judge Byington, and Gilman Keabell. The burden of the labor fell upon the chairman, who entered upon it with the enthusiasm, perseverance, and practical adaptation of means to ends, which have made him so efficient in his various modes of benevolence. On the 26th of the 3rd month, 1848, a full report of the results of this labor was made to the Government, accompanied by statistical tables and minute details. One hundred towns had been visited by the chairman, or his reliable agent, in which five hundred and seventy-five persons, in a state of idiocy, were discovered. These were examined, carefully, in respect to their physical as well as mental condition; no inquiry being omitted which was calculated to throw light upon the remote or immediate causes of this mournful imperfection in the creation of God. The proximate causes Dr. Howe mentions are to be found in the state of the bodily organization—deranged and disproportioned by some violation of natural law on the part of the parents or remote ancestors of the sufferers. Out of 420 cases of idiocy, he had obtained information respecting the condition of the progenitors of 359; and in all but four of these cases he found that one or the other of both their immediate progenitors had in some way departed widely from the condition of health; they were scrofulous, or predisposed to affections of the brain, and insanity, or had intermarried with blood relations, or had been intemperate, or guilty of sexual excesses.

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In consequence of this report, the Legislature, in the spring of 1848, made an annual appropriation of \$2,500, for three years, for the purpose of training and teaching ten idiot children, to be selected by the Governor and Council. The trustees of the Asylum for the Blind, under the charge of Dr. Howe, made arrangements for receiving these pupils. The school was opened in the autumn of 1848; and its first annual report, addressed to the Governor, and printed by order of the Senate, is now before us.

Of the ten pupils, it appears that not one had the usual command of muscular motion—the language body obeyed not the service of the imbecile will. Some could walk and use their limbs and hands in simple motions; others could only make slight use of their muscles, and two were without any power of locomotion.

One of these last, a boy six years of age, who had been stupified on the day of his birth by the application of hot rum to his head, could scarcely see or notice objects, and was almost destitute of the sense of touch. He could neither stand nor sit upright, nor even creep, but would lie on the floor in whatever position he was placed. He could not feed himself, nor chew solid food, and had no more sense of decency than an infant. His intellect was a blank; he had no knowledge, no desires, no affections. A more hopeless object for experiment could scarcely have been selected.

A year of patient endeavor has nevertheless wrought a wonderful change in the condition of this miserable being. Cold bathing, rubbing of the limbs, exercise of the muscles, exposure to the air, and other appliances, have enabled him to stand upright, to sit at table and feed himself, and chew his food, and to talk with slight assistance. His habits are no longer those of a brute, he observes decency, his eye is brighter, his cheeks glow with health, his countenance is more expressive of thought. He has learned many words and constructs simple sentences, his affections begin to develop; and there is every prospect that he will be so far renovated as to be able to provide for himself in manhood.

In the case of another boy, aged twelve years, the improvement has been equally remarkable. The gentleman who first called attention to him, in a recent note to Dr. Howe, published in the report, thus speaks of his present condition: "When I remember his former wild and almost frantic demeanor when approached by any one, and the apparent impossibility of communicating with him, and now see him standing in his class, playing with his fellows, and willingly and familiarly approaching me, examining what I gave him; and when I see him already selecting articles named by his teacher, and even correctly pronouncing words printed on cards—improvements do not convey the idea presented to my mind; it is creation; it is making him anew!"

All the pupils have, more or less, advanced. Their health and habits have improved, and there is no reason to doubt that the experiment at the close of its three years will be found to have been quite as successful as its most sanguine projectors could have anticipated. Dr. Howe has been ably seconded by an accomplished teacher, James B. Richards, who has devoted his whole time to the pupils. Of the nature and magnitude of their task, an idea may be formed only by considering the utter helplessness of idiocy—the incapacity of the poor pupil to fix his attention upon anything, and his general want of susceptibility to impressions. All his senses are dulled and perverted. Touch, hearing, sight, smell, are all more or less defective. His gluttony is unaccompanied with the gratification of taste—the most savory viands and the oil which he shares with the pigs excite no satiation him. His mental state is still worse than his physical. Thought is painful and irksome to him. His teacher can only engage his attention by strenuous efforts, loud, earnest tones, gesticulations, and a constant presentation of some visible object of bright color and striking form. The eye wanders, and the spark of consciousness and intelligence, which has been formed into momentary brightness,

darkens at the slightest relaxation of the teacher's exertions. The names of objects presented to him must sometimes be repeated hundreds of times before he can learn them. Yet the patience and enthusiasm of the teacher are rewarded by a progress, slow and unequal, but still marked and manifest. Step by step, often compelled to turn back and go over the same inch of ground he had gained, he still creeps forward, and by and by more imperceptibly degrees, his sick, emaciated, and prisoned spirit catches off the burden of his inspirations, and all the salaries he had received were embroiled, and all his oaths perjured, because not provided for by the Constitution, or because prohibited by the laws of the land. The General, should he fail of his office, will not again repudiate, again accept Territorial offices, and once more pocket salaries and take oath, as before.

LIBRARY NOTICES.

ENTERTAINING OF HAPPY TOWNS towards the End of Life. Second edition, with additions. By WILLIAM MONTAGU. Published by Crosby & Nichols, Boston. For sale by Taylor & Manly. Pp. xii and 516.

The design of this work, as its title indicates, is to assist persons in strengthening their faith in the superintending providence of God; in discerning the meaning, objects, and religiousness of life under all its aspects, especially of privation, sickness, and sorrow; in soothing and elevating the feelings, and inducing spiritual tranquility and meditation.

It is written in the form of conversations between an old man and his young friend, who has experienced the hardest lot, but drawn from it its wisest and holiest lessons. As they feel that age and sickness are drawing them to the grave, they speak of the ways of Providence, of the beauty of all things in the material world, and mutually cheer and sustain each other with the light that beams upon them through the opening vista of the future.

We regret the work as a valuable contribution to our religious literature, and the rapid sale of the former edition is the best proof of the need and value of a work free from sectarianism, to clear away the mists from the eyes of sorrow, and to guide the depending to the source of all consolation and hope.

THE DALTONS: OR, THE THREE ROADS TO LIFE. By CHARLES LUTHER, Esq., author of "Roland Castle," "Charles O'Malley," &c. &c. New York: Harper & Brothers.

This is the first number of the series. A small pamphlet of sixteen pages, so short as scarcely to be called a book, and yet so full of instruction, we cannot speak of its merits; but the reputation of the author as a pleasant writer will secure for the forthcoming work abundant success.

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THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE.

The Nashville Convention, it is said, has indicated its preference for a settlement of the present controversy by the extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific. The ultra Southern men insist upon this policy, and the entire South seems willing to test the North upon this point. The Washington *Union* is assenting, but it thinks such a settlement cannot be had.

There is every indication of a purpose in the House to try whether this mode of terminating the contest may not prove successful. Of course, it would divide California, giving slavery a chance to gain