

# Exciting Meeting of the American Tract Society.

The New York papers are filled with accounts of the proceedings of the annual meeting of the American Tract Society, which met in that city on Wednesday, in the Reformed Dutch Church, Lafayette Place. About two thousand persons, from various sections of the Union, were admitted by ticket, showing the great interest taken in the question at issue—whether or not the executive committee were justified in suppressing or suspending the publication of the tract "The Duties of Masters," alleged to have been offensive to the people of the South, especially slave-holders. The publication of this tract was commenced under a resolution adopted at the last annual meeting looking to the discussion of the moral aspect of slavery. Soon after the opening of the meeting—over which Chief Justice Williams, of Conn., presided, Rev. Dr. Adams made a report justifying the executive committee.

The Rev. Dr. Magee made a few remarks: Two truths were plain to the committee, and these considerations had governed them. Had they published the tract to which reference has been made, they would have dismembered the society. That was one conclusion at which they had arrived, and the evidence upon which it was based was not, and could not be, so well appreciated by those who had not their opportunity of judging it. They did fully believe it. Another was, that a large majority of the friends of the society were not prepared to adopt a course which should thus result. A further and equally plain consideration was that it was useless to publish a tract addressed to masters which would have but a small circulation in the South among those to whom it was addressed, and which in the North was not needed. They had decided not to mix the American Tract Society with the great exciting question. This was their simple decision.

The matter was now before them, and in judging it he hoped they had sought the grace of God; and would act under his guidance. Great interests were at stake. Should they adopt a course which would separate them from fifteen States and ten millions of people, a field where their labors were most called for? Such were the views of the committee. [Hisses and applause.]

The president hoped there would be no demonstrations of approval or dissent, as this was not a political meeting. Bishop McMillan moved that the action of the committee be sustained, and made a long speech.

Prof. Crosby read from a tract, entitled "Somo and Toby," in which slaves are counseled not to go from plantation to plantation, and to obey their masters, and asked if the society published it.

Amid much confusion and cries of "order!" Dr. Wm. Adams said the tract was published twenty years ago.

Dr. Tyng attempted to get the floor, amid cries of "order!" "Dr. Tyng." "Let 'em answer the question!" &c.

Order being restored, Dr. Tyng spoke in favor of the resolution of the society which admitted the discussion of the moral aspects of slavery to be a legitimate subject for the society to discuss, and moved to lay Bishop McMillan's motion on the table, in order that a resolution reaffirming that position be affirmed.

Dr. Tyng's motion was voted upon viva voce and the chairman said it was lost. A division was called for, and the affirmative was counted; but when the negative arose it so largely preponderated that a count was deemed unnecessary.

Much excitement prevailed. Some called for a count; others declared that the motion was lost to one, and the members of the committee displayed many symptoms of delight.

There was a long delay and great confusion. A partial count was made; but order was finally so far restored that Judge Jessup attempted to move an amendment to Bishop McMillan's motion, but was interrupted by loud calls for the previous question in all parts of the house, and another scene of tumult followed.

Several of the majority declared that it was not fair to choke off discussion. Judge Jessup read his amendment, reaffirming the resolution of last year, which was declared to be unanimous.

Dr. Bethune protested that it was not unanimous. He was requested to say for Dr. Spring that he did not vote for it, and he (Dr. Bethune) did not.

Doctor Thompson—Did either of you vote against it?

Bethune—No. [Laughter.] Thompson—Then there was no vote against it and it was unanimous.

Dr. Bethune said that, at the meeting last year, he was asked by Dr. Thompson to second the resolution, but refused to do it. He thought that anything coming from the chief editor of the Independent was to be regarded with suspicion, and not likely to meet his approval.

Laughter, hisses, cries of "Order!" and general confusion followed. Judge Jessup at last got the floor, and said it was vain for gentlemen to say that the action of the society last year was not unanimous. The fact that one, two or fifty might not have concurred, did not change the fact that there was no dissenting voice, and that the resolution meant but as the unanimous sentiment of this society. He went on to argue the reasonableness of that resolution, and deprecated the idea of receding from it, as a measure which would open the flood-gates of agitation and disturb again the peace of the society.

Dr. Bethune got the floor at the close of Judge Jessup's remarks. A scene of confusion followed, and there were, for several minutes, mingled cries of "Bethune," "Question," and "Order."

Rev. Dr. Bacon then got the floor, and made a warm anti-slavery speech, and was followed by the Rev. Dr. Bethune, on the opposite side, in a powerful and affecting speech. He deprecated the idea of no fellowship with slaveholders; for that was excommunicating them from the Church of God, and thus the unhappy South were prevented from having the gospel. He thought the devil never instituted a scheme so truly malignant as this to prevent the spread of the gospel. The worst cannibals in Africa, the natives of Congo, all would have the gospel preached to them, but the extreme men of the North would first deny them the gospel, and then deny them the tract.

What then was to become of these millions? Were they to be perverted to go

down to hell because these extreme people would not? God forbid!

Rev. Mr. Thompson (editor of the Independent) offered an amendment accepting the statements of the publishing committee, but ordering a tract to be published on the duties of masters. After Dr. Thompson's speech the society agreed to take a vote at 3 p. m. Five minute speeches occupied the hour from 2 till 3.

Prof. Howard Crosby offered a resolution that no tract bearing on the slavery question be published, and that the tract called Somo and Toby be suppressed.

Rev. Dr. Johns, of Baltimore, then spoke five minutes, saying that he should return home assuring his friends that the hearts of the members of the society at the North beat in union with theirs at the South. He and the Maryland delegation came here not to discuss the slavery question, but to vote for sustaining the action of the committee. He thought the North could best understand and correct evils at the North. The South could not intelligently do it, and just so it is impossible for the North to interfere with the evils relating peculiarly to the South. Dr. Johns further stated that he had come to the meeting to pay a legacy of \$10,000 from a slaveholder.

Rev. Mr. Williams, of Baltimore, had the concluding five minutes. He would stand by the constitution of the society. If that is infringed, the South will withdraw entirely, leaving it to be the North, and not the American Tract Society. He contended for the right of the South to take care of its own children without interference.

When the hour for taking the question arrived, the amendment of Prof. Howard Crosby was first almost unanimously rejected.

The amendment of Rev. Dr. Thompson (Independent) was lost by a large majority.

The resolution of Bp McMillan was carried as follows by a large majority: Resolved; That the action of the executive committee be approved.

DEATH, INSANITY, AND THE DUNGEON.—The sad consequences of vice were never more strikingly exhibited than in the following paragraph, which we copy from a late New Orleans letter. It is truly a melancholy case, and it should prove a solemn warning to persons tempted to depart from the path of virtue:

"The grand jury of this parish has found a bill of indictment against George W. Harby, who, several weeks ago, shot H. C. H. Stone, whom he charged with seducing his daughter. The bill was found on Saturday last. The trial will probably take place in the course of a month or six weeks. Public opinion now seems to be that the homicide was totally inexcusable, and that young Stone has met an unmerited fate. This is a truly melancholy case. The father is comparatively an old man, and heretofore stood well in the community as a teacher of youth; now he is immersed in a dungeon and charged with murder. Stone was just entering life with peculiar advantages, was prosperous in business, and surrounded by a host of confiding friends; now a cold grave enfolds him."

SOUTHERN COMMERCIAL CONVENTION.—The telegraph has given all the action of any importance taken by this convention. The mails bring us the details. The following is an extract from the speech of Hon. Wm. L. Yancey, of Alabama, in opening the convention:

"I welcome you, as the foreshadowing of that other more important convention which, if injustice and wrong continue to rule the hour and councils of the dominant section of our divided and estranged land, must, ere long, assemble for the noble purpose of putting the political and industrial relations of the South upon the safe basis of an independent sovereignty; whose climate and soil, production and social institutions, will have that unity which experience seems to have demonstrated to be the only permanent basis of successful government."

ANOTHER STATE ADMITTED.—The House of Representatives yesterday finally passed the bill, which had previously gone through the Senate, for the admission of Minnesota into the Union as a State, and we thus have now a galaxy of thirty-two stars to emblazon upon the national standard. Should Kansas elect to come in under the recent act of Congress, there will be still another State sovereignty to add to the list. Minnesota had already made a choice of her Senators and Representatives, in anticipation of her admission, and they will most likely take their seats in Congress to day. Gen. Shields and Mr. Rice are the Senators. The bill, we believe, allows the State two Representatives, though Minnesota had claimed three.

WESTERN VIRGINIA CONFERENCE.—This body which lately met at Charleston, Va., was presided over during the first two days by Bishop Ames, and afterwards by Rev. G. Battelle. The next annual session will be held at Parkersburg in April, 1859. The question of publishing a paper within the bonds of the Southern States, as an organ of the Church on the slavery question, was considered. Rev. Mr. Phelps, of the Baltimore Conference, pressed the importance of endorsing a paper about to be published at Baltimore. After some discussion, a resolution was adopted leaving the members free to support any of their papers without particularly endorsing any.

PAY OF ARMY OFFICERS.—The following sums are given as the amount received per year by the several army officers named: Gen. Scott \$18,292; General Wool, \$8,854; Gen. Persifer F. Smith \$8,189; Adjutant Gen. Cooper, \$5,093; Maj. McDowell, \$4,020; Col. Totten, \$4,646; Gen. Harney, \$5,031; Col. May, \$3,519; and the general average receipts of colonels \$4,800; lieut. colonels, \$4,000; majors, \$3,000; captains, \$2,500; lieutenants, \$2,000.

WHEAT CROP IN VIRGINIA.—A letter from Spotsylvania county, Va., says: The growing wheat crop is a sight at once cheering to the eye and heart. We have never seen a better stand, nor a more healthy shade of green. We have yet to meet with the first complaining farmer this spring, on account of his wheat. Of a verity, the millennium must be coming when farmers cease grumbling.

# Cooper's Clarksburg Register



"Equal Laws and Equal Rights!"

CLARKSBURG, FRIDAY, MAY 21, 1858.

FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR,

WILLIAM L. JACKSON,

OF WOOD COUNTY.

DEMOCRATIC COUNTY NOMINATIONS.

FOR CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT,

C. W. SMITH.

FOR CLERK OF THE COUNTY COURT,

W. P. COOPER.

FOR SHERIFF,

CHARLES HOLDEN.

FOR COMMISSIONER OF THE REVENUE,

THOS. HICKMAN, for Upper District.

F. M. BROOKS, for the Lower District.

For the Register.

MESSRS. EDITORS: In the last Register I find a card signed by W. W. McCann, which I dislike to notice, but since he has taken the liberty to mention my name in connection with his political troubles, because I did that which I knew to be honorable and just, I therefore consider it a privilege of right to clear up a false impression which it seems he wishes to make. He says that I "sold myself, soul and body, to Mr. Holden." And why does he say so? Merely because when called upon, I made an impartial statement of facts in my possession, in regard to the proceedings at Shinnston at the primary election—nor did I expect in so doing to receive his malignity and displeasure. Now, as far as "selling" is concerned, I will say frankly that I have never "sold" myself, or promised to support Mr. Holden in any way. Then, the only wrong I committed was, when I was asked for the truth I gave it.

"The head and front of my offending, Hath this extent—no more."

For Mr. McCann I entertain the kindest feelings—he is a young man fired with an honorable ambition, which is creditable to him, and should not be overlooked; yet notwithstanding this, he has other traits of character not so enviable or desirable—he is too hasty to accuse—too suspicious of his friends; too malicious and unforgiving; and last, not least, too supercilious and threatening. He assured me on last Court-day, that if I went to Shinnston on election day I would get "whipped" or in other words, that owing to the *indecency of the times*, I would find it detrimental to my health. Now I flatter myself in the belief that I have kind and clever friends there, and I would have no fears of their bouncing upon me without warning me of their approach. I know the character of the people of this county pretty well, and have never yet regarded them as ruffians, and hope I may never find them such. And with this confidence in their manhood, I would feel safe in going to Shinnston, or to any other precinct, on election day, or at any other time.

An impetuous man, in moments of excitement, will make assertions rash and wrongful against others, which after calm and deliberate reflection, will cause him shame. I hope it will be so with my friend.

In respect to the Sheriffalty, I have my own views, and they have been, and shall be consistent. I am not a Democrat one day, and a Know-Nothing the next; and in this, as in everything else I undertake, I am determined to be consistent "without fear, favor or affection."

It is my desire to have nothing to do with politics, but let the candidates fight it through for themselves, and let victory perch where merit is triumphant; but when I see the party that I have so long cherished, abused, debased and scandalized, and the leaders who have built up in this country, and fastened it together, during the Presidential campaign, misrepresented, maligned and anathematized; when I see these wrongs, I feel like taking a part against the abusers, and seek to disorganize and destroy it. There is no occasion to disorganize the party—if we had incompetent men in the field there might be some cause of palliation in party zeal; but as our candidates are reliable and competent men, it is our duty to defend them, it is an inherent right, it is self-defense.

But again: Mr. McCann will tell the people that he got Know-Nothing votes, and that he expects more of them, but if I mention the fact he gets angry. Now, I suppose he thinks he can tell it better than I can. I have known men so self-conceited that if they had a story or an anecdote to relate, they would not for the world have any one else to relate it, for fear of depriving them of the chance of their own telling, as they thought they could tell it with such grace and elegance themselves. Now, it may be that my friend is that kind of a man! I have said that I believed my friend to be ambitious—so was Brutus ambitious!! but how often

"Vaulting ambition overleaps itself," and leaves a man desolate, disappointed, and uncare for. Therefore a man should try and conceal some of the valiant promptings of the heart; take things cool and bear the spurs of political opponents, then patiently wait the decision of the people.

It is whispered around that a distinguished lawyer is the author of Mr. McCann's sharp, pointed and well considered cards. I don't know whether this is a fact or not, nor do I care; but I will say with the poet,

"Oh! what authority and show of truth, Can a cunning writer cover himself with!"

Respectfully,

MARIS TAYLOR.

THE MOUNT VERNON FUND.—Mrs. Ex-President Tyler, during a recent visit to Richmond, paid into the Mount Vernon treasury \$400, which she had collected by her exertions in Charles City county.

# For the Register.

Our Nominations.—Notwithstanding the violent opposition manifested in certain quarters to Democratic organization, the party did organize, and primary elections were held in all the magisterial districts throughout this county, and the result has been the selection of gentlemen, who are not only true Democrats, but are also qualified to discharge the duties of the respective offices to which they aspire, with honor to themselves, and to the satisfaction of their constituents.

The argument so much harped upon by the "disorganizers," that nominations generally result in the choice of disqualified men, to the exclusion of those who are better qualified, is certainly not true in the present instance; for our nominees will compare favorably with the other candidates in the field, and there is no good reason on that score why even a party man should not vote for them, and certainly no Democrat should be so recreant to his party, as to cast his vote against them. There are however those who call themselves Democrats, and yet are taking an active part against the Democratic nominations. It is obvious that these fishy Democrats are actuated by selfish motives, and it is to be feared they have a "hankering after the flesh pots of Egypt," and hence their "wanderings after strange Gods." But the great mass of the Democratic party are sound on this question and will cast their votes and will exert their influence in favor of the Democratic nominees.

The Democracy of old Harrison has never been beaten when properly organized, and while Democrats will continue to adhere to their old maxim, "united we stand, divided we fall," which has led them to victory, in many a hard-fought battle in bygone days, there is nothing to fear—let every Democrat go to the polls on the fourth Thursday, and vote the Democratic ticket, and victory is ours.

ELKONIAN.

(COMMUNICATED.)

MESSRS. EDITORS: I see a card of Mr. C. Holden in a former issue of your paper, a portion of which was intended as a reply to a statement made by me through the Register "to the public," of which perhaps I ought to take some notice. Mr. Holden does not deny any charge therein brought against him, but he gets Mr. Kinsley to say (whose card I see in your last issue,) that he thinks that he (Holden) was perfectly justifiable in the course he pursued, and says that my statement ought to be sufficient proof.

What I first say, I last say. I stated that Mr. Holden repudiated in advance the action of the Democratic party, unless certain things were complied with, which, I can assure you, was not. The objection urged was that Know-Nothing had voted in the primary election at Lumberport and Shinnston. Where was his proof of that? He had not seen the polls-books, neither did he know a man that had voted at either of these precincts.

Mr. Kinsley and I cannot agree. I think it released the party from any or all obligations which they might otherwise have been under to him, and renders him unworthy the support of the Democratic party.

I think the most that was hurting him, was that he thought he was defeated in the primary election, and wanted an excuse to remain a candidate—and declared his intention so to do.

"An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, and he that soweth discord among brethren," asks, why all this dodging with the poll-books? The first man who declared his intention to dodge is the first to censure. I think he ought to have been the last man to publish a thing of the kind. He says that he understood that the election in the Lower District was carried on almost entirely by Know-Nothing. I say that it is palpable, downright no-such-thing, and whoever gave circulation to such reports knows nothing about it.

Respectfully yours,

SAMUEL ROBINSON.

For the Register.

MESSRS. EDITORS: One of the county Offices to be filled on the 27th of May is that of Surveyor. Allow me to suggest, through the columns of your paper, for the consideration of the people, the importance of selecting a man to fill that office who is not only well qualified and worthy, but one who will keep the Office in its proper place.

There is almost as much necessity for this office being kept at the county seat, as there is for either of the other County Offices. Ever since the formation of the county of Harrison, the office has been in the upper part of the county, some six miles from the county seat.

Col. John R. Boggess, who is announced as a candidate, if elected, will keep the office at Clarksburg, where it should always have been. His qualifications and merits, I presume, are well known to many throughout the county, having acted for a long time as Deputy Surveyor, and for several years past done a greater part of the official surveying of the county.

Mr. Cyrus Haymond, the present incumbent, though a man worthy the title of a gentleman, is too old to do the surveying, and keeps the office so far from the Court-house that the people are subject to great inconveniences in transacting their business and in examining the books and papers of the office.

R.

May 18, 1858.

THE PRICE OF THE COMING WOOL CLIP.—The Ohio Cultivator for May 1 thus speaks of the prices of the coming wool clip:

"The wool buyers approach their work very cautiously, and we presume prices will open eight or ten cents lower than the ruling rates of last year. Many of the manufacturers need to buy on time, on account of the difficulty of negotiating their paper in banks for cash, as formerly."

The Medical Times and Gazette states that the efficiency of the valerianate of ammonia as a remedy in the cure of neuralgia has been frequently proved in a number of patients treated at the Royal Free Hospital, to the care of Dr. O'Connor.

# For the Register.

FELLOW CITIZENS: Having been nominated by the Democratic Convention of your county, which was held at Harrisville, on the 2d of March last, for the office of Clerk of the Circuit Court, I am before you as a candidate for that office.

The opposition candidates against me are Mr. McGee and Mr. Culp, the latter gentleman professing to be a Democratic candidate independent of the Convention referred to—the former a Know-Nothing.

My friend, Mr. Culp, has written a circular to the voters of Ritchie, in which he attempts to explain to the people his position as a candidate for their suffrages; but I am sorry to say that, about the only truths contained in it, are that he was "easily persuaded" to be a candidate, and that he "wants the office." The charges which he makes against me and friends, and the charge of corruption in the Convention, are altogether false and unfounded. The first objection which Mr. Culp makes to the Convention, and which he claims as one of the reasons why he did not go before the Convention as a candidate for the nomination, is, that when the meeting was held in the first District for the purpose of appointing delegates to attend the County Convention, that I was in said meeting whispering in the ear of a certain man evidently telling him whom to appoint as delegates to the County Convention, and that gentleman appointed six delegates. In reply to this grave charge of brother Culp, I will say that it is utterly false. I will give the truth of this matter, as certified to by the gentleman himself, who is implicated with me in this fraud. Mr. Hiram S. Wilkinson, who is the gentleman that Mr. Culp says he refers to in his circular, was, at the time the meeting was held in the first district, long before and up to the time the Convention was held, a friend to Mr. Culp, and against me, and had promised Mr. Culp, to vote for him in convention, and would have done so, had Mr. Culp been before the convention as a candidate.

Mr. Wilkinson informs me that he has been credibly informed that a majority of the delegates appointed on his suggestion would have voted for Mr. Culp, had he offered himself as a candidate in the Convention. Would it not, therefore, seem that I would be the proper person, if any, to object to the appointment of the delegates in the first district. But I never should have made any objection of this kind against Mr. Culp, as the suggestion of the names of suitable persons as delegates to the convention, by any person attending the meeting, was not the appointing of them—the meeting voted on the suggestion, and elected delegates. And, moreover, the delegates who were appointed upon Mr. Wilkinson's suggestion, were among the best men of the Democratic party in the district. I think that Messrs. Timothy Sharp, Marshal Neal and James Webb, were among the names suggested by Mr. Wilkinson as suitable persons for delegates to the convention. Considering this fact, I could not object to them; had every one of them been against me. Certainly then, Fellow Citizens, Mr. Culp has attempted to show fraud in the getting-up of the Convention when there was none, unless he and his friends were guilty of it.

The second charge which Mr. Culp makes against me is, that I had friends in the Smithville District meeting, who did not reside in that District, making motions &c., for my benefit. In reply to this charge, I will simply say that like the first, it does not contain one word of truth, and I challenge Mr. Culp to prove it.

Another charge which he makes against the Convention is, that some of the delegates from the Bond's Creek district changed their intentions in relation to how they would vote in the convention, and as he verily believes "through the influence, persuasion, and bargain and sale of aspirants in that convention."

Now, here is a serious charge against three or four of our honorable and respectable men of the Bond's Creek district, of "bargain and sale," when there is not the least evidence to substantiate one word of it. Mr. Culp only believes so from the simple fact that they would not have voted for him in the convention. But suppose these gentlemen did change their intentions with reference to whom they would vote in the convention, is that any evidence that they did so through the influence of "bargain and sale?" And must men be charged with corruption for changing their opinions? If we take Mr. Culp's view of the matter, we will find future charge corruption on every individual who dares to change his opinion with reference to any matter whatever. This charge, as well as others equally absurd, I shall give no further notice, excepting the one in which he attempts to make the impression on the minds of the people that I was a Know-Nothing. The Secretary of the Know-Nothing Council at this place, if called on, will tell the people that I was not regarded as a member of the order at any time—although I had the secrets of the order, and no one is better acquainted with the services I rendered the Democratic party in the exciting political campaign of 1855, than Mr. Culp. He well knows that I canvassed this county on a hired horse during the campaign for the Democratic party, and that the secrets of the Know-Nothing order which were divulged to me I used in breaking it down. Truly Mr. Culp is badly off for charges against me, when he would condescend to make this one.

But, Fellow Citizens, how stands Mr. Culp before the people at this time? Is he devoted to the Democratic party and its usages? No indeed; but on the contrary, he is before you now, doubtless thinking himself the candidate of the Know-Nothing party for the office of Clerk of the Circuit Court, and the bargains between himself and that party so well understood that several of its adherents are still inclined to support him notwithstanding they have a candidate of their own in the field.

I will now take leave of Mr. Culp and his Circular, and in conclusion, say to the people of Ritchie county that, should it be their pleasure to elect me Clerk of this county, I will be faithful and prompt in discharging the duties of the office. As to my qualification to do the business devolving on the Clerk, I believe there is

no doubt in the minds of the people, as they are aware that more than four years ago I did the business of the office without any assistance whatever; and should I be elected, I now promise that I will do the business of the office myself—I will not bring Mr. Stinchcomb from Parkersburg, to do the business for me, as my friend Mr. Culp has done at every term of the Circuit Court since he has had the office, which he now holds.

Most Respectfully, &c.,

SMITH C. HALL.

Certificate of Hiram S. Wilkinson.

I, Hiram S. Wilkinson, do hereby certify that at the time the meeting was held in the first District to appoint delegates to the Democratic County Convention, which was held at Harrisville on the second of March last, I have no recollection of Mr. Hall's whispering in my ear for any purpose; but if he did, he did not suggest the names of any person for me to appoint as delegates to the Convention, or say anything on that subject—I further certify that at the time the meeting was held in the first district I was a friend to Mr. Culp, and intended to vote for him against Mr. Hall in the convention, if I was a delegate, and had long before that time told Mr. Culp so, and would have done so on the day of the Convention had he been before the convention for the nomination.

HIRAM S. WILKINSON.

[From the Richmond Examiner.]

The Late Charles Fenton Mercer. Charles Fenton Mercer belonged to a family distinguished in the history of our Revolution. We will pass over his family history, however, not being very familiar with it, and confine our remarks to his public life and character.

Mr. Mercer was first elected to the Legislature of Virginia, from Loudoun county, in 1810, and continued in that position till 1817, when he was elected to Congress. He took an active part in the debates of the Legislature during the period of his service, and was justly classed amongst its most talented members. He distinguished himself particularly in his advocacy of a call of a Convention for amending the old Constitution of the State. Upon that question he came in contact, on one occasion, with Littleton Waller Tazewell, the most powerful champion of the old Constitution, and acquitted himself to the entire satisfaction of the advocates of a change in our organic law. On the subject of internal improvement, he was considerably in advance of his day; his fellow-members calling him an enthusiast in the cause, and one of them telling him, in a speech, that he was born just one hundred years too soon to fulfil his mission in behalf of roads and canals.

In 1817, Mr. Mercer became a candidate for Congress in the Loudoun district, to succeed Joseph Lewis, who declined a re-election. Mr. Mercer ran as the Federal candidate, and General Armstrong T. Mason, a distinguished and popular Republican, took the field against him. The district had been Federal from the first division of parties; John Adams having carried it against Thomas Jefferson in the first race between them, when the electoral vote was by districts. The canvass between Messrs. Mercer and Mason was active and acrimonious, and resulted in the choice of the former by less than one hundred votes. Out of this canvass, if we mistake not, grew the serious difficulty between General Mason and Col. McCarty, which ended in a duel with a fatal result to the former.

Mr. Mercer was re-elected to each succeeding Congress, if my memory is not at fault, till 1839, when he voluntarily retired to private life.

Upon the national theatre to which he was called, Mr. Mercer took his position among the "star actors," and maintained it creditably for more than twenty years. During that period he participated with the master-spirits of the House of Representatives in discussing the important questions that came before it for consideration and action. His name appears on the record as a speaker as well as a voter upon almost every proposition of general interest. He grappled in debate with many of the first minds of his day, and always sustained his character well as a man of mark.

In his political sentiments, Mr. Mercer was a Federalist of the old school, and his votes on party questions were consequently with the minority of the Virginia delegation, with rare exceptions. He supported the election of Wm. H. Crawford for President in 1824; but, with that exception, he never voted with his State in a Presidential election when there was a contest. He supported Mr. Monroe, as did nearly every body else, of every party, in Virginia and elsewhere.

In consequence of his zeal and enthusiasm in the cause of internal improvement, some of his friends denominated him "the De Witt Clinton of Virginia." He was called, by general consent and desire, to the presidency of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal; and it was then (more than 30 years ago) confidently believed that his conspicuous connection with that work would materially strengthen his claim to the title with which he was honored. But their bright anticipation in that respect was not realized; owing however, to causes which neither Mr. Mercer nor any other men could control.

Mr. Mercer was a conspicuous member of the State Convention of 1829-30. As the call of that Convention had been secured as much through instrumentality of Mr. Mercer as that of any other man, his election was a matter of form and not of contest in a district in which there was an almost undivided sentiment against the old Constitution. In the Convention, he was among the most uncompromising and efficient champions of Western interests. With Doddridge, Cooke, Powell, Summers and others, he gained eclat in the West in "measuring arms" with Eastern men of world-wide fame as debaters and orators. Notwithstanding his Federalism as a national politician, Mr. Mercer was, in the Virginia Convention, a radical Democrat of the first water; one not surpassed in intensity by Andrew Johnson, the present worthy representative of Tennessee in the United States Senate, who is said by his enemies to define admirably the character of a Red Republican. In discussing the Basis of Representation and the Right of Suffrage, Mr. Mercer took extreme ground in favor of popular rights.

His speech on the Basis of Representation was extensively circulated at the time, particularly in Western Virginia, and certain passages from it have been frequently quoted since. Among others, the following extract has been published in a book as a specimen of "pure free thought" and beautiful composition: "The natural equality of man is written on his heart, and stamped upon his visage by the author of his being, after whose 'express image,' he was made. While other animals look to the earth—Oa homin! sublime deit ad sidera tollis vultus,

his right spring from his affections and his wants, and these he derived from God, the author of his nature. He cannot exist out of society because society is essential to his existence. His first resolutions are those of husband and father. That period which, in other animals, is short of dependence on a father's care, is in man protracted for purposes the most beneficial. The infant gathers his first instruction in his mother's lap. His best virtues he imbibes from a father's care, a mother's tenderness. When age overtakes the parent, the son repays with kindness the kindness he has received. If the crutch drops from the feeble grasp of his sire, he picks it up and restores it to his trembling hand. Patriotism is but filial love enlarged. When we think of our country, we dwell on the memory of our early days, on the forms of those that gave us our being and watched over its infancy. When they are gone, we visit their remains and from the unconscious urn imbibe anew the inspiration of their virtues. Does not the savage cherish these affections? The Tartar wanders over the interminable plains of Asia, from climate to climate, accompanied by his flocks and herds; the Indian of America roams through forests yet more wild; but they revisit the tombs of their progenitors, and recount to their children the story of their deeds.

"Are not these natural affections at the foundation of all the moral rights and duties of a man?"

"Sympathy, is it not as natural to man as to the gregarious animals whom he gathers around him? Out of these feelings spring the elements of society."

"Is there no property known to savage life? Even the birds defend their nest, as the lion does his den; the former with less vigor but with equal zeal. The hunter decorates his cave with the fur of the animals he has killed, and stores away in time of plenty the provisions which a season of want may require. He has his bow and arrow for the mountain deer, and when he approaches the water side, his canoe and spear for the finny tribe. In contempt of danger, armed with rude instruments, he traverses the land and the water under the influence of the same feelings which prompt the civilized man to build habitations, to till the land, and to lay up the fruits of autumn for the necessities of winter."

How can labor and property be separated? Property is at once the fruit and the spring of labor. The author of the Essay on the Human Understanding, tells us emphatically that he means by property; to denote the life, liberty, and all the possessions of man."

After his retirement from Congress, Mr. Mercer left the State of Virginia. The newspapers reported him, at one time a resident of Florida, and at another took a somewhat active part in the Presidential election of 1852, for the