Weekly National Intelligencer.

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THE WEEKLY NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

THE VEXED QUESTION.

We have received the October number of the North American Review, and find its articles characterized by the research and ability common in its pages. Among the subjects elaborately treated in this number is the ever interesting one of "*Slavery in the United States, its evils, alleviations, and remedies*," which is discussed very temperately, judiciously, and completely. We can cordially commend it for its tone and discriminating justice, while its style and acquaintance with facts evince a practised writer and a careful and impartial investigator. Perhaps, in the present feverish excitement upon this topic in certain neighborhoods, it demanded some boldness, and a strong love of truth, to admit so fair an exposition of the whole question of slavery in this country, and therefore we most cheerfully award the meed of our praise to this laudable and patriotic article.

It is quite beyond our power to copy the whole thirty-nine pages of the Review; but, at the risk of injuring much of the force of the facts and reasoning by breaking their connexion, we subjoin an extract or two, as a specimen of the spirit and bearing of an essay, the perusal of the whole of which would afford instruction and gratification to every one possessed of liberal and national views on this vexed subject, whether they hail from the Northern or Southern extreme of our Republic.

"It is conceded on all hands that the right to legislate in regard to slavery belongs exclusively to the individual States in which that institution exists. Each State has the right to abolish slavery within its own borders, and no other State is permitted to interfere with its action. The General Government may admit it into or exclude it from the Territories which belong to it, but its authority ceases when the Territories become States. This single fact, without reference to any thing else, shows that the direct power, both of the General Government and of the free States, over slavery, is confined within very narrow limits. Instead of the several States deriving from the Union authority to interfere with one another's domestic institutions, the organic law by which they are united excludes them from such interference, and at the same time relieves them from a corresponding responsibility.

"There is, however, a limitation of our power over slavery far more invincible than any imposed by arbitrary laws or treaties, growing out of the manner in which it is wrought into the general framework of our institutions. Putting aside all questions which relate to the origin and character of slavery, and viewing it simply under its present aspects, the prominent fact which strikes one is, that it implies a certain condition of society—a stage of civilization in which all, whites as well as blacks, are implicated. Were negro slavery, as seems sometimes to be thought, a mere excrescence on the surface of society, something exceptional and alien to its general structure, it might with comparative ease be removed. But, instead of its being an exceptionable excrescence, it is an essential and controlling element in the whole social organization of the Southern people. It penetrates through and gives color to this organization. All the laws of the South, its customs, its industrial pursuits, its social habits, are modified by slavery. The education both of home and school, the notions of what constitutes an honorable position, the respect paid to labor, the condition of the church, the moral estimates of the true ends of life, are all, more or less, determined by it. In different ways its influence is equally decisive on the condition of the slaveholders, the non-slaveholders, and the slaves. The whites need to go through a training for freedom scarcely less than the blacks. The master is as much fettered to one end of the chain as the slave to the other; and it would be difficult to say which is least prepared for emancipation.

"It is obvious that to reconstruct the whole fabric of society—which is what is implied in any wise method of abolishing slavery—can never be the work of a day. Had the slaves been introduced a few years ago into a community whose industrial habits and social judgments and moral feelings had been formed under free institutions, they might be suddenly removed, and the transient void, soon filled, would scarcely be observed. But to change the organic life of ten millions of people, to change institutions and ideas rooted in the past and wrought into all the customs of common life, must, at the best, be a very slow and gradual process. To expunge slavery from the statute book would be the least and easiest thing required—far easier, certainly, than to legislate into the minds of whites or blacks the ideas which belong to free institutions. Were legal slavery abolished at the South, it would probably be centuries before it could be abolished from the Southern mind. Even at the North, the black, though equal with the white before the law, is as far as ever from having vindicated for himself any position of social equality. In England, in spite of affinities of race, color, and general equality of culture, eight centuries have hardly effaced the distinction between Norman and Saxon, and still less that between Saxon and Celt. And thus far all experiments in emancipation, which have left the negro in the same country with his former master, show how nearly impossible it is for either party to overcome the barriers of race, and caste, and color, and historical association, and for them to meet each other on equal terms.

"The slaves of the South are, comparatively, not only a civilized people, but we doubt if, in the whole history of mankind, a single example can be adduced of a race of men starting from such a depth of moral degradation and barbarism, and in a century and a half making so vast an advance in civilization. This progress has been owing, as we believe, in no small part to the fact of their being slaves. Through this relation they have been brought into close contact with a superior race, under circumstances of restraint and excitement which have compelled them to abstain from some of the most debasing vices, to form habits of industry, and which have led them to catch rapidly the social, moral, and religious ideas of their masters. This does not extenuate the moral wrong of slavery, for it originated in no such philanthropic purpose. It is a fact, however, not to be overlooked. How great this progress has been is seen the moment they are sent back to Africa, and placed side by side with those descended from the same general stock. The native African is still a brute, bowing before a stone, offering human sacrifices; without arts or industry, with scarcely a notion of right or wrong; a mere savage, and of the most degraded kind. The emancipated slaves who have colonized Liberia have gone far to prove themselves competent to establish and conduct—the greatest work of man on earth—a free and Christian Commonwealth. They have churches, and schools, and courts of justice, and a representative government, and laws to which they know how to secure obedience. The marriage bond is as much respected, the home is as sacred, and the education of the young as anxiously provided for, as among the great mass of the people in the more civilized States of Europe. And this progress, and more than this, is the fruit of a gradual culture under a condition of slavery; and could scarcely have existed without those habits of obedience, industry, and temperance which, if exacted by the master for his own advantage, have in the end redounded far more to the benefit of the slave. We confess that we fear, if, one hundred or one hundred and fifty years ago, any large number of native Africans had been landed in New England, and left, with their freedom, to provide for themselves, that their descendants at this moment, if any still existed, would be in a far more debased condition than if their fathers had been trained up from barbarism under the restraints of slavery.

"The moral sense of the world demands of the South, not that it shall abolish slavery in a day or a year, but that it shall show, by some decided action, that an institution which it confesses keeps the slave in a low, debased, and inferior state, it does not intend, because of its profitableness, nor for any reason but the direct necessity, to be a permanent one. Were the Southern States, with a prospective view to emancipation, to adopt some effective plan by which to educate the blacks for the duties of freedom—were they thus, in some proper method and by intention, preparing them for its ultimate enjoyment—though the process of training the slave for freedom were as long as that which has accustomed him to the habits of bondage—it would be felt that they were meeting, as can be done in no other way, the responsibilities of their position.

"If slavery is ever done away by human means, unless it be through revolution, insurrection, and civil war, it must be by Southern men; and the only persons who have any direct influence for good over this matter, and who can be expected voluntarily to exert that influence, are the Southern friends of emancipation. Any Northern method of agitating the question of slavery which overlooks this point must be fatally erroneous. We fear that it has been overlooked, and already with very mischievous results. We have never heard any man acquainted with the South doubt that the feeling in regard to the abolition of slavery has within the last few years undergone a very great change. Whatever important ends slavery agitation at the North may have accomplished, it has paralyzed and struck dumb the Southern friends of freedom. Fifteen or twenty years ago large numbers, in all parts of the South, for different reasons and in different degrees, looked with dislike on slavery, and with favor on whatever tended towards its removal. In Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky, the emancipation party was a large and powerful one. Now it is annihilated. Multitudes are altogether repelled from it, while others, shrinking from a false position, recoiling from any seeming treachery to their friends and neighbors, and fearing to be identified with Northern Abolitionists, are silenced. We attribute this state of things in part to the influence of Mr. Calhoun, and in part to the increased value of slave property; but that state of feeling which has made the calm and fair discussion of the subject all but impossible, we attribute mainly to the manner in which it has been treated at the North. The emancipation party in the slave States has been palsied by the action of abolitionism, more entirely even than the Colonization Society in the free States. A method of agitation, whose main result has been to destroy that party which alone had it in its power to do any thing effectively for the abolition of slavery, seems to us a mournful one. To have merely secured the discussion of the subject, without reference to the reasonableness or wisdom of such discussion, in Northern Legislatures or pulpits, or in the halls of Congress, is but a slight compensation for this disastrous evil; and to call the insisting on this destructive speech a vindication of the freedom of speech, implies a melancholy confusion of ideas.

"But if we are to wait for the growth of an emancipation party at the South, it is said, we may wait a century before it is large enough to accomplish any thing. This may be so, or not. It does not, however, alter the fact, that it is the only human agency, except it be through violence, to which we can look for the removal of slavery. We have in this case, as in so many others, to trust for the good which we desire to the slow development of causes over which we have but little control. It is certain that our impatience will do little to hasten the social progress of States in the management of whose internal affairs we have no voice; while our uninvoked interference will only cripple the action of those who alone have the disposition and power to promote the welfare of the blacks."

These passages, culled nearly at random, will suffice to exhibit the liberal and truthful character of the entire production, and will, to those who have not access to the Review itself, be a guaranty of its conservative and law-upholding spirit. The chief aim of the writer, however, is to inculcate upon the reader the immense importance of the movement in favor of a gradual removal of the free colored population of the United States to Africa or the West India Islands, particularly Jamaica, by a matured and extending system of colonization. Thus pleasingly does the reviewer condense into a paragraph the results of the beneficent efforts of the truly philanthropic Colonization Society, and give them encouragement in their future exertions:

"Had one, in some summer-day dream, busied himself with imagining the best method for civilizing a continent, he would have probably constructed in his fancy some such scheme as this, which, through the labors of the Colonization Society, has already become a substantive reality. It was a glorious conception this of making emancipated slaves the regenerators of the dark land from which their fathers came. Nor has it proved to be a visionary enterprise, but one which for more than thirty years has been steadily advancing towards successful issues. Many might reasonably, at the outset, have hesitated and doubted long, before engaging in such an undertaking. But who, now that its success and promise are before the world, will not bid it God-speed? The whole cost of colonization, since its first commencement in 1817, is estimated at no more than $1,250,000; a sum not sufficient to build and maintain for half-a-dozen years the small and ineffective squadron which we now keep on the African coast. On what enterprise during the present century has the same sum been expended with a reasonable prospect of such great results?"

That our writer does not, however, indulge simply in the dreams of an optimist, who contents himself with pointing out the perfect, without reflecting that it may be visionary and impracticable, is evinced by the following moderate expression of his expectations; and who can refuse to share in his hopes, even if all should not be accomplished which a pure and sanguine philanthropy might abstractly desire?

"Of course, we do not commend colonization either in Jamaica or Africa as a panacea for all the evils of slavery, nor do we anticipate that colored colonies, outranking all others in wisdom and virtue, will suddenly become embodied Utopias. We have no intention of maintaining extravagancies of this sort. It is not necessary that colonization should be a full and complete antidote to slavery to make it worthy of consideration. Our object has been simply to show that, in the present state of the world, it furnishes an opportunity to the free black for a decided improvement of his own condition, and, still more, that of his children, and that well-arranged schemes of colonization would form a most useful part in any wise plan for the abolition of slavery. If it be competent to no more than this, it deserves the attention of every humane and every patriotic man."

PICKPOCKETS AND BED BUGS.—It is stated in a London paper that the following curious trick was practised on a lady while she was walking in the Crystal Palace. She felt herself suddenly tapped on the shoulder, and turning round saw a gentleman, who said politely, "I beg your pardon, madam, but look there;" and he pointed to a black moving speck on the shoulder of the lady's shawl, when to her horror she beheld crawling one of those insects which are the abhorrence of all cleanly and delicate housewives. With a shudder and almost a shriek, she threw the shawl from her shoulders, and full of shame and confusion shook off the unclean thing, kindly aided by the gentleman who had pointed it out, and by two others, who were very assiduous in rendering assistance, and who, she thought, pressed upon her rather too officiously. They suddenly separated, and she had scarcely recovered from her confusion, when she found that she had been robbed of her gold watch and chain, her brooch, and her purse. Fortunately, she was at this moment joined by a gentleman who had quitted her side but a few moments before, which the thieves had no doubt observed. He informed the police officer of the occurrence, the lady described the persons who had surrounded her, and in an instant the whole admirable detective arrangements of the police were in operation. Every avenue was watched, every door guarded, and in fifteen minutes the thieves were in custody, and the property was found in their possession. The well dressed fellow who had excited the lady's terror by pointing to the dreadful creature on her shawl was searched, and a small box half full of the disgusting insects was found in his possession.

SINGULAR GEOLOGICAL FACT.—At Modena, in Italy, within a circle of four miles around the city, wherever the earth is dug, and the workmen arrive at the distance of sixty-three feet, they come to a bed of chalk, which they bore with an auger five feet deep. They then withdraw from the pit before the auger is removed, and upon its extraction the water bursts up with great violence, and quickly fills the well thus made, the supply of water being affected neither by rains nor droughts. At the depth of fourteen feet are found the ruins of an ancient city, houses, paved streets, and mosaic work. Below this again is a layer of earth, and at thirty-six feet walnut trees are found entire, and with leaves and walnuts still upon them. At twenty-eight feet soft chalk is found, and below this vegetables, trees, and animals as before.

LOITERINGS IN LEISURE HOURS.

Sketch of a Prairie Tramp through Northern Missouri.

Kind reader, you that have lived the life of a "cit," shut up in smoky towns and crowded marts, did you ever, when the shortening days of autumn come on, and the face of Nature wears her most inviting looks—by turns

"Gloriously gay and pensively sad"—

did you ever escape from your prison-place into the pure, free, open air of heaven, and, leaving behind the canker-worm of care and thought which had been eating into your vitals, wander on, onward, rejoicing in your freedom, until you found yourself at last making an autumnal tramp over the glorious prairies of that undefined region, the "Far West?" If you have not, you have not worshipped Nature aright. Talk not of your pleasure trips to Saratoga, to Newport, to Niagara, or any other crowded resort for fashionable loungers of the present day. These may all do well enough; but they are not the thing. One sees at them the same rivalry between man and man; the same struggling to keep up appearances; feels the same cares which have wearied him, and from which he hoped to make a happy escape. It is only by worshipping Nature face to face that he can fully realize the object of his desires. He must leave behind him, too, those with whom he has been accustomed to act and speak and think. But I am wandering from my purpose, which is simply to endeavor to impart to you, gentle reader, a portion of the pleasure and utter *abandon* which I myself realized over a twelve-month since from a tramp over the magnificent prairies and through the noble forests of Northern Missouri—a portion of the State boasting not of civilization—where the log-cabin or the canvass tent is the traveller's shelter at night, and where his homely meal is furnished him by the hunter's skill; its only inhabitants the pioneer-farmers of the backwoods—Nature's best and truest nobility.

Behold us in the beginning of October, a party of twenty, starting on a reconnoissance of a proposed railway across the noble delta lying between the two mightiest rivers of America—the Missouri and the Mississippi; the waters of the one rolling from their home amid the mountains of "eternal snow," the other flowing through that valley into the lap of which Nature has poured all her choicest gifts—the frontier town of St. Joseph, on the Missouri, being the starting point of our reconnoissance; Hannibal, on the Mississippi, the terminus.

As we took up the line of march with all the paraphernalia of a surveying party, camp equipage, &c., summer was sinking gently away into the arms of autumn. The ancient forests had partly doffed their robes of green, and the "Titans of the wood" now stood arrayed in all the gorgeousness of autumnal drapery. The bright plumed paroquets were on the wing; the squirrel leaped from limb to limb in the tall hickory and cotton-wood trees; herds of sleek and contented cattle browsed upon the verdure of the prairies; whilst the red deer, collected in small bands, as they rested on the heather, dreamt not of the hunter's skill. Now the sun shone out in all his regal splendor; the next moment he would veil himself behind the fleecy clouds, which seemed chasing each other through the heavens, whilst a gentle voice of sighing went through the woods and tall prairie grass like a requiem for the bright foliage as it floated from the boughs. Such was the season when we started on our tramp.

A few days' diligent use of surveying instruments, whilst the camp hands employed themselves building rough bridges for us to cross the various streams, sufficed to place us beyond reach of the Missouri river. Our course lay [illegible] region of unsurpassed fertility, wild and as yet but thinly settled, vast stretches of prairie land unbroken to the furrow; noble forests which knew not the stroke of the woodman's axe; streams which scorned the restraint of bridge or dam. Here and there a log-cabin reared its humble and unpretending front, its owner some sturdy pioneer more independent on this his "quarter section" than ever an English baron in days of "Magna Charta." The days we spent in the field in use of our instruments; the nights we passed at camp, or else at some neighboring cabin. The labors of the day over, field notes, calculations, &c. made out, the social ring would form around the camp-fire, (some huge decayed tree which had been devoted to the flames,) and as the pipe went the rounds, yielding up our incense to the *God of Tobbacco*, the joke or the story of border-life passed from lip to lip.

Our sturdy chain-bearers from the wild region of Grand river—the heroes of many a target match and deer hunt—would then fight over again the battles of the fabled Mormon war, through the scene of which we were passing, and pour into the ears of willing listeners many a tale of the days when the bandits of the prairies existed as an organized body, and had their *cordon* of emissaries over the whole valley of the Mississippi. They could point out where such a notorious horse-thief had been caught, such another lynched, and yet another had paid the forfeit of his life. Thus passed away the evenings, till, as night stole on, one by one of the group would stretch out before the blazing fire in slumber, or seek repose beneath the shelter of the tents.

In one month from the time of our departure from St. Joseph we pitched our tents upon the banks of Grand river, a small stream navigable for the lower class of steamboats as high as the forks at which point we crossed. This, the most noted and largest stream of any watering this region, is wild and romantic in the extreme. Its serpentine waters are fringed with over-hanging willows, and the mighty cotton-woods lining its bottom lands of untold fertility impress one with a deep sense of the sublimity of Nature. At the junction of the forks with the main stream is the little town of Utica. This is laid out with all the magnificence of a city on paper. Its inhabitants pointed out to us with no little pride their various reservations for public squares, &c. Who knows but what their dreams may some day or other be realized? At present it must be confessed they seem but visionary. Certain it is, however, that we found it the most thriving town we had yet passed through. Success to its "go-a-head" projectors!

We lost no time by the way. Each day found us in the field, and each night we camped in a different spot. Occasionally we would reach a stream which a sudden rain had swollen and caused to overflow its banks. To us this was no impediment. Our camp-horses furnished us the ready means of crossing. A slight ducking was all the damage we ever experienced in crossing, and, once over with our instruments, we bivouacked with some friendly farmer until the waters subsided sufficiently to venture our camp equipage to the tender mercy of the elements. For some weeks it was the period of Indian summer. A slight haze rested upon the earth, and a thin vapory film hung like a veil across the blue arch of heaven. Far and near the prairies were on fire, and as the sheet of flame with which they were enveloped far as the eye could reach went leaping and crackling upward until it seemed to lick the very heavens, dense volumes of smoke rolled through the atmosphere enveloping earth in a still deeper haze.

As we crossed one of the magnificent prairies on the Grand river "divide," one of the company in a thoughtless moment fired some of the decayed grass. In a short time we were enveloped in flames, which, spreading rapidly, threatened destruction to the cabin and clearings of the only settler for some miles round. The flames were rapidly driving before the wind when we set to work to save the poor fellow and his habitation from the effects of our comrade's thoughtlessness. A neighboring thicket furnished us the weapons with which to fight the "fire king." After one hour of the hardest work we ever did in our lives we finally succeeded in overcoming it, literally whipping it out. I do not know what a chance traveller would have thought of it, coming upon us suddenly, and beholding a party of twenty men, each armed with a huge brush, and whipping the flames like so many devils. At any rate, we had the satisfaction of knowing that we had saved an honest farmer from the destruction which our comrade's thoughtlessness had well-nigh entailed upon him.

At length we stood upon the grand "divide" which separates the waters which flow into the Missouri from those of the Mississippi. This, one of the noblest prairies in the whole West, is some ten miles in breadth, and runs unbroken from the northern boundary of the State almost to its southern extremity. The eye wearies, as, standing in the centre of it, one endeavors to seek a limit to its vastness. From this "divide" onward, till the valley of the Mississippi is reached, the streams are beautifully limpid and transparent, and present a very different appearance from the muddy streams which flow westward to empty their waters into the Missouri. There is presented, too, a marked difference in the soil; that lying east of the "divide" being much less rich and fertile than to the westward of it.

By the time we reached Palmyra—not the Palmyra of the ancients, but the snug little county seat of Marion county—the season was far advanced. The glories of autumn were fading fast away. The dew no longer rested upon the prairies in the morning; but the decayed vegetation glittered with the hoar frosts, which crackled beneath our feet as we went to our labors. The keen norther whistled through the trees, stripping them of their foliage, and scattering it ruthlessly about. The nights had become cold and sharp, and buffalo robes and blankets smacked of comfort.

Just as we rolled into Hannibal, at the end of our line on the Mississippi, a slight fall of snow announced the descent of winter. Our field labors were now over; the survey finished. Partaking here for a few days of the kind hospitality of the citizens, and in the enjoyment of the luxuries with which we had for some time dispensed, we rested from our labors. At the end of a few days more we started from Hannibal to retrace our steps back to St. Joseph. The prairies through which we had so lately passed were now covered with a robe of snow, and had an appearance of dreariness and desolation. Ten days' hard walking took us back to St. Joseph, and we again trod its streets, having been absent on our tramp just two months, and having pedestrianated some five hundred miles.

Kind reader—if you have not already dropped from me by the way-side—here would I take my leave of you. This is not the place nor mine the pen to dwell upon the vast resources of this noble region, agricultural and mineral, nor to demonstrate its peculiar physical adaptation for railway purposes, the object which our reconnaissance had in view. This has been done by other hands. In a few years the steam-horse will rush snorting across this beautiful delta, linking with his iron bands the two noblest valleys of the West. The almost unbroken solitude which now reigns over these prairies—unbroken save by a solitary squatter here and there, and by the California and Oregon-bound immigrant, as from Illinois and Indiana with his ox-team slowly and toilingly westward he wends his way—will in the course of time be succeeded by the busy hum of civilization and the throng of a dense population. Sooner or later this day must come to pass. Narrow-minded prejudices and party bigotry may retard it for a while, but come it will. Let the day come when it may, long will it be ere the memory of our pioneer tramp over these noble prairies shall pass from my mind. In the future it will linger around me like the shadow of some pleasant dream.

ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI. B.

LIBERIA AND ITS PROSPECTS.

A few days since we met an intelligent colored man who was about going to Liberia, with a view to make an examination of its condition and prospects. He [illegible] many would emigrate. Till very recently the blacks have been strongly prejudiced against emigration to Africa; the greatest misrepresentations were made to them of the country and its resources; the climate was asserted to be fatal; the hardships far greater than they were; and finally many of them had been taught the delusion that they could, in some way, and by some means, rise to social equality in this country. This delusion is now nearly destroyed, and the public mind of the blacks is ready to receive correct impressions, both of the true condition of Africa and their own prospects. The reaction has commenced, and with it will commence the rapid removal of the free blacks, and then emancipated slaves, to the shores of Liberia. The same difficulties, the same prejudices, and the same slow progress have attended the foundation and growth of every new colony which now attends that of Liberia. Indeed, we scarcely know where a new colony in a wilderness and foreign land has been founded under better auspices than this. In 1660, more than half a century from its first settlement, the colony of Virginia contained but thirty thousand inhabitants, notwithstanding wealth, power, and influence had been largely exerted in its favor. In half that time, and with less than half that influence, and with only colored emigrants, burdened by the degradation of an inferior caste, Liberia has six thousand, with a flourishing commerce, a republican constitution, and civilized manners. It requires no sagacity to foresee that, at the end of half a century from its foundation, Liberia will present a far greater array of population and wealth than did Virginia in the same period.

Nor need we fear a deficiency of emigrants; for there is not only the free colored population to recruit from, (who will henceforward go freely at their own expense,) but there are great numbers of the slave people who will be emancipated by their masters and sent to Liberia.

We have, then, really more than a million of the colored population of this country from which to recruit the rising State of Liberia. In this million, every possible motive which can excite the energy of emigration, whether in freemen, slave, or master, exists in full force. A rising empire of black men offering the anticipated glories of freedom and civilization, the riddance of a tax and a burden on the master, and liberty to the captive—all now combine to increase emigration to Liberia, and increase the prospects of its ultimate and complete success. We rejoice in the hope of a continent redeemed from barbarism, a degraded race restored, and christianity illuminating the land of shadows and of darkness.—*Cincinnati Gazette.*

CHINESE METHOD OF WELDING CRACKED IRON-WARE.—Mr. BALESTIER, who went on a mission to the East, describes, for the information of the Commissioner of Patents, the Chinese method of welding cracked iron-ware, by cementing them with cast-iron while in a liquid state:

In a cast iron pan which Mr. B. procured to be welded, the operator commenced by breaking the edges of the fracture slightly with a hammer, so as to enlarge the fissures, after which the fractured parts were placed and held in their natural positions by means of wooden braces. The pan being ready, crucibles made of clay were laid in charcoal, and ignited in a small portable sheet-iron furnace, with bellows working horizontally. As soon as the pieces of cast-iron with which the crucibles were charged were fused, it was poured on a layer of partly charred husk of rough rice or paddy, which was previously spread on a thickly doubled cloth, the object of which is to prevent the sudden cooling and hardening of the liquid metal. Whilst in this liquid state it was quickly conveyed with the right hand to the fractured part under the vessel, and forced up with a jerk into the enlarged fissure, whilst with the left hand a paper rubber was passed over the obtruding liquid inside of the vessel, making a strong, substantial, and neat operation.

FOUR MEN DROWNED.—On Wednesday morning, about four o'clock, four of the crew of the ship Augusta, of Gottenburg, lying in the North River, (New York,) were drowned while endeavoring to get on board their vessel in a small boat. It appears they were intoxicated at the time. Their names are Anderson, Neilson, Peterson, and Berryson.

PARENT AND CHILD.—The case of Richardson vs. Richardson, in the Maine courts, has excited considerable attention. It will be recollected that there was involved in this case an important question as to the binding effect of a gift of an infant child on the part of the parents to the grandmother, Mrs. Farnsworth. The mother died soon after the birth of the child, but first requested her mother to receive the child, as she alleges and as was found by the jury, to rear and educate as her own. Some years afterwards the father claimed, and, having obtained possession of the child, refused to give it up to the grandmother. This action of replevin, in the name of the child against the father as defendant, was then instituted, and the child restored to the grandmother, and the case was carried up to the full court by exceptions. The principal point was in relation to the validity of this contract. The court now decides that the proof of the contract was inadmissible, and that the action cannot be sustained. The effect of this decision must be to restore the child to the father.

OFFICIAL.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, OCTOBER 29, 1851.

Numerous applications having been made to this Department for the allowance of increased commissions to postmasters, authorized under certain conditions by the sixth section of "An act to reduce and modify the rates of postage in the United States, and for other purposes," approved March 3d, 1851; and it having been clearly shown that, in most cases, the labors of postmasters have been increased and their commissions reduced by the operation of said act—

It is ordered that, whenever the Auditor of the Treasury for the Post Office Department shall have satisfactory proof, by affidavit or otherwise, that the labors of any postmaster have been increased and his commissions reduced, as provided for by said act, he shall allow and credit such postmaster with commissions according to the following rules, to wit:

1. Where the commissions of such postmaster for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1851, did not exceed fifty dollars, *the same amount of commissions allowed for that year*, with twenty per cent. added thereto, shall be allowed and credited to the postmaster for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1852.

2. Where the commissions of such postmaster for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1851, exceeded fifty dollars, and did not exceed one hundred dollars, *the same amount of commissions allowed for that year*, with fifteen per cent. added thereto, shall be allowed and credited to the postmaster for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1852.

3. Where the commissions of such postmaster for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1851, exceeded one hundred and did not exceed five hundred dollars, *the same amount of commissions allowed for that year*, with twelve and a half per cent. added thereto, shall be allowed and credited to the postmaster for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1852.

4. Where the commissions of such postmaster for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1851, exceeded five hundred dollars, *the same amount of commissions allowed for that year*, with ten per cent. added thereto, shall be allowed and credited to the postmaster for the year ending June 30, 1852.

Provided, always, that the commissions to be allowed at any post office (other than a distributing office) shall not exceed the postages collected at such office during the period for which such allowance is made: provided, also, that a special application for a further allowance to any distributing office may be made whenever the Auditor shall certify that the commissions authorized to be allowed under this order are insufficient to pay the actual and necessary expenses of such office, including the compensation of the postmaster: and provided, further, that there shall not be allowed at any office where the compensation of the postmaster is by law limited to a fixed salary or compensation any greater sum than shall be required to pay such salary or compensation, and the actual and necessary expenses of his office.

The rate of allowance after the present fiscal year is reserved for future consideration, and will be determined upon after the accounts for the first three quarters of the present fiscal year shall have been adjusted by the Auditor.

N. K. HALL, Postmaster General.

FOUCAULT'S PENDULUM—THE EARTH'S ROTATION.

From the Guardian, an educational magazine edited at the Female Institute, Columbia, Tennessee.

A very happy idea, in connexion with this beautiful experiment in Natural Philosophy, has been presented to the world by Professor STRONG, of Rutgers's College, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

[illegible] a very light wheel of some six feet in diameter upon a steel point resting within a socket of glass for the avoidance of friction. The wheel is supported horizontally upon its central point, and is shut up from all disturbing influences of currents in the air, being left entirely to itself. The wheel exhibits all the phenomena of Foucault's pendulum—the earth revolving around it, causing a seeming revolution of the wheel, precisely as in the case of the pendulum.

The probability is that a chip resting upon the surface of a tub of water, secluded from all atmospheric motions, and left in perfect repose, would exhibit the same phenomena, but not in so marked a way, owing to the disturbing influence of the friction of the water against the sides of the vessel. A highly-polished steel needle rests upon the surface of quicksilver apparently without contact, just as certain insects walk upon water without wetting their feet. Could a perfectly circular vessel be devised of a material that would annihilate the retardation of friction on being filled with quicksilver, it is possible that a float placed upon its surface would exhibit Mons Foucault's beautiful idea far better than his own pendulum, or Prof. Strong's wheel. The quantity of the fluid experimented with has nothing to do with the success of the experiment; and quicksilver is the most promising substance for the trial, as being the densest fluid known, that is, possessing the highest *vis inertiæ* or resistance to motion.

It is probable that, whenever a round vessel of any easily moving fluid is left for some time in a state of perfect rest, it assumes a slowly revolving motion like Foucault's pendulum, in obedience to the earth's diurnal rotation. This motion is more or less considerable as the vessel is more or less remote from the earth's equator. Its direction is to the left if in north latitude, and to the right if in south latitude.

Ever since the announcement of Prof. Strong's variation of the Foucault experiment we have been waiting for some one to announce this very obvious inference, and to demonstrate that some of the most remarkable of the oceanic currents are easily traced to the influence first suggested by the rotating pendulum.

Some twenty-five years ago Capt. Basil Hall promulgated the theory of the trade winds, which is now received and acquiesced in by the learned every where; and it seems surprising that he did not happen to advance a little further, and present to the world the very experiment of Mons. Foucault. This theory, in brief, is that the atmospheric ocean has a *general* motion precisely equal with that of the earth, but that it is constantly approaching to or receding from the equator under the influence of rarefaction from the sun's rays. Within the torrid zone the movement of our atmosphere is *less*, and the higher latitudes, whether north or south, *greater*, than the *average* rotatory movement of the earth's surface; the result being easterly winds on the equator, and westerly winds at all points far enough removed from it.

The basin [tub] of the North Atlantic presents us the most striking instance of a large and somewhat insulated body of water, removed far enough from the equator to exemplify with distinctness the influence of the earth's rotary motion. The Gulf Stream, on its western side the well known current setting eastward from Newfoundland towards Europe, a distinct southerly movement along the Spanish and African coasts, and the westerly motion within the tropics, hitherto ascribed exclusively to the influence of the Trade winds, constitute a very striking demonstration of the influence of the power first suggested by Mons. Foucault. The northern portion of the Pacific will probably, on being more thoroughly explored, verify this theory. In the southern hemisphere we find an equally plain confirmation of the truth of Mons. Foucault's theory. The Indian Ocean forms another isolated body of water, which is constantly exhibiting the phenomena of a vast rotation. The currents in its eastern section are much interfered with by the periodical monsoons, while its southern division is so little traversed by the navigators as to be almost unknown. Its western side, between Madagascar and Africa, known as the Channel of Mozambique, exhibits almost a repetition of our Atlantic Gulf Stream. A constant current sets through between Madagascar and the continent, running ordinarily at the rate of four or five miles per hour. Being on the opposite side of the equator, the stream flows in a direction opposite to that on the North American coast—the rotation of the insulated sea being to the right rather than to the left—thus completely verifying the theory of Mons. Foucault. The most prominent cape, projecting from the continent into this stream, was named by the Portuguese adventurers who first attempted to make headway against it *Capo de Corrientes*, the Cape of Currents. Outward bound ships always avoid it, while those returning from the East Indies always avail themselves of the favoring flood.

The influence of the earth's rotation upon oceanic currents cannot fail to arrest the attention of Lieut. MAURY, of the Washington Observatory, in the construction of his wind and current charts.

FATAL AFFRAY IN GEORGIA.—An affray occurred at East Point, about six miles from Atlanta, on the 17th instant, between a young man named LEONARD RATERREE and THOS. and JOHN CONNELLY, in which Thomas received a fatal stab in the abdomen and has since died. His brother John was shot through the breast, but his wounds were not considered fatal. Raterree made his escape after the fracas, and a reward of three hundred dollars is offered for his apprehension.

VARIETIES.

GAMBLING IN EUROPE.—The enormous sums of money which daily change owners at Wiesbaden, Carlesruhe, and other watering places which are generally resorted to by the fashion and aristocracy of Europe are almost incredible, and of course this high playing is frequently attended with tragical results.

A few weeks ago, at Carlesruhe, a gentleman named Tissard, who had long been considered the most successful gambler of his day, and who has frequently won $100,000 in one night, suddenly took it into his head to send a bullet through his heart, because on one occasion his good luck had deserted him, which, though it would not be the cause of his ruin, yet he thought would dishonor him. Playing with a German Countess, he lost every time, though they continued for thirty-one hours without the slightest interruption, except while once taking a cup of coffee. At last, finding himself minus the sum of 100,000 francs, he coolly rose from the table, and, requesting the lady to excuse him for a moment, retired. After the lapse of some time, the Countess having become a little fidgety about his return, sent a servant to seek him, who, finding his door locked, knocked several times for admission, but receiving no answer he at length broke it open. There lay the gambler extended on the floor, with a bullet hole through his heart, and beside him on the table an envelope bearing the address of the Countess, and containing in bank bills the amount she had won from him. The Countess, it is said, when she was informed of the catastrophe which occurred, remarked: "Well, at least he might have told me he was never coming back, and not have kept me waiting here so long."

A JEWISH DIVORCE.—A Jewish divorce was granted in this city a few days ago. It is the first case that has occurred here during thirteen years. The applicant was the husband. The mode of untying the knot is simple. The aggrieved party lays the case before the chief Rabbi, who selects two other Rabbis, and the three hear the statement, call witnesses, and, if satisfied that there are grounds for a divorce, give to the suitor a writing of twelve lines—no more nor less—on parchment. This is signed by witnesses, who also see that this party delivers it to the party criminated. When this has been done the separation is complete, though the parties can be re-married if they wish; but if the wife, for instance, should marry another man, and he should die, the former husband cannot again marry her. The woman in this case is not a Jewess by birth or education. She was connected with no church. Shortly after her marriage she appealed most urgently to the Rabbis here to be admitted to the Jewish faith. After considerable opposition her wish was granted. This is very rare, and only one other instance has occurred, so far as we can learn.—*Cleveland (Ohio) Plaindealer of October 6.*

OBSTINACY.—An obstinate man does not hold opinions, but they hold him; for when he is once possessed of an error it is like a devil, only cast out with great difficulty. Whatsoever he lays hold on, like a drunken man, he never loses, though it do but help to sink him the sooner. His ignorance is abrupt and inaccessible, impregnable both by art and nature, and will hold out to the last, though it has nothing but rubbish to defend. It is as dark as pitch, and sticks as fast to any thing it lays hold on. His skull is so thick that it is proof against reason, and never cracks but on the wrong side, just opposite to that on which the impression is made, which surgeons say does happen very frequently. The slighter and more inconsistent his opinions are, the faster he holds them, otherwise they would fall asunder of themselves; for opinions that are false ought to be held with more strictness and assurance than those that are true, otherwise they will be apt to betray their owners before they are aware. He delights most of all to differ in things indifferent; no matter how frivolous they are, they are weighty enough in his weak judgment; and he will rather suffer self-martyrdom than part with the least scruple of his freehold, for it is impossible to dye his dark ignorance into any lighter color. He is resolved to understand no man's reason but his own, because he finds no man can understand his but himself. His wits are like a sack, which the French proverb says is bad faster before it is full than when it is; and his opinions are like plants that grow upon rocks, that stick fast though they have no footing. His understanding is hardened, like Pharaoh's heart, and is proof against all sorts of judgments whatsoever.

AN "OLD COCK" GONE.—We place no restraint upon our sorrow in recording the death of the large Shanghae cock of Mr. William Stowe, our worthy postmaster, and late chairman of the committee on fowls. He died three days since while moulting. He had watched from day to day his waning glories, as tail-feather after tail-feather fell to the ignoble earth, and in the depth of his humiliation was crowed over by a bantam rooster hard by. His proud spirit was humbled. The hens, who had so often regarded him with respect, with all the fickleness of their sex, clucked at him from under current bushes, and pretended to be very busy scratching whenever his stately form—stately even in his wreck—stalked like a sorrowful shadow by. At