

# THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

"I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man."—Thomas Jefferson.

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## WINE INSPIRATION.

From the New York Star.

### THE BEAUTIFUL SLAVE.

A gentleman of fortune in this city has lately received a letter from his brother, who is President of one of the Mobile Banks, who mentions, among other matters relative to the present distressing times, some interesting incidents touching the sale of the effects of a late merchant of that city Mr. N. This gentleman was possessed of a beautiful female slave, about 18 years of age. At the North she would have been taken for a brunette, being as much unlike the French creoles as possible. Indeed it was said that she had not a drop of French, and but precious little African blood in her veins. Nevertheless she was a slave at the time of her master's failure, and as such became the property of his creditors. An individual (a broker) to whom he owed some \$10,000, determined to possess himself of this girl, if possible, and it was likewise the intention of the broken merchant to redeem her at all hazards. All the creditors, except the broker, agreed that N. might retain his slave on giving a good indorsed twelve months note for \$1,500, with interest. He alone demanded the sale of the girl under the hammer, and the unfortunate merchant was compelled to submit, determining however, to have some of his friends buy her for him. The day of sale having arrived, Mr. N. was under no apprehension but that he could retain his Martha for something less than \$2,000 and he had made arrangements to meet that sum in full, and commissioned one of his friends to make the purchase for him. But what was his surprise and indignation to see his refractory creditor make the first bid 2,500! He was not thus to be balked, and under instructions, his friend bid 2,000, and the creditor, upon the beautiful Martha was struck off to him at \$4,500!

It was utterly out of the power of the broken merchant to raise money even for the bid he had made upon his Martha, had it succeeded in purchasing her, and his creditor would doubtless have still overbid him, had he gone higher. He must therefore lose her, or pay the full amount of the \$10,000 debt, which it was impossible for him to do. What was then to be done, Martha would never consent to part with her master. He had purchased her on his arrival at the South, more than eight years ago, at her own request, she then living about twenty miles from Mobile. He had given her every advantage of education, and brought her up as tenderly as though she were his own daughter, and now she would sooner part with life itself than become a slave.

Her feelings on learning her situation, (for N. had carefully concealed the announcement of the sale from her,) were probably similar to those which the proud daughter of any citizen would experience in a like predicament, for the fact of her being a slave was known to but few in Mobile. She therefore sent word to her purchaser, that she would never leave her present abode alive. In answer to this message, he sent two officers to take her into custody. Mean time Mr. N. had encouraged her that she should certainly escape her doom, and embark for New York, whither he would join her in a short time, never again to return, and he would there marry her.

Martha was shortly after this placed in the common jail at Mobile, as a stubborn servant, but, fortunately, the keeper interested himself in her behalf, and she enjoyed equal comforts to those of her master's house.

Just ten days after this, Martha signified her consent to leave the prison, and take up her abode with her new master, the heartless creditor of N. With pleasure and surprise she was liberated by the purchaser, who appropriated a handsome apartment in his own house to her use.—The same night she started for Savannah per express, unknown to any one save the faithful N.

One thousand dollars reward was immediately offered for her apprehension and the detection of those who had aided in her escape, and on the 6th day the reward was doubled, messengers also having been sent to New Orleans, and in several other directions. A fortnight passed, and no tidings of the beautiful slave Martha. Every one suspected, though none could prove, that her former master had aided in her escape. Mr. N. had now nearly arranged his affairs, and was about to leave Mobile. His stubborn creditor had tried by every means in his power, to procure an indictment against him, but without success, when on the evening of N's departure, his friend, at his desire, called upon the creditor, to endeavor if possible to purchase a release to the title of Martha. "No," replied the broker, "I would sooner spend the \$10,000, than be tricked by the infernal Yankee!" N. took his leave, depositing \$800 with his friend, which was all the spare money he had, and instructing him to purchase with it the freedom of Martha if possible.

Within one month from the time N. left Mobile, the extensive house of R. M. and Brothers, cotton brokers stopped payment, and in due time, the sale of their personal property devolved upon an auctioneer. Among the living chattles disposed off, the title to the beautiful slave Martha, then absent, but who cost \$4,500 was struck off to the friend of N. for sixty two dollars!

This narrative is no fiction, the author of the letter first mentioned being the identical purchaser of the slave Martha. His immediate object in writing to the gentleman who furnished us with the above, was to ascertain the whereabouts of his friend N., as he had been unable to hear from him since his important purchase, though he had immediately written to New York, acquainting him with it. We have been promised an introduction to the heroine of this narrative, and her own happy husband.

## THOUGHTS ON THE TIMES.

One of the most striking characteristics of the present age, is the highly excitable state of the public mind. From the North-eastern boundary line to the Mexican Gulf, from the Atlantic to the 'Far West' there comes rumor after rumor of riot, insurrection, and tumult. A species of moral cholera seems every where prevailing; and no portion of our country is exempt from its visitation. The cold and circulating sons of New-England are now as readily lighted up into these out-breakings against order, as the hasty and inflammable spirits of the south. The passions of the populace are ever ready for explosion, and it matters not what is applied to the train—abolition, Granites, high prices of food, bank frauds, or gambling, any thing, in fact, is made use of by the people as an opportunity for taking the law into their own hands. They would be at once jurymen and executioners, legislators, and judges, when laboring under maddened excitement, that renders them wholly unfit for their assumed powers.

Though there have been riots among mankind, since they were first gathered into organized societies, and became nations, yet we do not recollect a period recorded in history when these 'uprors among the people, bore similitude to the riots of the present day, either in their frequent recurrence, or in the peculiar character of their motive power. They were generally, both in ancient and modern times, the reaction of those natural rights of man, which had been forcibly kept down by tyranny and oppression; and these insurrections were either immediately checked by the strong arm of enthroned authority; or else became the glorious means of restoring the people to their rightful privileges. But among us, it is different. Our government acknowledged that 'all men are born free and equal,' and the people have neither the disposition nor the excuse to rise in rebellion against it, since they both feel and know the blessings it secures them. Our mobs are not political, though they are sometimes made use of

by designing politicians; for we never see, even in the greatest excitement of party against party, one portion of the populace rising against those who differ from them in their opinions of public men and measures. In a philosophical sense, they may be termed moral ones, for the exciting cause is generally found to be some imaginary or real outrage upon the moral sense, or upon the honest but ignorant prejudices of the community. 'There is much truth in the remark of Bishop Porteus, that 'the mob may sometimes think right, but they always act wrong.' Either the supposed inefficiency of the laws, or an impatient unwillingness to await their slow decision, rouses the multitude into a determination to punish the offenders at once, and upon this rash resolve, they madly wreak their vengeance upon the original criminal, or upon any one whom they fancy to be in the least degree connected with him. Infuriated by their passions, they rush onward to the work of destruction, regardless alike of law, of justice, of reason, and of humanity. As in the first taste of blood, by the lion's cub, every drop that it takes makes it thirst for more, so it is with the mob's insatiate wrath, if left to itself, it never can be glutted—it never says 'it is enough,' until every thing has become a prey to its vindictive spirit.

The rapidity with which this tendency to riots has spread through our country, and their frequent recurrence here, there, and every where in our land is owing, in a great degree, to the encouragement given to them by the press, and by public opinion. The light and often commendatory notice given of Judge Lynch's proceedings, when his sapient Judgehip happened to punish rightly, according to the opinion of the writer or speaker, has produced incalculable mischief through our wide-spread community. With these short-sighted individuals the end justifies, and they thoughtlessly cast these fire-brand opinions about, saying, 'Are we not in sport?' But let such beware of this dangerous trifling, or they will kindle a conflagration, which will bid defiance to the power of man to arrest, and whose flames may go to the South Sea, until it has involved our prosperity, our glory, and our government, in one vast smouldering ruin.

However different may have been the exciting causes of these tumults among the people, yet the characteristics of a mob, when once roused into action, will ever be found similar. Take those of any age, and of any country, and we trace in their proceedings the same distinctive features.—The history of one is in this respect the history of all, for its subject is human nature. It is the wild misrule of the fiercest passions of the multitude gathered into fearful combination, and infuriated to insanity. They are for the time as incapable of exercising reason or judgment, as a band of maniacs; and it is this mental and moral derangement that invests them with a power so appalling. And it is also owing to this, that sound-judging legislators and humane magistrates have been forced to acknowledge, that nothing but the strong arm of power will be of any avail at such a crisis, and that in extreme cases, the severest measures are often the most merciful. Like drunkards when raging in 'delirium tremens,' they are not in a fit state to be counselled or reasoned with, and their acts of outrage have to be checked by force. Although public safety, and the necessity of preserving order, render strict procedures needful, yet there is not a patriot or philanthropist, whose heart does not bleed for the poor misguided populace, when thus excited to deeds of violence.—The general good requires the punishment of the actors, but the responsibility of their crimes hangs heavily upon their instigators. Sacred as well as profane history points to these leaders as the greatest criminals. The desire for the crucifixion of the Saviour sprung not spontaneously from the multitude, for they 'esteemed Him a prophet,' and would have taken Him 'by force to make him a king.' It was the wily 'chief priests and

scribes' who 'persuaded the people,' and 'moved them' to cry out 'Crucify Him, crucify Him!' It was these who stimulated the ignorant and thoughtless mob, until they thirsted for the blood of Him who had healed their sicknesses, borne their infirmities, and compassionated their sufferings.

While the mass of the people continue unenlightened, they will ever be passive instruments in the hands of those who study how to move them. In reason, they are children, but in their passions they are men; and it is through this dangerous medium that they are led on by their self-appointed rulers. We fear that the true friends of the people are comparatively but a small band. It seems the interest of all classes, and all parties, to keep them in ignorance, that they may be more easily swayed to suit their own purposes. It is as much the desire of the partisan politician to keep the crowd from judging for themselves, as it is that of the most despotic tyrant. The result, in making them do what they will, is the same in both cases, though the means which effect this are different; for the one is gained by flattery, and the other by force. We have said that the friends of the people are few, and even these few stand aloof in shameful inaction, and leave them to helpless prey to crafty disorganizers, erroneous prejudices, and rabid infidelity. There is an alarming degree of power left in the hands of those who are both secretly and openly striving to corrupt the populace, by removing the only two restraining principles that can be felt in their unenlightened condition—the belief in a God, and a future state. Should these be taken away, we may well tremble for our country, for the turbid and polluted waters of anarchy and vice will overwhelm it like a deluge.

To a calm and reflecting mind, an excited mob is an object of compassion, and the pious man will ever pray for the infuriated multitude as his Saviour did: 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!' The first stirrings of tumult generally arise from some cause that to their minds appears a just one. They possess an intuitive sense of right and wrong, which having never been guided or enlightened by religion or reason, can be easily misled by those who dazzle them by false lights, and delude them by sophistry. They have not judgment to sift the specious from the true; they are prone to mistake appearances for reality, and thus to them the worse can be made to seem the better reason. They both see and feel instances of hardship and apparent injustice, and they are mischievously told that the power of redress is in their own hands, if they have but the courage to exert it. While writhing under the loss of their hard-earned savings, they see the men whom they think were instrumental in ruining them, still living in ease and opulence, and some evil designer whispers, 'Revenge!' In the midst of their keen sufferings from want of employment, poverty, and scarcity of provisions, they are told that the exorbitant prices demanded for shelter, food, and fuel, are owing to 'combinations' & 'monopoly' among speculators, who are fattening upon the miseries of their fellows. They stop not to examine the truth of this statement, but give it full credence, and take summary vengeance upon the supposed offenders. They are thus lashed into fury, and imagine they can set all things right by violence and tumult. This course appears to them a 'justifiable expression of their feeling,' for so mobs have been spoken of, again and again. They have never been taught, that all out-breakings against law and order are deserving of censure and punishment. No one has attempted to convince them, while they were in a fit state to be reasoned with, that they are enemies of their country, by thus draining off the force of the laws; and that by their throwing clogs upon the inferior machinery of government, they may stop the mighty engine itself, and shatter it into dissolution. The people have teachers, it is true, but what are the lessons that are given them? Their subtle tutors wheedle them by flattery, and secure their confidence by avowing themselves the friends of liberty and of virtue. This gained, they assemble them in their 'halls of science,' and to try to undermine their faith in God and revelation, and their respect for all laws, whether human or divine. In addition to this oral instruction, they have the mighty aid of the press, and pour out their publications daily, weekly and monthly. These false teachers, these pretended friends of the people, have been unceasingly active in their unholy work. But what has been done by patriots or philanthropists to counteract their efforts? Has there been any thing like a strenuous, concerted action among these, to enlighten the public mind as to its true interests, and to bring it to a healthful state of feeling and action. Have they endeavored to prove to the people the sophistry and falsehood of those who are leading them into the bottomless pit of atheism, there to leave them groping in its chaotic darkness? If nothing has yet been done, then it is time for the true friends of the people to be up and be doing, for there is a great work before them. There has much been effected toward the moral reformation of the world, by exertions in the cause of christianity and of education. But the work of which we speak is preparatory to both. One reason, perhaps, why missionaries among the heathen are more successful than those who labor among our own miserable and vicious poor, is, that the savage has never heard revealed religion derided as a fable, and its professors ridiculed as dotards, or censured hypocrites. His ignorance and his natural sinfulness are the only obstacles to be overcome; but in our civilized community, there is a host of bitter prejudices, and gross errors, to be driven from the way, before the truths of christianity can even gain a hearing. If it was thought needful, before the appearance of the Saviour, that 'Elias should first come,' to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord,' then may there not still be something that is requisite to open the way for the reception and diffusion of the truths of revelation? This preparatory work is the enlightening of the public mind on the various ~~connections~~ flowing from moral, social, and political relations. ~~It is to exhibit in strong relief the misery and wretchedness that~~ will necessarily flow from the misconduct of the people, as husbands, fathers and citizens, and to show them that prosperity and happiness can only be expected in the faithful discharge of their duties in these several stations. It is to remove the existing prejudices against the religious portion of the community; to convince them that the hypocrisy of some professors, & the sinful acts of others, are no arguments against christianity, and to bring before them simple yet striking evidences of the truth of the holy Scriptures, in familiar and apt illustrations. The proper education of public opinion is yet to be accomplished.

The charge left by our venerable Washington, in his Farewell Address, needs still to be repeated, although forty years have passed since it was given. After having shown that 'religion and morality are indispensable supports to political prosperity,' and that it is to religion alone that we can look for true morality, he then recommends the general diffusion of knowledge among all classes of the people, and afterward says: 'In proportion as the structure of government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.'

By the enlightening of the public opinion, the Father of his Country surely did not mean the education of children in the rudiments of learning. It was to the education of men, in their duties as members of the body politic. It was to teach them to think, and judge, and act, for themselves, that they might rightly use their privileges as freemen, and not ignorantly or heedlessly abuse those blessings which were bought by the blood of revolutionary patriots. The