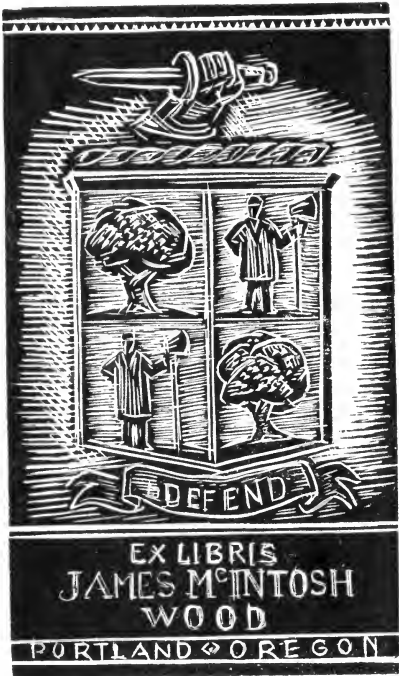


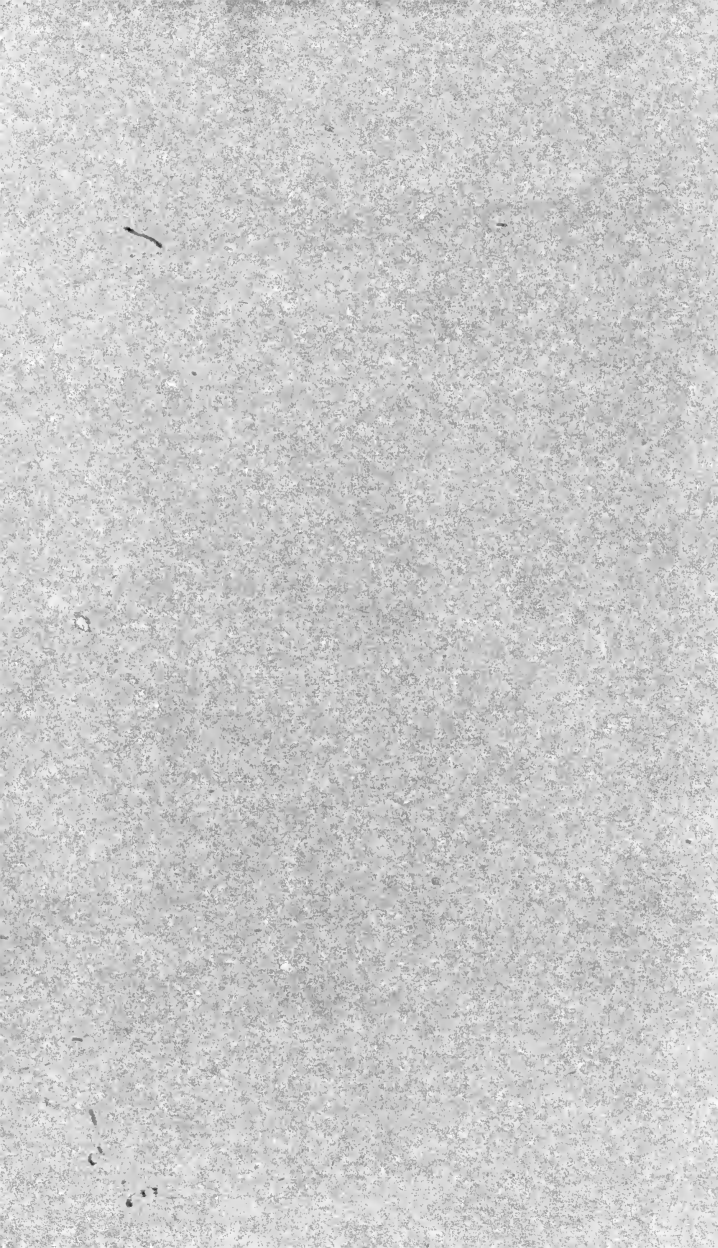
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James Mcintosh Wood







A

Shoulder to the Wheel of Progress:

BEING

ESSAYS, LECTURES AND MISCELLANIES

UPON

THEMES OF THE DAY.

BY

WM. MAXWELL WOOD, M. D.,
SURGEON U. S. NAVY.

Author of "The True Sources of Subordination," "Wandering Sketches in South
America, Polynesia," &c.

BUFFALO:
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1853.

GIFT

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TO
JOSHUA I. COHEN, M. D.,
OF THE CITY OF BALTIMORE.
THE FRIEND,
PROVEN BY TIME AND THE HOUR OF NEED,
THIS LITTLE VOLUME
IS
With every feeling of Grateful Remembrance,
RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

The most which the author claims for the collection which forms this volume is, that it may be taken as evidence that, according to his humble ability, he has endeavored to do what he believed to be his duty, as a citizen of the republic, as a member of the profession, and of the service to which he belongs.

A sufficient motive for making the publication may be found in the natural desire, to gather up, at least a part of the dispersed, and, in some instances, unnamed members of his literary family. He has felt encouraged to do so by the fact that such of the essays and lectures as have been published have met with a friendly reception; and as the questions to which they relate are still in progress, he hopes that their usefulness, if they have any, may be continued.

The medical address was originally written for the pages of the Buffalo Medical Journal, and at the solicitation of eminent professional brethren was published in pamphlet form. It was issued under the auspices of the Faculty of the Buffalo Medical College, and owing to the recommendation of these gentlemen and of the medical press, it was called for in all sections of the Union. For more than thirteen years the author has been a writer upon

the subject of naval reform, and at times under great discouragements. Public and naval opinion seems now settled upon the necessity for such reform. It is advocated by the press at large, and by some of the most able and efficient writers in the country. But, still, it is not yet effected. The essay upon "The Naval Institutions of a Republic" is the last of five pamphlets which its author has produced upon this subject, all of which have had the favorable notice of the newspaper and periodical press generally. Two editions of this essay have been published, and it has been read from with approbation upon the floor of Congress.

The lecture upon the "Obligations of Young Men to the Republic," and the Historical View of Erie County, Pa., have never before been published.

PARTY PRESIDENTS.

[As the following article had the honor of being attributed by the Philadelphia U. S. Gazette, to the Hon. Daniel Webster when Secretary of State in the administration of President Tyler, I hope that I may now be permitted to claim its responsibility.

I am as fully aware, as any of my readers will be, of the hasty judgment which led to the error; but still the fact is worth mentioning, if only as an instance of the mistakes which may be made even by a paper of so much character as the Gazette—then under the editorial charge of the Hon. JOSEPH R. CHANDLER.]

PARTY PRESIDENTS.

“Those who are not for us are against us” is the uncompromising motto of party discipline; a discipline which, like the bed of Procrustes, brings the short and the long to the same stature, and admits of no standard of merit but blind conformity to its will. The wild storm of party spirit has swept with tornado violence over the institutions of our Republic, prostrated its prosperity, and will yet howl over its destruction, unless a true and firm patriotism breasts its fury. The politics of honesty and those of party are wholly incompatible with each other; for the former would inquire into the bearing of measures upon the public good, and the minds of men being proverbially various, those who might be united upon certain measures would differ upon others: a universal agreement marks a sinister purpose—the selfish advancement of the party for its own sake. This being the great end,

measures become only worthy of consideration as they tend to the advancement of this end, and the public good is lost in the good of the party.

As all organizations require some one to lead and control them, these leaders alone are permitted to think for, and to devise the measures of the party; and to them every other individual surrenders the independence of his thought and action.

The only inquiry to be made is—Is a measure sanctioned or opposed by the party to which I belong? and, accordingly, it is carried out or destroyed without further investigation.

When the great mass of the population of this Union united under the banner of General Harrison in opposition to the administration of Martin Van Buren, that mass was composed of men of every variety of political sentiment, and their common bond of union, was opposition to the selfish policy of an administration, which had no political principles but such as led to the dominancy of the party, and consequently, advocated every principle according to the locality of its popularity. While such trimming would answer for

a time, and, unfortunately, for too long a time, it finally became apparent to the good sense of the community, and instituted the league of honest, though differing politicians, against the unanimity of selfish and dishonest ones.

Had the Whig party, made up as it was of so many different views, found any one who would have suited the views of each division, it must have been by a deceptions course toward each component branch of the party, and a change of administration would have been only driving out one set selfishly devoted to its own interests, to introduce another of precisely the same character. No man could entertain honest political sentiments of his own and agree with every section of the then Whig or opposition party.

From their own compound principles, no political union could have greater reason for forbearance toward the sentiments of those, who from their personal and general popularity were appointed the leaders of this union; and the greatest evidence which could be given of the popularity of the selection, and of the honesty of these leaders, was given by their daring to

differ from portions of the party which elevated them to power; preferring to be honest men, rather than to seek popularity by trimming to all; and being unwilling to sacrifice what they believed to be the best interests of the country to their own good.

Honesty in the administration of our government is its only security; for erroneous opinions in the minds of honest men will be openly exposed and subjected to correction; but dishonest and able men will seek to make every national interest bend to the particular course or opinions upon which their own power may depend. Therefore our great national interests are safest in the hands of those, who have the firmness and integrity of purpose to adhere to the honest convictions of their own minds, rather than to sell every sacred principle to the exactions of a blind party spirit.

The editorial columns of the "United States Gazette," a few days after the appearance of the foregoing article, quoting the opening paragraph, commented as follows:

“ It is understood that the cabinet officers who write for the *Madisonian*, have the use of the editorial columns; and the ‘W.’ which stands as the signature of the pen from which the above is extracted, would seem to intimate a high origin to the communication.”

Although flattered by the mistake of authorship, I had no reason to feel in the least so, by the remarks upon the sentiments and principles of the article, and the best excuse I can make for not relieving Mr. Webster from censure, which was due to my humble self, is, that he could better afford to bear it; and the correction would have been indulging vanity under the affectation of magnanimity. I, however, felt, under the circumstances, the more bound to utter my protest against the assaults made upon him at that time, which I did in the following article :

Daniel Webster.

A citizen of this Union, who refuses to become the humble tool of party leaders, who disdains to have his intellectual views bandaged by party measures,

but who maintains the independent right of a freeman to examine into the great measures affecting the national interests, to separate them from the personal popularity of their advocates, and to investigate their intrinsic character and bearing; who chooses to be the patriot rather than the partisan; while such a citizen may, from a conviction of their injurious tendency, array himself in opposition to the measures of any statesman, he will yield him respect, proportioned to the dignity of intellect, and honesty of character, by which these measures are sustained. While he may dissent from their principles, he will feel proud that his country can produce men, who, though of diverse views, sustain their respective principles by an amount of intellectual power claiming the admiration of the world, and he will regard their eminence as a legitimate source of national pride.

But a debased party spirit, selfish and groveling in its character, and blinded by prejudice, cannot perceive the brilliancy of a pure and lofty character. Acknowledging no incentive but party success, it reduces the motives of others to the standard of its own compre-

hension, and is incompetent to judge of high motives of action. Love of country, and a sense of duty, are incentives too lofty to be appreciated by the spirit which, Arnold like, would sacrifice national honor and prosperity to its own interests.

The gentleman whose name heads this article has been assailed as a prominent mark, by an unprincipled party spirit; and every true-hearted citizen of the United States, who has felt a personal pride in the great names which his country has given to fame, and to history, must have felt pained, humbled and mortified by the vituperation and abuse which this spirit has hurled upon the fame of Daniel Webster. Who and what is the man thus assailed? Let the intelligence and the heart of every patriot, aye, almost of every child, give the answer. It is he to whom the world points with confidence, when we would claim the admiration of strangers for the eloquence and statesmanship of our country. Eloquence which has raised still higher the already lofty character of our Senate Chamber, and which has gone to the minds and hearts of men wherever the English language is

known: an eloquence which not alone soothes the ear and excites the fancy by harmonious periods and glowing figures, but which takes possession of the most capacious minds by the vigor of its thought and the power of its judgment. The man, now, thus assailed, is he from whom, but a little while since, we justly derived a national compliment, in seeing him, the plain republican, the architect of his own fortune, a splendid but genuine production of democracy—receiving the homage of the most haughty aristocrats of Europe; asserting in his own character the dignity of the nobility of nature, in the midst of that of coronets, and unassumingly receiving the courtesies of those whose brows they decorated.* It is he who stands preeminent in the front rank of the statesmen of the world, and whose fame is almost a part of the most perfect existing political organization, the perpetuity of which is a guarantee for that of the name of Daniel Webster; and even though the constitution itself should be overwhelmed by the turbulence and

* Mr. Webster had not long before this returned from England.

convulsions of political strife, its very ruins become an enduring monument to the fame of him who was its most firm defender and most able expositor.

Why is it that the man whose character has become a national monument is thus assailed? Is it because in a time of great need, and when extensive national interests are to be adjudicated, he occupies an important official station, which enables him best to serve his country? Those who are actuated by a desire for the spoils of office, would prostrate the most able men of the age, that they may reach those spoils, and suppose all men to be actuated by the same mean motives which influence themselves. Degraded, indeed, must be the mind which can suppose no other inducement to encounter the labor and responsibilities of elevated office, but pecuniary compensation. But even those of such limited views we think, would reflect, that he whose professional reputation can command more employment than any human mind or body could accomplish, would find, in the salary of office, but little inducement to encounter its labors. Its extrinsic honors can weigh but little with one of such extended

fame, and the office of Secretary of State, can add nothing to the fame of Daniel Webster save as it marks his readiness to devote his powers to the service of his country. Surely, patriotism and virtuous motives of action are yet to be found among our countrymen, and we can no where look for them with so much confidence as in those whose whole lives have been one continued flow of patriotic exertion. The true sphere of such men is in the councils of the nation.

The spirit of party which thus assails the personal character of its political opponents, is more than the spirit which would, with vandal barbarism, destroy the libraries, specimens of art, and monuments of a hostile nation; for it seeks to mutilate and destroy the most honorable specimens of its country's greatness; to overturn and deface that which it cannot appreciate. What are patriotism and considerations of national greatness with those who are led on by spoils and plunder? They are unknown; they can not be understood by them.

The political course of Daniel Webster is before the nation; let those opposed to it attack it; expose its

defects, defeat it. But when selfish politicians, incapable of higher modes of attack, attempt to blacken his name with low abuse and vile slanders, they arouse the honest patriotism of all who are not under their evil influences, whether his political friend or opponent, and as the foreign invader, who, in the hour of triumph, mutilates our monuments of marble, excites indignation and contempt, these emotions are far greater toward him whose traitor pen would desecrate the more noble, intellectual monuments of his country's fame.

SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY.

SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY.

That influence, which, next to and confederate with Christianity, has done more for the dignity of human nature, and contributed most to the happiness of the human family, is the Spirit of Democracy. It is an influence springing from the nature of man, and both blind and vain is any contest between the narrow, selfish and exclusive institutions established for the benefit of a favored few, and that steadily advancing principle which is a law of God, and which has for its ultimate object the benefit of the whole human race. History has done much to conceal the influence of this spirit, in effecting the improvements in man's condition which have marked advancing ages; for, in recording the deeds of prominent individuals, it has too often forgotten to point out how far those individuals were the creatures of the times in which they lived, and

how far their characters were moulded and controlled by that of the masses whose movements they appeared to direct or lead. Such individuals are but the points upon which the prevailing spirit of the age concentrates itself, and are the levers through which the moving power acts. Even the glorious character of our own Washington, the most perfect one history presents, was the creation of a spirit of liberty which had been diffusing and extending itself among the people, from the time when the refugees of political and ecclesiastical tyranny first sought an asylum in the wilds of our continent.

What have individuals, who have been sustained by all the institutions of despotism, and had control of its forces, done for the people? How have they directed these influences otherwise than against the interests of the people, save when, from weakness or danger threatening themselves, they have been compelled to pay a tribute to popular privilege, for the aid and support asked of the mass. Monarchs and aristocracies have made brilliant contributions to national glory, but not

in contests to establish principles beneficial to the people at large, so much as from selfish motives, to sustain their personal interests which they have regarded as those of their nation.

The spirit of democracy, which lurked a hidden spark among the people in their darkest days, has won every human right from despotism in despite of the powers of despotism, and contrary to the habits, thoughts and education of the people themselves. Who, then, shall calculate its influence when it no longer lurks a hidden spark, but from almost an entire continent, in open blaze, sheds its light upon the world, and even where it is forbidden to manifest itself, burns with scarce controllable force beneath the institutions which seek to suppress and extinguish it? The spirit of democracy has never receded; every political convulsion, no matter what the result, has tended to the healthful advancement of democratic principles. Even the splendid drama of Napoleon's history has been subordinate to this end. It swept from the mind of Europe the paralyzing influence of legitimacy, and showed that the people could erect from themselves a

throne, mocking, by its power and splendor, that of regal descent.

The enemies of democracy point to its turbulent out-breaks as evidence of its unhappy influences upon domestic existence, and stigmatize democracy as mobocracy. We are far, very far, from advocating or defending any violations of law or order, and we deny that such violations are the consequence of democracy; but before condemning any organization for its imperfections, it will be well to examine if greater imperfections do not manifest themselves in opposing organizations.

The outbreaks of a mob, not being a systematic violation of human rights and justice, to which observation has become accustomed, strike the attention prominently and forcibly; while outrages upon right and justice, beyond all comparison far more extensive, may be committed under the sanction of a legalized despotism, without attracting general remark, and with this great difference: the injuries of a mob are, in time and place, limited and local; those of a despotism wide as its domain, and ever acting, night and

day. What injury to life and property can be committed by any mob, to be measured by those horrible outrages which rob a whole people of their sustenance, and drive them to vice, jails, and alms-houses, that a favored few may riot in splendid pageantry, and laugh in luxury at surrounding misery? Again, the legal outrages of despotism are, in most cases, the deliberate result of studied vice and selfishness; the irregular outrages of a mob are the spontaneous rush of many minds to one point, and that point a principle of virtue. No matter what the violation of law and order, no matter how degraded the agents, the purpose of a mob is generally to vindicate what it believes to be some violation of law, right or virtue. The motive is good, is proof of the purity and dignity of the Democratic spirit, though the mode of its exhibition is bad, and is to be deplored. Better, however, that this spirit in its exuberance should occasionally storm the law under virtuous impulses, than that an uniform quiet should be produced by a systematic violation of virtue, human rights and human happiness.

The enemies of democracy also contend that the

necessarily uneducated condition of the mass is adverse to their capability for self-government. Such persons have looked superficially to the influences of the spirit of democracy. Those who live under its institutions, even though without the acquirements of letters, are not uneducated. From their earliest youth they are thrown into unrestrained rivalry and collision with each other, which brings into play all their resources and develops their faculties, under the stimulus that success, in any pursuit, depends more upon individual merit, than upon adventitious circumstances. Each one feels that he has a personal interest and control in the policy of his country; its principles are discussed before him and by him; they are submitted to his judgment and decision. Hence, the citizens of a republic, however illiterate, coarse and unrefined, are educated; have their faculties under continual cultivation, for the practical purposes of life. Increasing time will proportionally mark the effects of this education, as our national character is yet forming under the influence of our institutions.

The spirit of democracy has, likewise, a favorable

and humanizing effect upon the manners of those within its influence. The manners of a democratic people may not be marked by the conventional forms and ceremonies, which characterize a courtly or aristocratic society, but there are principles at work which give a general diffusion to a courtesy springing from the heart, although it may be sometimes ungracefully manifested. In a country where people are divided, by political institutions, into ranks and castes, peculiarity of manner will attach to those divisions; and those who pride themselves upon belonging to the higher orders, will naturally seek to mark their position by a reserve or even rudeness toward those unknown to them, or known to be beneath them; on the other hand, those of inferior rank, when with admitted superiors, will display an humiliating subserviency, for which they will endeavor to compensate themselves, when their true position is unknown, by vulgar imitations of the arrogance of their superiors, and hence, in the promiscuous intercourse of society, manners will be marked by the polished assumption and arrogance of pride, or its coarse and vulgar imitations. But in a country of

political equality, the highest social rank is that of a gentleman, and this being defined by no station or pursuit, all feel that they have a claim to it, and will, to a greater or less degree, according to circumstances, cultivate corresponding manners, making affability and courtesy general, as has been testified to by foreign writers upon our country.

The literature of our country will take its tone and character from the spirit of democracy, and will again have a reflected and stimulated influence upon that spirit. The influence of hereditary usages and authority, of superior and exclusive classes, is to give weight to dogmas and doctrines; to make the precepts of individuals and the dicta of schools superior to the principles of truth; and it is only by such influence that these usages, authority and exclusive classes can maintain their position, and hence it is inculcated as a greater merit to adhere to long established and prescribed views, than to be guilty of the heresy of showing forth their weakness or error. The continuance of despotic governments and governmental religious depends upon the suppression of the freedom of thought

and investigation. The influence of democracy, on the contrary, is to send forth all minds boldly in search of those truths and facts which contribute most to the general good and happiness. So untrammelled are mens minds, that many strange and novel ideas, theories and plans may be presented, as is seen in the sphere of mechanical invention, but none will become permanent but such as stand the test of the general welfare.

In connection with this part of our subject, we will notice another charge often brought against the practicability of democratic governments: the want of permanency and stability in their measures. We think that, from the very nature of democracy—its being a law of God, established among men, and the same in all ages, having at all times the same ultimate object in view, and that object the universal good of the human race—that its measures are those alone which will be permanent and stable. True, measures and policy must be experimental and varying until those which are in exact accordance with the principle of democracy are discovered, and none can exist but

those which have this accordance. Measures which are now the settled and permanent policy of our country, have had to struggle into existence through the discord of opposing influences; and measures which are now subjects of doubt, contest and opposition, will eventually be acknowledged as the true fruit of democratic principles and claim a general reception. The spirit of democracy is ever onward, it cannot recede, and none can see its limits or its end. The influences, at which we have glanced, are constantly acting and reacting upon each other, imparting new impulses, and giving and receiving new strength. Every elevation and every dignity, won for the mass, gives it a claim to higher elevation and higher dignity. Already is conceded to the people a respect and a position which, in former days, would not have been conceded to many of the influential and exclusive classes. As the advance of democracy tends to the general welfare of man, and as this welfare is founded in virtue alone, no human power can rise superior to it, and it must finally lead to the establishment of laws and usages consistent with the principles of virtue.

The spirit of democracy has a fitting temple in the architecture of our country; and while contemplating our mountain ranges, vast rivers with their teeming valleys, our ocean lakes, broad and fertile prairies, or listening to the thunders of Niagara's flood, may every member of the republic be urged to make our country's noble architecture, the type of its future moral and political destiny.

ON THE PRACTICAL INFLUENCES
OF
POPULAR INSTITUTIONS.

A LECTURE,

WRITTEN FOR THE IRVING LITERARY INSTITUTE, OF ERIE, PA.

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OF
POPULAR INSTITUTIONS.

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WRITTEN FOR THE IRVING LITERARY INSTITUTE, OF ERIE, PA.

GENTLEMEN OF THE IRVING INSTITUTE:

I owe you an apology for not rendering an earlier reply to the invitation with which you have honored me, to deliver a lecture before your Association. The delay has arisen from a wish to render myself useful to you in some way, should I be compelled to decline that pointed out by yourselves.

It was with much pleasure that I learned, soon after my arrival in your town, that such an institution as yours was in existence, affording to the young men of the place a stimulus to mental exertion and improvement; a theater and material for intellectual recreation, and a refuge from the worse than profitless employments, through which the activities of our

nature will run riot, and retaliate for any neglect of their proper direction.

I do not intrude upon you my opinions respecting your Association, from an assumption that they have any special value or claim to your attention. The impulses which have called you together—the literary pursuits in which you are engaged, give assurance that you are incited by refined tastes, and governed by obligations which make you, to some extent, independent of the approbation of individuals; even of those not so humble as myself. But every citizen who properly values the institutions of our Republic must rejoice, and has a right to express his gratification at anything which tends to sustain and to advance those institutions. Their continued success and future advancement depend so much upon the direction given to the energies and faculties of our young men, that it becomes a source of the highest gratification to see any of them acting up to a sense of their responsibilities, by the aid of such associations as that you have organized; and I am invited by the reflections it has suggested, to address you this letter upon some

of the practical influences of popular institutions; our obligations to them; and the dangers to which they are exposed.

It may not be an unwarrantable egotism, to say that my remarks are not altogether the result of closet theories, but are drawn from opportunities of practical observation of society as it exists under various grades and manners of organization. It has been my lot to mingle in close association with my fellow-man, as he appears amid the simple wants, untutored passions, and insulated independence of barbarism; to have seen him awkwardly moving in the restraints of a new civilization; to have dwelt with him in the log cabins of our western forests and prairies, where, in the pride of self-reliance and local independence, he felt the dignity of his union with a grand and widely-extended social system; displaying faculties educated and strengthened by influences independent of scholastic acquirements and unvarnished by the polish of refinement. Again, I have seen him with his whole nature hidden beneath the artificial splendor of conventional usages; and from this experience I have

learned that there is much to respect where the adventitious aid of ornament is wanting, and much to regret and deplore amid its most improving splendor. It has taught me to be thankful that this is "my own, my native land," and to place a jealous value upon its institutions.

The utility and consequent success of popular government depend so much upon the culture and self-government of each of its members, that the youth of our country have their individual obligations extending to a much wider range than that of their personal success. Each can say, the "state! 't is I;" for each is the state in epitome, and his cultivation is that of the state. As every member of an oligarchy is bound to the interests of his class, so in our country we are bound to those broad principles which, repudiating the limited interests and exclusive rights of aristocracy, go to show that the great and good lies sown broadcast among the people, to spring up in a wide-spread and useful harvest. Such obligations may involve more active duties than are at first apparent. It is not enough, that we live quietly under our institutions,

and give them the acquiescence of tacit enjoyment.
In the words of a poetical philosopher—

“Of him on whom the riches were bestowed
Of liberty, the rays of streaming light
Will be required; liberty demands
Intense exertion. Stolid despotism
Can rest unmoved like inorganic stuff,
And yet may last a time; not freedom so.
Freedom is like organic life, suspended
Between the two unalterable points—
Unceasing action or a putrid death.
The terms of earnest freedom are not light;
For freedom is but plenitude of right,
And every honest right a hugging twin
Of obligation—they were born together;
They are like woof and warp of choicest web,
A scurril rag, if one be ravelled out.
The gospel of stout civil liberty
Is like the enfranchisement of Christian souls,
Imposing greatest tasks of right and truth.
But freedom, too—man’s healthiest existence,
Is like the joyous life of sylvan tribe.
Each tree, each vine—they hide their laws of growth;
They spread, entwine, and struggle toward the light;

The vernal ray infuses wak'ning warmth,
And life pervades the whole community."

Inaction would be culpable, were there no opposing principles to be encountered and contended with; but unfortunately there is no such unanimity, and while we know that much of the world is arrayed against us, both in sentiment and political organization, there is too much evidence that in our midst there are two classes hostile to the existing arrangement of our political system. One which regards with admiration and favor the splendors of aristocracy, and another which would level all to barbarian rudeness, and loosen the bonds which hold in check the wildest passions of our nature.

In the various grades of human intellect, there are undoubtedly feeble minds which bow before the circumstance of aristocratic pomp, or flutter around the tinsel which glitters over its principles and conceal their enormous pretension—pretension to separate men into ranks and stations, without respect to the claims of talent and virtue; principles which make plebeian the intelligent mechanic, the engineer, the

architect, the painter, the poet—those whose minds are the thrones of intellect, and whose hands are the instruments of skillful genius; while he may be patriot, whose occupation and ambition are to fill the various degrees which range between the bully of the pugilistic ring and the enervated loungeur of a fashionable drawing-room. In addition to those who, from mental organization, may be the admirers of the splendors of aristocracy, it can not be questioned that many who have successfully achieved the high position which is consequent upon fame and fortune, not satisfied with the influence justly earned by them, sigh after the exclusive privileges enjoyed by those on the top round of the social ladder, in countries of political organization different from our own. They look with distaste upon the institutions, through the protection of which they have made their own ascent, because they can not enroll their blood in a higher register than that of the humble masses from which they sprung. There are many influences encouraging these tendencies, and disseminating erroneous impressions. Notwithstanding the great lessons taught by

our Republic, since its formation, in regard to the true dignity of man, few of us are educated out of the fictions and prejudices handed down from the ages of feudality, and still embodied in the political systems of great nations. Not only romance and poetry lend their fascinating powers to the same errors, but most of the works put in the hands of youth, as unexceptionable history, deepen and extend the false impression, until it becomes difficult to estimate man abstracted from the "guinea stamp" of rank, or to conceive that all the qualities and sensibilities of a hero may be found in the hearts and heads of those engaged in what are called the humble pursuits of life.

Society will, of course, form itself into cliques and associations, according to the tastes and sympathies of those so associating; and as we all, in the various occupations of life, exhibit this social disposition, it must be conceded even to those who are bound by a common folly, and who unite for the purposes of fashionable frivolity. But the popular judgment will claim to establish the standard of what is best; and what was best under other institutions, and in past

ages, ceases to be so now; last of all will it be conceded in an utilitarian age, and to the votaries of folly and fashion. And any such claim may be looked down upon with contempt by all engaged in the truly noble pursuits of usefulness.

It is to be deplored, that men do not always rest satisfied in the dignity which should emanate from the consciousness of being useful; but, by manifesting envy and jealousy toward the pretensions of self-constituted exclusives, they in some measure acknowledge the importance of those pretensions, and pay tribute to them, by making an unworthy confession of inferiority. These are the feelings which beget the levelers and disorganizers of society, and it is important to be shown that such feelings are hostile to our institutions, and consequently hostile to popular rights.

Experience and observation teach that the inclinations and desires of the human heart, when inordinate in power or irregular in direction, obey a law of retributive justice, and while they punish the individual manifesting them, even in the reward of success, they

make his punishment tributary to the common good. Contemplate, for a moment, the inordinate desire for wealth. He who is cursed with this lowest of passions toils on and on; denies himself the legitimate enjoyments of life. Blinded to the beauties and harmonies of nature and art, he loses the pleasure of their contemplation. Too often, the well-springs of joy, which should flow in streams of human affection, are dried at their source, and a life of avarice becomes a path in a moral desert, while the promised joy is a flying phantom, ever beyond the unreachable *more*. Thus it is with the individual. But what is the effect upon the community? The whole man—energies of soul, of mind, and body, have been coined into public wealth. New sources of wealth have been opened under the individual desire, arts originated, manufactories instituted, and mines, forests, and seas explored. In like manner, the same wise law makes the follies, extravagances, and vices of those who have accumulated the stores of society, tributary to industry, energy, and integrity, by again distributing among the people the wealth which these latter qualities had

gathered together. Thus the beauty, harmony, and adaptation of our institutions are vindicated, and the individuals composing the various classes of society made interchangeable, according to their capabilities; and the causes for class hostility, envy, and jealousy, are removed or done away with. It is a disregard of these laws, the confounding of political with social equality, which has been among the errors of French republicanism, and is the error of socialism. It is unjust to human nature, to legislate an equality of wealth, or a conformity of manners, irrespective of merit and tastes, as endow by law organized aristocracies with exclusive privileges. Every attempt at this forced equalization gives facility to the sophistical deductions of the advocate for exclusive privileges; when he tells you, in support of his views, that nature points to such an arrangement, because men are born unequal in physical and mental powers; and when he claims for man the same hereditary law of pure blood which is so carefully respected in unreasoning animals. These laws of inequality, and hereditary transmission, none can deny; but we can use them

against both aristocrat and socialist. We claim that each individual be left free and untrammelled, to achieve the position to which this inequality resigns him; and in regard to the law of hereditary transmission of qualities, we demand the evidence to show that the good and the bad are necessarily limited to particular stations in life. The physiological history of man, teaches that prominent qualities of mind and body may lie dormant for several generations, and then appear in their original force in the same line of blood. It is apparent, then, that during this sleep of ennobling powers, families may sink to the humblest stations; and from these stations, then, the sun of genius may arise, to dazzle the world with a splendor in brilliant contrast with the clouds of obscurity from which it has burst.

The socialist and the aristocrat are alike the enemies of human progress and efficient freedom. The socialist takes from man, by diffusion, the property in and responsibility for himself, and impedes advancement by paralyzing energy. The aristocrat produces the same result by monopolies, which leave nothing for

the privileged to gain, and but little for the excluded to hope for. Individualism—a close, responsible individualism is the spirit of progress and soul of freedom.

At this present moment, some poor artisan, anxious to escape from the oppression of poverty, and the humility of obscurity, robs nature of food and rest, in the study of some new combination of mechanical powers, which is to contribute to the comfort and enjoyment of his fellows; but the rewards of fame and fortune are to be his own.

Some lawyer, just entering upon his profession in an obscure village withdrawn from the seductive pleasures of society, is studying, working, drudging in the loneliness of his office; concentrating the powers of his intellect upon a case which is to elicit and establish principles most interesting to the community. His mind is to deduce them, the radiations are to go from him, and, perhaps, flash far beyond the limited locality of his residence. He works with the eyes of the world upon him. A physician in the silent watches of the night, is deep buried in his study, enthusiastically engaged in the contemplation of some disease, or

specimen of disease, externally most disgusting, but to him it speaks in clear and beautiful language, silently written by the finger of the Almighty, and tells of laws and actions over which his mind expands itself in boundless enjoyment: he feels impatient to invite the world to share his pleasure. His own mind is then a kingdom embracing the welfare of the whole human family.

Such is individualism acting under the guaranty of free institutions, and bearing the torch of Hope along its path.

We will now give some attention to the influence of individualism, and to the bearing of our institutions upon that virtue which "covereth a multitude of sins"—Charity—and the word is used in its limited application to the relief of the sufferings of our fellow-creatures.

Some years ago, circumstances threw me into constant and intimate association with an intelligent and educated foreigner, resident in our country. Upon one occasion, a wondering and commiserating crowd was gathered around a poor wretch writhing in the convulsions of epilepsy. My companion came at

once to the conclusion, that it was only a feigned appeal to public sympathy, and acting upon this conviction, he pushed his way through the crowd, pinched up a fold of skin upon the neck of the convulsed person, and thrust through it the blade of a sharp knife. The victim of this barbarous test proved to be a genuine epileptic. At another time, a well fingered written petition was presented my companion by a tottering old man—a revolutionary relic, “Whose trembling limbs had borne him to our door.” My friend called a boy, who happened to be near, placed the old man’s petition and a sixpence in the boy’s hand, and directed him to deposit the paper upon the opposite pavement, and to keep the money for his trouble. Weak and trembling as he was, I was glad to see the fire of ’76 sparkle in the old man’s eye, as, raising his cane, he made an assault upon my companion, threatening a severe chastisement for his heartlessness.

A citizen of our own or any other country, might have acted just as this person did, but no one of our countrymen possessing the mental and moral organization of the individual alluded to, would have done

so. The acts were inconsistent with his general character; hence it is fair to infer that his uncharitable feelings were attributable to the circumstances under which his character had been formed, and I think it may be shown that such an effect might be the result of certain political and social arrangements.

Look, for instance, at a country which, by artificial arrangements, such as the laws of entail and primogeniture, secures a small portion of its people in enormous wealth, and its consequent luxury and splendor. This unequal distribution of course increases the chances of poverty and distress among the masses and multiplies the subjects of charity. The favored class is so far removed from the sufferings of those who are not protected, that their common humanity is almost forgotten and sympathy is deadened. Permanent wealth and luxury is apt to induce a morbid and refined sensibility, which shrinks from contact with the revolting misery which would identify the common humanity; and money which has not the value imparted by laborious acquisition, is often distributed to purchase an exemption from the painful exercise of an active and

discriminating charity; and this easy liberality invites to feigned distress and imposture. Suppose, further, that such a country, to meet the necessities it has created, loads the industrial classes with heavy taxes and poor-rates. With the fund thus accumulated, let large and showy edifices, devoted to charitable purposes, be glared in the public eye. Externally this will appear a people of splendid charity; but let us lift the vail and see what heart beats beneath it. The industrial classes look with a jealous and angry eye upon the amount forced by law from their earnings. They look around them and see the domes, and walls, and grounds of the splendid establishments, to which they are bound to contribute, and in which are maintained a retinue of officials. They naturally learn to consider poverty as a legal prey upon their purse; to look upon it as an offense, and to regard every case of destitution as of the same factitious character as those created by the indiscriminate liberality of the upper classes. When appeals are made to them, the reply is: the law has been met. Their poor-rates have been paid, and the sufferer too often is turned from their

door, to perish, perhaps, in sight of these institutions, which, for want of certain formalities, he cannot enter. Charity having thus become law has ceased to be feeling. It is represented by the magnificent brick and stone walls, and like the cement which binds them together, it has indurated into more than marble hardness. The charity of law, is cold, formal and routine. From such effects as these, our institutions have so far preserved us, and may we never seek to loose our individual obligations in a boastful display of public charities; and may we ever bear in mind that our pecuniary aid may be a barren gift unless accompanied by a kind and cheering spirit, which can light the gloom of despondency and tell the victims of want and privation, that there is a hope of life and happiness for them in the companionship and brotherhood of humanity.

Kindred to such a spirit is that which imparts kind, courteous, and gentlemanly deportment to our intercourse with each other; and it adds no small consideration to the value of our institutions, and to the obligations we owe them, if they contribute to the diffusion

and equalization of refined manners. I do not allude to the conventional forms and masonic rules which are necessary to establish a membership with exclusive classes and fashionable circles, those Chesterfieldian arts and grimaces which have been not inaptly called the manners of a dancing-master ingrafted upon the principles of a scoundrel. I refer to those natural and spontaneous graces which spring from benevolence of heart, Christian charity, and from the external influences, teaching the self-respect which prevents servility, and the appreciation of the rights of others which forbids arrogance. The respect paid by mankind to refined manners, is as natural as the respect paid to the virtues of which the manners are the external signs, and the sense of their appreciation is similar to that which derives enjoyment from the beauties and harmonies of nature and art. Therefore, those who affect a coarse, rude, and offensive deportment, under the idea that it indicates honesty and sincerity of character, violate the natural common sense and good taste of their fellow-men, and with such endorsers, the claim to honesty may be considered counterfeit. The Bible, adapted by Divine

wisdom to all the circumstances of life, offers the best rules, and strongest injunctions of gentlemanly deportment. In a curious book by De Foe, called "Religious Courtship," a conversation is carried on between a pious sister, and her irreligious brother. I quote the following remarks of the sister :

"Let the scripture be judge, whether the rules of life dictated by the apostles to the Christian churches, were not such, as not only agree well with that of a gentleman, but indeed with that without which no man can be a gentleman; if you look almost through the epistles in the New Testament, you will find it so; I'll name you a few :

Phil. i. 9, 10. *That your love may abound in knowledge and all judgment.* There's wisdom and learning.

That you may approve things that are excellent. There's solid judgment.

That ye may be sincere and without offence. There is the honesty and open-heartedness of a true gentleman.

1 Peter, iii. 8. *Love as brethren, be pitiful, be*

courteous. There is the charity, the beneficence, and the good-breeding of a gentleman.

Col. iii. 12. *Put on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, &c.* Who can be a gentleman without these?

Col. iv. 8. *Whatsoever things are honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, think of these things.* What think you now? Can the practice of these things dishonor a gentleman? or do they honor and illustrate, and indeed make a gentleman?

In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. What becomes a gentleman more than such humility? I could name you many others. Will any man that needs these rules say they are not suitable to a gentleman? No, brother, it shall ever be a rule to me, that the only complete man on earth is a religious gentleman." Manners such as these precepts teach, need not be limited to any station or occupation in life, and it is the tendency of our institutions to diffuse them throughout society. Where men are fixed in their positions by birth and occupation, and no change in their general relations is dependent

upon their deportment, there is, of course, but little, if any inducement for those in humble occupations to refine their manners; but where, as in our country, every one possessed of the characteristics has a right to call himself a gentleman, courteous and gentlemanly demeanor is found to be of more general existence, and foreigners are compelled to express their admiration of the tone and bearing which mark among us those engaged in pursuits which, with them, would be associated with rudeness and vulgarity. We may rejoice that such are the humanizing influences of our institutions, for were their effect upon the general manner of those living under them, of an opposite character, as is alledged by the advocates of aristocracy, we might be tempted to adopt the language and sentiments of Hazlitt, when he says: "I cannot describe the contempt and disgust I have felt at the tone of what would be thought good company, when I have witnessed the sleek, smiling, glossy, gratuitous assumption of superiority to every feeling of humanity, honesty, or principle, making part of the etiquette, the mental and moral costume of the table, and every

profession of toleration for the lower orders, that is, for the great mass of our fellow-creatures, treated as indecorum, and breach of the harmony of well-regulated society. In short, I prefer a bear-garden to the adder's den."

In addition to the hostility which our institutions have to encounter from the domestic treachery of those whom the favors of fortune have seduced into the belief that they are worthy of exclusive privileges, and of those who by a system of forced leveling would deprive man of his natural rights, popular government is exposed to the assaults made upon it by the pens of able, systematic, and interested advocates of opposing modes of government, and in this contest of varied forces it falls to our young men to array themselves into an army of moral influences, which shall bear on, and on, the banner of enlightened freedom, until it floats triumphant over class privileges, and leaves them a ruin for the wondering contemplation of the political antiquary.

The August number, for the present year, of the popular and extensively read Blackwood's Edinburgh

Magazine, contains an eloquent review of Lamartine's Revolution of 1848, in which the writer brings all his powers, of ridicule and argument, to bear against both the theory and practice of republican government. It may, perhaps, appear presumptuous in me to controvert the opinions of a writer for a periodical of such established reputation and influence as Blackwood, and I am only tempted to do so by a conviction of the truth and strength of my cause which renders it independent of the deficient skill and ability of its advocate.

False argument and erroneous opinions, sometimes gain force and currency when placed in connection with or behind prominent and generally acknowledged truths. When alluding to the causes which unfit the French, particularly, for popular institutions, and give that people a tendency to turbulence and revolution, the reviewer says: "The irreligion, or rather general oblivion of religion which commonly prevails in the towns, is a part, though doubtless a most important part, of this universal disposition. Christianity is abjured or forgotten, not because it is disbelieved, but

because it is disagreeable. Men do not give themselves the trouble to inquire whether it is true or false; they simply give it the go-by, and pass quietly on the other side, because it imposes a restraint, to them insupportable, on their passions. Dispositions of this sort are the true feeders of revolution, because they generate at once its convulsions in like manner as passions which require gratification, poverty which demands food, and activity which pines for employment." The sentiments above quoted claim our assent and win our approbation. The restraints of religion and the searching self-discipline of Christianity are essential to the success of popular institutions. So closely are they associated, that it may be questioned whether the one will not lead to the other—whether the establishment of popular rights has not gone hand-in-hand with the spread of pure and unadulterated Christianity; and whether the continued existence of popular government does not facilitate the spread of those Christian principles upon which it so essentially depends. It is most certain that the irreligion and immorality alluded to by the reviewer were the growth of the corrupting

influence of despotic and aristocratic institutions. He substitutes effects and their results for primary causes. In another place the reviewer tells his readers that "self-government is the dream of the enthusiast, the vision of the inexperienced; oligarchy is the history of man. In vain are institutions popularized, nobles destroyed, masses elevated, education diffused, self-government established: all that will not alter the character of man; it will not qualify the multitude for self-direction—it will not obviate that first of necessities to mankind—the necessity of being governed. What is the first act of every assembly of men associated together for any purpose, social, political or charitable? To nominate a committee by whom the common affairs are to be regulated. What is the first act of that committee? To nominate a sub-committee of two or three, in whom the direction of affairs is practically vested." This language of the reviewer, uttered in the bold confidence of wrong, falls with the impress of surprise and astonishment upon our ears. But it is well for us to know that such sentiments are promulgated and read, and believed by thousands,

notwithstanding their glaring sophistry, and that their contradiction lies written over the vast surface of our republic, in all the eloquence of its achievements in arts and arms—in statesmanship and diplomacy—in the production of the individually great, and in the diffusion of morals and religion, prosperity and general happiness. This very disposition to nominate a few to manage the affairs of all, so sneeringly alluded to, constitutes the security, efficiency and superiority of self-government. The convocation of all gives to each an individual interest and responsibility in what is going on, his faculties are quickened and his judgment strengthened. The few selected, are chosen from all for superior capacity, or facilities for managing the business in hand, and their efficient action is secured in the highest sense of individual responsibility—the agents are not independent of those who call them into existence. But let the chief agents in the business of society, and the right to high station be designated by the accident of birth, and social and political interests may, as they have, fall into the management of imbecile idiocy;—the dispensation of charity, to the

cold and selfish, and the affairs of religion to the profane and licentious.

The selection of public men by the popular voice, gives the guarantee of self-interest that better men shall be chosen than if the decision is by chance. It is well known that those destitute of principle themselves, respect it in others, and even an assemblage of bad men, obliged to trust their interests to a few or one of their number, will naturally select those in whom they can most confide; and in the characters of mixed good and evil which constitute society, the aggregate judgment must fall upon the principle of goodness and capacity, as that only in which they can have a common faith. The judgment of men may sometimes be erroneous as to the individuals selected by them, but the disposition and the interest is to choose the best. One of the most remarkable laws of nature gives the security for correct judgment and points out popular government as that best adapted to man. However humble may appear the intellectual endowments of the individuals of the mass, compared to the exceptional possessors of great genius and

intellectual power, it is only the common sense of the aggregate mass which can correctly determine the questions relating to the interests of mankind. Guizot, in his history of civilization, tells us that "It is common sense which gives to words their proper signification, and common sense is the Genius of Humanity." In the essay of Beattie on Truth, it is said that "common sense or instinct, which prompts men to trust to their own feelings, hath in all ages continued the same; but the interests, pursuits, and abilities of philosophers are susceptible of endless variety, and their theories vary accordingly."

The facts which have been laid before you in this letter, and the great law to which allusion has been made, show conclusively, the bold ignorance of the Blackwood essayist; and they prove not only that man is capable of self-government which offers a security against the imperfections of human nature. So progressive have been its influences, that from observation of the past, there is reason to hope for the breaking down of all old prejudices and external disguises, until moral greatness becomes the principle of

distinction among men. An eloquent and philosophic writer of our own country has these words: "Hitherto the world has seen only aristocracies; moral greatness is the truly republican condition of society. A more than human teacher has declared, "In my Father's house are many mansions," yea, an open and honored place for all that enter in. It is a civilization founded on moral culture, on the life of the affections, that must yet be the great leveling principle in human society, equalizing all conditions of life, ennobling all lawful avocations, encircling with its zone of kindest sympathies, the loftiest and the lowliest dwellings.

There is hope for the speedy advent of this millennial condition of society, in the fact that the several principles of greatness that have been reversed in successive ages, have supplanted one another, each with more rapid footsteps than the preceding. For the first half of the world's history, we trace no higher principle than brute force. The ascendancy of the military spirit makes the next two thousand years. But the reverence of birth, of wealth, of intellect, have succeeded each other by much shorter intervals; and

moral greatness is even now, we trust, winning the ascendancy.

Christian benevolence already belts the globe. Art lends its fire-wings; science its eagle vision; wisdom its age gathered. We will hope, then, that an early posterity may witness the entire supremacy of faith, truth, and love.

Gentlemen of the Irving Literary Institute, having made use of your Association as the text for the foregoing reflections, I shall be most happy if they prove in any way useful to you.

POPULAR EDUCATION.

A REPORT

TO THE EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY OF ERIE COUNTY, PA.



POPULAR EDUCATION.

It would seem to be almost unnecessary, at this time and in this country, to say anything upon the importance and the necessity of general education. But, unfortunately, while all give a formal assent to its value, there is too much reason to fear that the public mind is not so deeply and so earnestly impressed with the worth of education as the general verbal admission would imply. Few individuals become workers in the cause of education proportioned to their acknowledgment of its value, or in any degree proportioned to its influence upon the interests of every member of the community.

This prevailing apathy and indifference could not exist, were the true nature of education fully understood, and its whole influence upon individual prosperity and happiness correctly appreciated; were it

seen to be an elevating power, and an element of success, not only to the man of literary and scientific pursuits, but to the laborer and mechanic. It shall be the endeavor of this report, briefly to set forth the nature and importance of general education, and its relations to individual and national prosperity and happiness. The object of education is "to develop in each individual all the perfection of which he is susceptible."* To cultivate man to the full and productive exercise of all the faculties with which he has been endowed by the Creator; and, hence, it is a necessity to render every human being fit for his greatest usefulness; and society has not done its duty, while, to any individual, the opportunity for this full development is wanting.

So extended a view of the nature of education embraces the cultivation, in just proportion, of all the human powers—physical, mental, and moral, none of which can be neglected without detriment to the others. Such is their mutual dependence and

* Kant.

support, that no education is efficient which does not apply to all the faculties of the human organization. Without physical energy, the frame sinks beneath the nervous exhaustion of mental labor, and firmness is wanting for the fulfillment of moral obligations. Fortitude abandons the weak and nervous, and industry is a virtue beyond the reach of the enervated and languid. "To exercise an art, it is necessary to commence by procuring the instruments; and, to render these instruments useful, it is necessary that they be made sufficiently firm and solid. To learn to think, it is necessary, then, to exercise our limbs, senses, and organs, which are the instruments of our intelligence; and, to make these instruments the more available, it is necessary that the body which furnishes them should be robust and healthy. Thus, so far from the reason proper of man forming itself independently of the body, it is the good constitution of the body which renders the operations of the mind easy and sure."*

Without mental power and cultivation, physical

* Rousseau's *Emile*.

energies fail of their entire usefulness; and, without moral control, both physical and mental power become engines of vice instead of the supports of virtue, and are annihilated by their corrupt and vitiated manifestations. With these few remarks upon the nature of education, in its whole signification, our further inquiry shall be directed to that part of it embracing mental culture.

Much of the popular indifference in relation to intellectual acquirements may arise from the error of regarding acquirements as the whole of education. Those who take this view of the subject may well argue that it is a waste of time to expend it in the acquisition of knowledge which is not directly applicable to their special pursuits. Languages, mathematics, and science, they may say, are useless to him whose vocation in life has no dependence upon those branches of knowledge. This is very far from a correct view of the subject. Acquirements are not, in themselves, the whole of education. They are but the means of effecting it, and knowledge is the necessary result of that discipline and training which gives

mental capacity and power. If it were possible for any knowledge to be entirely useless, it would still have served a valuable purpose, by the powers developed in the process of acquisition.

Take away all the attainments which form a complete and accomplished education, and yet the mental power, which has been developed in the progress of attainment, remains for application to the practical purposes of life. The fact is illustrated every day by those who, for want of use, have forgotten the studies of their youth, and yet exhibit the mental vigor which those studies have imparted, and go on through life in the exercise of this cultivated strength, until nature yields to the infirmities of age. Man is bidden, by a law of "Him who doeth all things well," to employ his youth in disciplining his faculties for the work of life; for it is a physiological law, that only through the period of growth and youth are the faculties susceptible of development and increase; and when the period of culture terminates in that of action, when the active duties of life prohibit, in most men, the continuance of study, the mind has attained the greatest

strength of which it is capable. It may go on to new applications of its power, but it is now too late to increase its force, and the man must, for the remainder of his existence, suffer the penalty of neglect during the time assigned by nature for the purposes of education; and the community which permits this neglect is responsible, beyond evasion, for all the mental power which is thus lost. In this view of the subject, the neglect of early education is not only the loss of acquirement, but the loss of the power to acquire; it is not only removing objects of beauty and pleasure from before the eye, but destroying the power of sight. It is the failure to bring the man up to the full purpose of his creation, to that earthly development which foreshadows the expansive powers of his future immortality, and the higher intellectual association of his disembodied existence. None know more assuredly the duty and importance of mental culture than those whose scientific investigations are with the materiality through which mind manifests itself. The following passage is from the pages of one of the most distinguished living physiologists:

“By this immortal soul, the existence of which is thus guessed by man, but of whose presence within him he derives the strongest assurance from Revelation, man is connected with beings of a higher order, among whom intelligence exists, unrestrained in its exercise by the imperfections of that corporeal mechanism through which it here operates; and to this state—a state of more intimate communion of mind with mind, and of creatures with their Creator, he is encouraged to aspire, as the reward of the improvement of the talents here committed to his charge.”*

These facts, relative to intellectual culture, are illustrated by every-day observation of the laws of the physical frame. Let the arm of man be, during his period of growth, still and inactive; it acquires no muscular development, and retains in adult years the feebleness of childhood; but let it swing the mechanic's hammer, or the wood-chopper's axe, and it grows, swells, and hardens to its fullest capability; and

* Principles of Human Physiology, by Wm. P. Carpenter, M. D., F. R. S.

that being reached, is retained by constant use through the whole of vigorous manhood; but the felled forest, or the result of the mechanic's blows, are like the acquirements of intellect, not the education but the means by which it has been effected, and the man made ready for his work.

“Mental philosophers have always admitted that if a man, through imperfect education, has never had his reasoning faculties called forth, the instrument of that power becomes more or less atrophied, and the power is more or less lost. For instance, take two boys born of the same parents, and with the same, or nearly the same original capacity. Suppose them differently educated, the one brought up in the fields and all mental culture neglected, the other trained for a learned profession. When these two have arrived at maturity, oblige them to change places, and the incapacity of the brain of the peasant would only be surpassed by the incapacity of the muscular system of the student. The same applies to moral as to intellectual culture. And hence the same importance of early education for the formation of moral

strength, as for the formation of intellectual or muscular strength.”*

Such being the effect of intellectual culture to increase mental vigor, its necessity and advantages can not be limited by individual occupation or pursuit; but they result from the nature of man, and impose upon that nature an obligation which can not be neglected without the guilt and the penalty of crime. The educated mechanic, laborer, or farmer, will have that advantage over his uninstructed neighbor which strength has over weakness; and, in his business, and all other relations of life, will have the greater chance of success, let them be in morals, skill, and all other respects equal. Such a truth scarcely needs illustration, but we will take one from the observations of a learned foreigner † upon the influence of education in the factories of Lowell:

“Some of the factory girls have been teachers in

* The Human Brain ; by Samuel Solly, F. R. S.

† Frederick Van Raumer, Professor of History in the University of Berlin.

the schools, and some, after the accumulation of a little money, return to that occupation. It is commonly found that those girls who diligently attended school *make more rapid progress in the factories, and earn more* than the uneducated. The printed productions of some of the workwomen, ('The Lowell Offering,') show a degree of cultivation of which one has no idea in the European factories."

That an educated intellect is not incompatible with the pursuits of labor, is testified to by the fact that all men are born with the capabilities for cultivation, and it is inconsistent with the arrangements of Providence to endow beings with powers which are to be useless to them. We have evidence, too, of the harmonious combination of mental culture and manual labor, in the fact that several learned and scientific pursuits require as much mechanical labor as ordinary mechanic arts. Such is the necessity for a combination of active labor with mental exercise, that many judicious literary men seek the labor in amateur workshops, or as laborers on their farms, or in the fatiguing amusements of the chase. On the other hand, mechanics

in the constant exercise of their calling have become eminently learned, and the time lost by the ignorant in idleness and low dissipation would be amply sufficient for extensive intellectual acquirements, had their faculties been developed and educated to the capacity and want, and the pleasures of mental occupation.

The evils of ignorance, and the hourly dependence of the uneducated, their subjection to imposture and delusion, may be taken as evidence that general education is among the first duties imposed by Providence on a community of rational beings. The ignorant man falls a ready prey to the vultures of society. Insane fanaticism leads him away from the purity and simplicity of Christian truth. Mercenary lawyers rob him of his money and mar his prospects in the halls of justice; ignorant physicians impose upon his credulity, consume his substance, and ruin the health of himself and family; pretenders to science bewilder his judgment, and tax his faith in their impositions; incompetent teachers leave his children to grow up in ignorance, and dishonest politicians make him the tool of their selfish purposes, and often a traitor to the

happiness and prosperity of his country. Such being the result of ignorance, every honest member of society must feel that he has a personal interest in the cause of general education.

Having thus far endeavored to point out the influence of education upon the success and happiness of individuals, and to show its entire compatibility with the pursuits of labor, it will now be our duty to consider its bearing upon society in its political organization.

In those countries which have their government vested in hereditary sovereigns, and their laws enforced by military power, it would seem that the less general education, the less manliness of intellect existing among the people, the greater the security of the controlling powers. Some despotic governments, recognizing the relationship between popular ignorance and popular subjection, have discouraged, or even prohibited all means of mental culture; have made war upon books, newspapers and schools, and cowering before the intellect which spoke in dramas, or breathed in the music of operas, have prohibited them from presentation

to the public. Such means of education, as these governments have established or permitted, have been colleges and universities for the education of the higher classes only.

There are, however, most honorable instances of despotic governments, whose monarchs, either yielding to the demands of the people, or prompted by a philosophical liberality which overleaped selfish interests, or, it may rather be, overruled by that Providence which sees the "end from the beginning," have established the means of popular education throughout their dominions. Under its influence, man is ascending to his true dignity, and armies, in ignorance the mere machines, the engines of despotism, being educated, are promising to become the most efficient means of accomplishing civil freedom.

"No country can rival Germany in the *general diffusion of knowledge*, and common school education is the more widely extended, as parents are forced by the law to send their children to school, or at least to give evidence of having in a suitable manner provided for their education. The children of the poor enjoy,

of course, the benefits of instruction, free from expenses. The total number of children, frequenting the common schools in Germany, amounts to more than six millions. About fifteen millions five hundred thousand Prussian dollars are, in Germany, annually bestowed upon this branch of education. That, with these arrangements, scarcely none above six years old are to be found throughout Germany who can not read, and but very few who can not write, is not to be wondered at. Some years ago, there were, among 122,897 men of the standing Prussian army, only two soldiers who could not write, and these were not Germans, but Poles from the province of Posen."*

Such has been the course of a portion of Europe in regard to this important subject, and the mental power, thus called into action, is beginning to assume its control over the destiny of nations. It presents the most wonderful historic evidence of the extended, beneficent, and humanizing influences of general education.

A writer, who thinks deeply, and expresses himself

* Europe, Past and Present, by Francis H. Ungewitter, M.D.

forcibly, offers us the following thoughts on this subject:

“But events, the current of which often frustrates the purposes of the unprincipled, interfered to disturb the calculations of despotism. When the light of civilization began to illuminate the face of society, and to warm into life their hopes and aspirations after freedom, it was found impossible to remove the army beyond the reach of this genial influence. Public opinion found its way into the barracks and mess-room, followed the soldier to camp and garrison, accompanied him to the battle-field, and gradually inspired him with the wish to be like other men, an argumentative, logical free preacher, in matters of thought altogether his own master, and, therefore, inclined to inquire into the causes of these wars, which his valor, patriotism and intellect could alone conduct to a happy issue.

“From the moment this change was effected in the military service of Europe, it became manifest that the doom of arbitrary power was sealed; though it was, and is still, impossible to foretell the date of its final

overthrow, still, the order of things which owed its existence to an unreasoning army, must obviously pass more or less rapidly away, when that representative of the nation's energy and courage assumes the right to exercise the privilege of thought.

“Despotism is conscious of reposing upon a basis, hollow and uncertain, filled with combustible and explosive materials, to which, at any moment, the spark may be applied that will shatter into ten thousand fragments the whole structure. Doubts, misgivings, alternate boasting, and timidity—a confident appeal to the sword at one moment, and at another an apprehensive shrinking from it—characterize the policy of contemporary governments. It is felt that the army is no longer what it was—a blind instrument wielded by weakness and perfidy, for their own aggrandizement. Into the mind of the European soldier, the notion has found its way that he is a citizen also, and that it consequently behoves him to investigate, in that capacity, the nature and objects of the designs he is first, of all men, called upon to accomplish.

“The prestige of loyalty is gone, and whenever

events, whether sooner or later, shall open up to the Germans a rational prospect of establishing their freedom, nothing can be calculated upon with greater certainty than the defection of the army to the people.

“Despotism now stands in awe of its own instruments. It called them up and subjected them to the modifying force of discipline, to further its own designs; but, having completed the organization of its military establishments, it trembles at its own handiwork. As hitherto, the army has allied itself with the few against the many, so there seems to be every reason to believe that its practice will, henceforward, be reversed, and that, belonging chiefly to the many, will side with them against the few.” *

Can we contemplate a more stupendous illustration of the benefits of general education than is here shown of its bearing upon civil liberty, converting, by the power of developed intelligence, the organized and systematic enemies of freedom into its most ardent,

* United Service Magazine. Article, “Military Crisis in Europe.”

powerful, and efficient supporters? If monarchies have done thus much for the popular intelligence which must shake their thrones, and finally overturn them, what then is the duty of the people of this noble republic, having its whole fabric resting upon the intelligence of the people; where each individual is a part of the sovereignty—each individual a maker of the law—where mental and moral discipline, and governed passions form the power of efficient obedience, make submission to law a guardian principle, and the people a law-abiding people! Shall the sovereign and law-making power be an ignorant one, and yet produce enlightened government? Shall that mental power which takes the place of bayonets, and renders them unnecessary, be an untrained, blind, and undisciplined force, and yet preserve harmony and security?

While our institutions assert the capability of man for self-government, they imply that it is the attribute of an educated, and not of an ignorant people; and hence, we are under obligations to the whole human family to found the principle of self-government upon its

own sure basis, that of general education ; and it is not going too far to say that if we fail of our duty, in this respect, we are guilty of treachery to the institutions of our country and to the rights of mankind.

Our responsibility upon this subject derives increased force from the nature of our population. It is not composed only of those born under our institutions and venerating them as the work of their fathers, but from the freedom with which we open all the advantages of our country, and confer all civil rights upon those who have no traditional alliance with our constitution, but rather prejudices with other lands and other civil organizations, it is necessary that the national intelligence be kept so deep and clear as to absorb the varied and mingled streams of foreign population, and yet be marked by no other trace of the union than increased volume. The wonderful national prosperity which has blessed our country, and the success which has so far attended its progress, give us the assurance that we have in part done our duty, and are receiving the rich reward of our work. Those who are remote from the operation of the causes of

our national prosperity, and who can contrast them with a different state of things, are, perhaps, more advantageously placed than ourselves, for appreciating the true causes of the prosperity which blesses us, as a nation. It becomes the part of wisdom to hear their report—to listen to their evidence, and to be influenced in the future, by the instructions of the past. The following remarks are taken from an article in an English periodical* upon the subject of “Education in America:”

“What is the enterprise and general prosperity of the Americans to be attributed to, (their country is not naturally so rich or fruitful as Mexico,) except to their general enlightenment? The oldest manufactories of cotton in the world are the Hindoos; labor with them is cheaper than it is in any other part of the world, yet we take the cotton that grows at the doors of their factories, bring it 13,000 miles to this country, manufacture it here where labor is so expensive, take it back 13,000 miles, and undersell the native manufacturer. Labor is dearer in America than in any other

* Frazer's Magazine.

part of the world, and yet we dread and fear their competition more than that of any other nation. The reason of all this is obvious. All the advantages which the Hindoo possesses are far more than counter-balanced by his intellectual inferiority to ourselves; while we dread the American with reason, because he is, intellectually at least, our equal, and, considering the general intelligence and good conduct of the hands he employs, our superior. To what cause, except that of decided superiority in captains and crews, can we attribute the fact that the Americans have deprived us of so large a portion of the whale-fishery as in a measure to have monopolized it?

“ American clocks, which we now see in every hall and cottage, ought to set us thinking. We may be sure of this, the commerce of the world will fall into the hands of those who are most deserving of it. If political or philanthropic considerations should fail to show us the necessity of educating our people, commercial considerations will one day remind us of what we ought to have done. We can only hope that the reminder may not come too late.

“Enlightenment is the great necessity and the great glory of our age ; ignorance, the most expensive, most dangerous, and most pressing of all our evils. Among ourselves, we find a variety of motives converging upon this conclusion. The statesman has become aware that an enlightened population is more orderly, more submissive, in times of public distress, to the necessity of their circumstances; not so easily led away by agitators; in short, more easily and more cheaply governed. The political economist is well aware of the close connection between general intelligence and successful enterprise and industry. The greater the number of enlightened and intelligent, the greater is the number of those whose thoughts are at work in subduing nature, improving arts, and increasing national wealth. The benevolent man is anxious that all should share those enjoyments and advantages which he himself finds to be greatest. Both churchman and dissenter know well enough that they are under the necessity of educating. And the manufacturer, too, who is employing, perhaps, many more hands than the colonel of a regiment commands, is

now becoming well aware how much to his advantage it is that his men should prefer a book or a reading-room to the parlor of a public house ; should understand what they are about, instead of being merely able to go through their allotted task as so many beasts of burden; and that they should have the strong motive of making their homes decent and respectable, and of bettering their condition. All these motives are now working, strongly too, in the public mind, and have begun to bear fruit."

This is profitable testimony, as to the bearing of general education upon the individual interests of each member of the community, and upon the prosperity of the nation. While it presents encouragement for what we have done, it by no means presents the assurance that we have performed our whole duty, but only offers a reason for the vice, the wretchedness, and the criminality, which are the natural consequences of the want of general education, and leads to the conviction that as men, or as a nation, we have not done our duty while there is one individual among us who has not had the opportunity for that kind of

mental culture which shall give his faculties their fullest possible development. Who, now, may put it off and say it is none of his business? It is the business of every man, who wishes social virtue, security and peace, and who would give to himself and his children those guarantees for correct conduct, which are afforded by an intelligent, orderly, and well-regulated neighborhood.

Having, in this brief manner, endeavored to present the importance of general education to every man in the community, no matter what may be his pursuit, the next endeavor shall be to indicate the mode of development, which shall be of general practicability.

Generally speaking, there may be said to be three classes of study developing three correspondent divisions of mental power, and all of which are necessary to complete mental culture, and to prepare the individual for his future studies and labors. The studies of languages, mathematics, and the sciences of observation, develop, in harmonious dependence upon each other, various faculties which make up the human intellect.

Language is a comprehensive mental process; it is the connecting link between mortality and immortality, between the operations of the mind and soul, and their expression for earthly use; and here it alone implies a wide range of mental culture, and the increase and development of many faculties.

Some diversity of opinion exists as to the relative importance of ancient and modern languages. Many contend that the time occupied in the study of Latin and Greek is thrown away, and had better be devoted to the acquirement of a modern language, which they argue may be of more practical utility. This difference of view may arise from the error of regarding the language studied as the object only, and not the means of mental culture; and it may not be out of place to offer here suggestions which should be considered in relation to this subject. The study of the dead languages, the foundation of modern languages, and the materials of which they are formed, would seem to be better fitted for disciplining the mental processes concerned in the acquisition of language. To be well acquired, they train the powers of memory,

attention, and application, and, being mastered, they render the acquisition of modern languages easy, from the strength they may have given to the faculty of studying language. But upon the ground of practical utility, it is questionable whether the ancient languages have not advantages over the modern. The occasion for the use of a modern language occurs to very few persons, and to those upon rare occasions in a lifetime. How few of those who study French, Spanish, and Italian, ever find a necessity for the use. German, in some sections of our country, is more useful, though rarely necessary. On the other hand, scarcely a page of English can be read, or a study entered upon, without the utility of the ancient languages being felt, in the precision they give to the many words derived from them, and in our scientific and theological investigations they are essential.

The influence of mathematical studies, in giving firmness and endurance to the attention, in strengthening the reasoning powers, and guarding the mind against hasty conclusions, is generally understood and admitted. There are few to whom scientific

knowledge is not of every-day utility; but if it had no other value than the wide and pleasurable range it gives the mind, its neglect would be inexcusable. There is a wide difference between the man who sees in the boiling fluid, the burning taper, and the glowing fire, the falling dew and gathering clouds, nothing but every-day facts, familiar by use, and suggesting no range of thought, and him who sees in all of them kindred processes in the vast laboratory of nature, illustrating beautiful and extended laws, over which the mind expands with pleasure, until it reaches, through his works, the great Cause and Ruler of all.

The laboring man, who goes to his work with his mind open to such contemplations, from all he may see—the flower, the rock, or the earth upon which he treads; the metal, or the wood in which he works, is a man of higher nature, and has greater sources of happiness than he who toils in mental vacancy, and passes from the fatigue of labor to the enjoyments of sense and animal indulgence. To these studies may be advantageously added the art of drawing, which

imparts accuracy to the eye and hand—of practical utility in almost every occupation in life.

The means of education being supplied to the people, there is ample time for acquiring well all the studies essential to mental development, during the period of growth of the mental faculties, and before entering upon professional, commercial, or mechanical pursuits. In the latter case, the mental cultivation might go, step by step, with all the manual labor which should be required of youth. It is unnecessary to enter into a detail of the specific studies in each division of mental culture, as these are either self-indicated or might be influenced by circumstances, or would be contingent upon the views and capabilities of those who are the instructors of youth.

General education, or mental development, having so important an influence upon the welfare of the individual and of society, it is evident that the process should be committed only to the most competent, and hence the business of the teacher becomes one of the greatest trust and responsibility. His mistakes and neglects are too often beyond the reach of correction.

Until the community will recognize the importance of the teacher's duties, and, by competent rewards, respect, and honor, invite to their profession its appropriate talent and character, there can be no efficient general education. In addition to the acquirements to be imparted, the teacher should possess a knowledge of human nature and skill in its management, which can only be acquired by steady devotion to his pursuit; such a devotion as will only be given to a pursuit which presents the inducements of a permanent occupation. Under the existing circumstances of the profession of teaching, many, the most capable of its duties, make it but a means of reaching other professions, and abandon teaching just as they become fit for pursuing it. This must be fatal to progress in the art, but such must continue to be the case until the community honors the profession of teaching in proportion to its intrinsic value and nobility. Some, of the greatest intellectual power, have given their lives to duties of instruction, and have impressed their mental stamp upon those who have exhibited it in various walks of intellectual greatness. As we honor mind in

its highest manifestations, we honor and respect that occupation which gives to mind its form and direction; those who commence that culture which produces the eminent in art, science, literature, and statesmanship, to adorn, honor, and benefit their country.

But, despised as his pursuit may be by the unthinking, unrewarded as he may feel to be his labors and devotion, the teacher who has done his duty cherishes within his bosom the proud consciousness that to him has been intrusted the honored duty of lighting up the double flame of intellect and religion; the one to shed its brilliant gleams along and around his pupils' path through time; the other, more brilliant, to brighten the darkness of the tomb, and to light the soul on to immortality.

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
OF
ERIE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.

WRITTEN FOR THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MARYLAND.

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EVERY year during the season of travel, thousands of voyagers embark at Buffalo, in the state of New York, on board the magnificent steamers leaving that port for the voyage of the great lakes. The first point of interest at which these steamers stop, is the harbor and town of Erie, the only port possessed by Pennsylvania upon the lakes, and formerly known by the name of Presque Isle. This place is distant from Buffalo, ninety miles, and thus early in the voyage commences the enjoyment and interest derived from picturesque scenery and beauty of location. The lake shore rises into a bold bluff, the base being a slaty rock, to the height of eighty feet, and then spreads out into a broad irregular plain, covered with thickets of wild roses, with forests and farms. This plain is

broken by ravines, through which are flowing rivulets either quietly to join the lake, or to tumble their waters in mimic falls over the rocky bed from which they have washed the superimposed soil. Seen from the deck of a steamer, the country back rises and sweeps away in a beautiful slope of varied hue, until its dark forest-crowned summit, at almost a mountain elevation, cuts against the sky. In reality it is a succession of plains, or ridges, as though there had been successive elevations of the land, or depressions of the lake.

The harbor or bay of Presque Isle, is formed by a low and thickly-wooded point or peninsula, which, shooting out from the bold bluff, bends around like a bowed arm, until its free extremity approaches a shoal or spit shooting from the coast below, and thus hugs in this beautiful bay, called Presque Isle, from the almost island character of this peninsula. The beautiful bay thus shut in is five miles in length by two in breadth, and has a depth of eighteen feet. Its entrance between the approaching points of land had originally but four or five feet; the erection of stone piers upon these points, by confining the channel, has given

greater force to the currents and washed it out to the depth of nine feet.

On the plain overlooking this bay and peninsula, stands the town or borough of Erie, containing now between five and six thousand inhabitants.

This locality, so interesting in its natural arrangements and adornments, is also worthy of attention from its historical associations. Here was the commencement, within our territory, of the chain of French forts, which, crossing to the Ohio and Mississippi, were intended to unite Canada with Louisiana, and to shut out British rule from this region.

Here is located the scene of the youthful and daring adventures of Washington. Here General Anthony Wayne terminated his earthly career; and this point is intimately associated with one of the proudest naval achievements of our last war with Great Britain.

Before doing more than allude to these interesting associations, it may be better to give a short statement of the early political history and settlement of the country.

When the courtier quaker, as Macaulay represents

him, Wm. Penn, received from Charles II. the grant of Pennsylvania, the charter prescribed that "the said lands were to be bounded on the north by the beginning of the three-and-fortieth degree of north latitude."

No measures were taken to ascertain where the said line would be located on the ground, until so late as the year 1785. Commissioners were then appointed on the part of Pennsylvania and on that of New York, to ascertain the northern boundary of the state from the river Delaware westward, to the north-west corner of Pennsylvania. The commissioners first appointed were David Rittenhouse, upon the part of Pennsylvania, and Samuel Holland, on the part of New York. They proceeded to act in pursuance of their appointment, and in December, 1786, ascertained and fixed the beginning of the forty-third degree of north latitude, erected suitable monuments thereof at and near the river Delaware, but were prevented, by the inclemency of the weather, from proceeding further in the survey. The next year Andrew Ellicott was appointed a commissioner for the above purpose, on the part of Pennsylvania, and James Clinton and Simeon

Dewit, on the part of New York. In the year 1787, they completed the running and marking of this northern boundary line, two hundred and fifty-nine miles and eighty-eight perches, from its commencement at the Delaware river to its termination in Lake Erie, five or six miles east of the Ohio state line, and throughout the whole distance marked by mile-stones, each one indicating the number of miles it is distant from the river Delaware. In addition to these stones there are also throughout the line, mile-trees marked, in the same manner. In 1789, an act of Assembly was passed confirming the acts of the commissioners and establishing the line run by them as the boundary between New York and Pennsylvania. This line running with such undeviating straightness from east to west, first gave to Pennsylvania a little corner upon Lake Erie, without port or harbor—a mere tantalizing look-out upon its broad expanse of blue waters, without any facilities for participating in the commerce which they were destined to bear. This county of Erie, and harbor of Presque Isle, were not then in the state of Pennsylvania. But by reference to the map,

we see that the northern boundary of Pennsylvania is not now a rigid straight line, but that it makes a singular and sudden projection or shoulder jutting out upon Lake Erie—that the boundary line, as it draws near the lake, makes a sudden turn more to the north and runs out into the lake, cutting out a “huge cantle” of what was the acute, south-west angle of New York, and we now proceed to some notice of this “Triangular Tract,” as it is technically called.

To the jurisdiction and ownership of this important little piece of territory there were conflicting claims. New York claimed jurisdiction by virtue of her charter. Massachusetts made the same claim—the possession and ownership of the soil were with the aborigines.

The statesmen of Pennsylvania at an early day perceived the importance of having a front with a harbor upon the lake, and took the necessary measures to effect it. In pursuance with negotiations had upon that subject, New York ceded her right to the United States, and Massachusetts did the same. In the mean time Pennsylvania entered into arrangements to purchase from the Indians their right to the soil and

jurisdiction of the same tract; and on the ninth of January, seventeen hundred and eighty-nine, these were ceded for the sum of twelve hundred pounds. This, it is believed, was the last purchase made from the Indians by the state of Pennsylvania, extinguishing all native claim to lands within her borders — the same just and peaceful character marking the closing transaction on Lake Erie, in 1789, with which the first negotiation commenced on the Delaware in 1681.

On the third of March, 1792, the United States, for the sum of one hundred and fifty-one thousand six hundred and forty dollars and twenty-five cents, ceded to the state of Pennsylvania this important "Triangular Tract," containing two hundred and two thousand one hundred and eighty-seven acres.

Although the political right of possession and jurisdiction was now settled, this tract was still to be the subject of much individual dispute and litigation, very much retarding its settlement and improvement, or rather breaking them up after they had commenced. On the third of April, 1792, a law was passed by the state for the sale and settlement of all the *vacant* land

lying north and west of the Ohio and the Alleghany rivers, and Connewango Creek. This included all the lands from Pittsburgh to Lake Erie and west of the Alleghany river. Portions of this land in the different districts had been appropriated by the state in the way of donation to the officers and soldiers of the Pennsylvania line in the war of the revolution.

The law which provided for the sale and settlement of the vacant lands, stipulated that they should be granted to actual settlers in tracts of four hundred acres. The settlement, the extent and kind of which were specified, was required to be made within two years from the time of the grant, unless obstacles arose from the enemies of the United States, meaning, more particularly, the Indians. Under this law the lands were chiefly taken up by large speculating companies, though each tract was nominally in the right of separate individuals. The companies failed to comply with the stipulations of the law, requiring settlement, cultivation and improvement, within two years, and individuals thinking the company claim vacated, proceeded to settle and to make improvements upon the

land. Here, again, were three kinds of claims: the revolutionary donation, the company settlement, and the individual occupation.

After much and protracted litigation, the final settlement was in favor of the company title, upon the plea that the Indians had offered obstacles to the settlement within the prescribed period. These difficulties spread abroad the impression that the titles to land in this district were not safe, and hence emigrants passed by and went into the adjoining part of Ohio—the Western or Connecticut Reserve, as it was formerly called—and hence the Western Reserve has an earlier and more wealthy settlement than this part of Pennsylvania. These uncertainties have, however, long since been terminated, and the county is steadily progressing in wealth, numbers, and improvements.

There have been few, if any, pioneers in any of our new country who have had to encounter greater privations, hardships, sufferings and dangers, than the first settlers of Erie county. To a very late period the country was a wilderness, and the unprotected population was exposed to the murderous attacks of

the Indians. So recently as May, 1795, a Mr. Rutledge and his son were murdered by the savages at a point which now forms the junction of two of the principal streets of Erie.

Without roads through this wilderness, all the supplies had to be procured from Pittsburgh or through Canada. From Pittsburgh the supplies ascended in keel boats, the Alleghany river, French Creek, Le Bœuf Creek, to where the village of Waterford now stands, fourteen miles from the lake shore, and from this point they were carried on pack-horses. The transportation from Canada was by bateaux. The first wheat grown in Erie county was carried more than one hundred miles to Chippewa, Canada, to be ground.

The county of Erie and the adjoining county of Crawford, were surveyed and laid out into tracts of 400 acres, as early as 1794, and a few adventurers pushed their way into the county of Erie at that time, but no permanent settlements were made until 1795 and 1796.

The great southern road which leaves the lake

shore at Erie for Pittsburgh, immediately commences ascending the succession of ridges which have been described as characteristic of the formation of the country, giving us at each step a more extended view over the forests beneath us, the town, the bay, and the lake. About ten miles from the lake shore, the greatest elevation, about six hundred feet, is reached, and at the distance of fourteen miles, on the southern border of the county, we descend into the pretty little valley, in which, on the banks of a miniature lake, stands the town of Waterford. The little lake, called Le Bœuf, empties its waters by a small creek of the same name into French creek, and by this into the Alleghany and Ohio rivers. We have here these waters taking their rise in the same hills, and in proximity to each other, finding their way to the Atlantic by the distant channels of the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence. But we have now come to this point, from its interesting historical associations, as being the scene of the youthful achievements of Washington when in his 20th year, in the service of Great Britain, and commissioned by Governor Dinwiddie, of Virginia, he accomplished his

mission to the French posts of this region. It may not be out of place to recall the circumstances which required him to enter upon this service.

In Sparks' *Life of Washington*, chapter 3d, it is stated "The time was now at hand when the higher destinies of Washington were to unfold themselves. Intelligence came from the frontiers that the French had crossed the lakes from Canada in force;" friendly Indians, seeing these aggressions and the strength of the French, were intimidated from their fidelity, and those of hostile feelings were encouraged to open aggression. One messenger had already been sent to meet these threatened dangers, but had shrunk from the accomplishment of his task. Under these circumstances, Washington was commissioned to proceed to the posts of the intruders to protest against their aggressions and to warn them of the consequences.

The journey before him was nearly seven hundred miles, over rugged and untracked mountains; through a savage wilderness and savage tribes. Commissioned on the 31st day of October, 1753, he left Williamsburgh, the Virginia seat of government, on the same

day, and on the 11th of December arrived at the French post on the little lake of Le Bœuf. Washington records in his journal that on his way out, during an interview with an Indian chief, the Half King, the chief "informed me that they had built two forts, one on Lake Erie, and another on French creek, near a small lake, fifteen miles asunder, and a large wagon road between them. They are both built after the same model but different in size, that on the lake being largest. He gave me a plan of them of his own drawing."

From his journal of the thirteenth of December, two days after his arrival, we have the following description of this fort:

"The chief officers retired to hold a council of war, which gave me an opportunity of taking the dimensions of the fort and making what observations I could.

"It is situated on the south or west fork of French creek, near the water, and is almost surrounded by the creek, and a small branch of it which forms a kind of island. Four houses compose the sides. The bastions are made of piles driven into the ground, standing

more than twelve feet above it and sharp at the top; with port holes cut for cannon, and loopholes for the small-arms to fire through. There are eight six-pound pieces mounted on each bastion, and one piece of four pounds before the gate. In the bastions are a guard-house, chapel, doctor's lodging, and the commander's private stores; round which are laid platforms for the cannon and men to stand upon. There are several barracks without the fort for the soldiers' dwelling, covered, some with bark, and some with boards, made chiefly of logs. There are also several other houses, such as stables, smith shop, &c."

The locality of this early and important mission is now, as before mentioned, the village of Waterford. The French fort has disappeared, and the present road passes over part of its site; and frequently an old cannon ball, or some implement of corroded metal, turns up as a relic of its bygone days and occupants. The Le Bœuf Hotel is in part constructed of the block-house which succeeded the French work, and the road from this work to that on the lake shore is still traceable.

It seems not a little remarkable, that Washington, at a time of life when curiosity is most active, being within two hours' ride of the great lakes, and a good road to conduct him to their shores, should not have visited them; especially, as in that day they must have been, from the great difficulty of reaching them, even a much greater wonder than they are now. From the minute character of his journal, it is evident that if he had visited the lake it would have been mentioned; and there is no reason to believe that the French would have prevented him. He was at the Fort from the eleventh until the sixteenth of December, and that he did not seek to gratify the natural curiosity which he must have felt, is worthy of remark, as showing how completely, even in such early youth, all private feelings were sacrificed to public duty. His constant vigilance was necessary, to prevent his Indians from being seduced from him; and on the 15th he says, "I cannot say that ever in my life I suffered so much anxiety as I did in this affair;" and in a preceding part of the journal he says, "As I had orders to make all possible dispatch." When he had reached

the French commander on Le Bœuf Creek, the point to which duty called him was reached; and although, after six weeks' hard and perilous journeying, he was within a few hours of one of the most interesting natural phenomena of our globe, the youth of twenty in fulfillment of his duty, turned from wonders which annually invite hundreds across the Atlantic.

On the eastern edge of the town of Erie, are still to be seen the remains of the fort on the lake shore. It was picturesquely situated, at a point where the bluff is broken by a ravine through which flows a small creek. Here, then, was the commencement of the chain of works within our own territory, which was to unite Canada with Louisiana, and shut out the British rule and the British race from the belted territory. What an illustration of the pride and power of nations! of human sagacity and foresight! Scarcely one hundred years have rolled away; and as one stands amid these ruins of the monuments and means of military power and aggrandizement—of monopolizing associations, the mind is pleasantly oppressed by the wonderful events which crowd the time marked

by these mementos of the past, and by the present moment. The lilies of France, which once floated here, where are they? No longer the emblem of a nation or a race; while the rival Cross of St. George has yielded to the Star-spangled Banner—the emblem of a nation and of institutions then unthought-of and unimagined. Beneath the folds of the new-born flag, the blue waters before us are dotted by the sails of commerce, and dashed into foam by rushing steamers. The brook beneath us, which brawled through a lonely wilderness, is now silenced by the clattering mills on its banks; while the solitary fortress has mouldered into a ruin, before the civilization, the peaceful arts and animation of the populous city. The stripling youth who trod this wilderness, the modest messenger to France's proud knight, St. Pierre, has his name and fame written on marble monuments, and in the hearts of men, as the founder of a nation—the warrior of its flag, and the hero of the world.

Standing on the ruins of the old French fort, and looking over the ravine to its opposite bank, the eye is arrested by an isolated block-house, of time-blackened

timbers, rising from the grass-covered brow of the hill. This block-house was erected in the winter of 1813-14, by the Pennsylvania volunteers, then in the service of the United States. But on the spot where it stands, and in a block-house which preceded this, one of America's most gallant sons breathed his last. It was here that "Mad Anthony" General Wayne ended his mortal career. He was on his way from the west, where he had been in the service of his country, when, in December, 1796, he sickened and died at this place, and was buried near the flag-staff. In 1810, his remains were removed by his family, and found in such a state of peculiar preservation that the form of the body and features was preserved.

During the wanderings of his youthful exile, in our country, the late King of the French, Louis Phillippe, found kindness and hospitality in Erie county. His host, a gentleman by the name of Reese, has but recently died. The cabin of this gentleman stood on what is now the corner of Second and French streets, in the town of Erie; and here he received and entertained the Prince who was destined to a future of

such varied and diverse fortune—from exile and beggary to a throne, and from that again to banishment and the protection of foreigners.

On the eighth of April, 1793, the first act was passed authorizing the laying-out of a town at the Bay of Presque Isle, on the lands reserved at that place for the use of the state. Nothing appears to have been done in pursuance of this act; and in April, 1795, another act was passed, authorizing the Governor to appoint commissioners for the purpose. Andrew Elliott, with others, were designated to survey and lay out a town at Presque Isle, to be called "Erie." It seems that, even at that early day, magnificent anticipations were formed of the importance and growth of this place, and room enough was given to gratify the largest expectations. The commissioners were directed to survey and lay out *one thousand six hundred acres* for town lots, and *three thousand four hundred acres* for out-lots. The town thus laid out was divided into three sections, called the first, second, and third sections of the town of Erie, the whole fronting three miles on the Bay. The first section, with a sprinkling

in the second, is all that the town of Erie has so far been able to occupy. The anticipations of its early projectors may be realized, now that it promises to reap to the full the benefit of modern improvements. Plank roads are opening to it the surrounding country, and railroads are connecting it with the Hudson river and with the city of New York. At present, the population of Erie consists of 5,800, and the county of forty thousand. Besides the towns of Erie and Waterford, on the north and south lines of the county, it has two very pretty villages of about one thousand inhabitants each; North-East, as its name indicates, in the north-east corner, and Girard, on the western border.

Just inside of the mouth of Presque Isle Bay, and to the right hand coming in, is a small sheet of water spreading into a curvature of the land, or peninsula, which forms that side of the harbor. Vessels running in from a gale, or waiting for the abatement of one before putting to sea, make this a place of refuge, and hence it is called "Misery Bay." Through the waters of a shoal part of this bay, the blackened remains, the

ribs of a sunken vessel are seen projecting; and not far from her, but entirely beneath the water, which is as clear as glass, lie the remains of another; and there they have lain for more than thirty years. These are the remains of two vessels, associated with one of our most brilliant naval achievements; and though the fragments of their wrecks will soon be entirely gone, their names will never be lost while our history remains. They are the *Lawrence*, Commodore Perry's flag-ship at the battle of Lake Erie, and the *Niagara*, to which he went in an open boat, exposed to the fire of the enemy, after the *Lawrence* was disabled. Their history is a part of that of Erie county. In its forests was their birthplace, and appropriately they lie entombed beneath the transparent waters of this beautiful bay.

The story of the battle of Lake Erie is that of the glory of these vessels. The fire of the whole British squadron was directed against the "*Lawrence*," Commodore Perry's flag-ship, until she was almost a wreck, and then, as is stated in Cooper's "*Naval History*," "Captain Perry, finding himself in a vessel that had

been rendered nearly useless by the injury she had received, and which was dropping out of the combat, got into his boat and pulled after the Niagara, on board of which vessel he arrived at half-past two. Soon after, the colors of the Lawrence were hauled down, that vessel being literally a wreck.

“The manner in which the Lawrence was cut-up, being almost without an example in naval warfare. It is understood, that when Captain Perry left her, she had but one gun on her starboard side, or that on which she was engaged, which could be used, and that gallant officer is said to have aided in firing it, in person, the last time it was discharged. Of her crew, 22 were killed and 61 were wounded, most of the latter severely. When Captain Perry left her, there remained on board but fifteen sound men.

“Although much has been justly said of the manner in which the Bon Homme Richard and the Essex were injured, neither of these ships suffered, relatively, in a degree proportioned to the Lawrence. Distinguished as were the two former vessels, for the indomitable resolution with which they stood the

destructive fire directed against them, it did not surpass that manifested on board the *Lawrence*."

Of the *Niagara* it is stated, "At this critical moment, (when the victory was thought to have been with the English,) the *Niagara* came steadily down, within half pistol-shot of the enemy, standing between the *Chippeway* and *Lady Prevost* on one side, and the *Detroit*, *Queen Charlotte*, and *Hunter* on the other. In passing, she poured in her broadsides, starboard and larboard, ranged ahead of the ships, luffed athwart their bows, and continued delivering a close and deadly fire. The shrieks from the *Detroit* told that the tide of battle had turned."

Having separated the individuality of the *Lawrence* and the *Niagara* from the general action in which they were engaged, it will now be proper, as one of the historical incidents of Erie county, to trace the difficulties through which they were called into existence, and carried into the battle which made them so glorious. They were built in and launched from the mouth of a small ravine on the western side of the town of Erie.

The following account of the building and arming of these vessels is in the words of Captain Daniel Dobbins, at this time an aged and most worthy resident of Erie. He was then a sailing master in the navy, and commanded the "Ohio," one of Perry's squadron, but which, having been sent to Erie for supplies, was not in the action:

"On the 27th of December, 1810, Commodore Chauncey and Mr. Eckford arrived, and gave further instructions to prepare timber for the two brigs. In February, Mr. Noah Brown arrived out, with a party of carpenters; and in March, Captain Perry arrived; and by May the fleet was in a great state of forwardness. There being no arms of any kind, except a few dilapidated muskets, at this point, Captain Perry kept me employed in transporting guns, etc., from Buffalo, by water in boats, and by land in wagons. On the 6th day of April, I arrived at Cattaraugus from Buffalo, on the ice, with six teams; one wagon, loaded with a gun weighing thirty-two hundred, arriving at Erie on the eleventh. This gun of thirty-two hundred was the first piece of ordnance for the defense

of the fleet then building, except two three-pound field-pieces borrowed from the state, and they without any shot. All the long guns were brought from New York city, and the short carronades from Washington City. They were all transported by wagons; those from New York *via* Buffalo, and those from Washington *via* Pittsburgh. The shot was principally cast at Pittsburgh; the rigging came mostly from New York; the heavy anchors from Philadelphia, and the small from Pittsburgh. Fine oakum was not to be had, and we were compelled to calk them with 'rope-maker's oakum.'

Captain Perry having brought the remaining vessels of his squadron into Presque Isle Bay, was there blockaded by the British, until the prospect of roast beef and plum pudding drew John Bull from his watch. Having received an invitation to dine in Canada, at the town of Dover, the British fleet departed on the festive enjoyment. This was Friday, August 2d; two days afterward, on Sunday, Captain Perry commenced the operation of getting his squadron out of the harbor. There were but seven feet water on the

bar, and the brigs, the Lawrence and the Niagara, drew more than this water. The guns of the Lawrence and Niagara, loaded and shotted, were taken out and landed on the beach. Beams were run through the forward and after ports, and rested on scows sunken to the water's edge; the beams, or timbers, were then blocked up on these foundations, and the water being pumped out of the scows, the vessels were lifted over the bar. Continuing the narrative of Captain Dobbins, he says: "We had succeeded so far, that day, as to get the Lawrence and one or two of the smaller vessels over, when, on the following morning, the blockading squadron hove in sight. The Niagara was on the bar, with all her guns on shore; but it so happened that the wind was in such a direction that the Lawrence, tending to the wind, headed the same way as the Niagara." The enemy was deceived by this circumstance, and did not know that the Niagara was fast on the bar; the foremost ship laid her maintopsail to the mast, and after exchanging signals, bore up and stood off. Captain Perry immediately applied to officers of the army, and obtained a detachment

of infantry, by the aid of which he got the fleet all over, mounted the guns, and sailed in pursuit of the enemy that night. This account is a little more detailed than that in Cooper's history, and also differs as to the vessel on the bar. Captain Dobbins says that it was the Niagara, and not the Lawrence. This, however, is of no moment.

The result of the first duty of these ships is well known, and is briefly summed up in that memorable dispatch, "We have met the enemy, and they are ours." Besides the wrecks of the Niagara and Lawrence, in Misery Bay, the citizens of Erie have a more animated and noisy memento of the battle of Lake Erie, in the bell which swings in the belfry of the shabby old brick court-house. This, which now marks the time for republicans, and calls them to their public assemblages, is the same which tolled the watches on board the Queen Charlotte, the flag-ship of the British squadron.

Going back to the commencement of the commercial navy which now floats upon the waters of Lake Erie, we find that the first vessel built on the American

side of the Lake was built in this county, near the town of Erie. This was the sloop "Good Intent," of forty tons, built by Captain William Lee, about the year 1795. In 1798, a person by the name of Beebe built a sloop, called the Washington; and in 1800 another, called the Harlequin. Soon after the commencement of the war, every merchant vessel had disappeared from the Lake.

The first improvement, for deepening the channel, was by the appropriation of ten thousand dollars, by the state, in 1822. In 1824, the general government appropriated thirty thousand dollars for the improvement of the harbor, and General Bernard designed the plan of the works. The old channel was very crooked, and had but four and a half feet water, and was therefore abandoned. At the time the present piers were erected there was only two and a half feet water where the channel now runs. A great increase was given to the business of this locality by the construction of the Pittsburgh and Erie canal.

The object of this little paper has been more to collect those events and incidents associated with the

history of Erie county, or of general interest from their nature, rather than to follow out minutely every transaction of interest only to this particular section; and I have been instigated to do so by an inclination to contribute what little may be in my power to the designs and purposes of the Historical Society of my native state and city; and I make the present offering as an evidence more of my wish than my ability to be useful.

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS

UPON THE

Grog Ration of the U. S. Navy.

THE GROG RATION OF THE U. S. NAVY.

“Give Jack his Grog,” it is reported, was an exclamation heard upon the floor of the House of Representatives, just as the final vote was taken during the last Congress, and which vote rejected the proposition to abolish the Grog Ration of the United States Navy. The exclamation and the vote were most probably the impulse of a generous feeling, and arose from a popular, though false, impression of “Jack’s” character. Romance writers and poets have seemed disposed to endow sailors with certain qualities of character, independent of the natural influences moulding human nature; and popular opinion has seemed willing to tolerate gross propensities and vices in men of this class on account of the virtues, not belonging so extensively to mankind in general, which is attributed

to them by the popular imagination. Boldness, recklessness, generosity, are among the supposed peculiarities of seamen as a body, and for these sensuality, ungoverned impulses, low appetites, and a disregard for rule and order, are to be tolerated and justified. If the supposed peculiarities really existed, and were really virtues, it may fairly be questioned whether they offer a sufficient compensation for the outrages upon morality and order consequent upon the tolerated vices.

The popular impression respecting nautical character and the indulgence with which its irregularities are regarded, do much to keep up the affectation of peculiarity in the public eye, by men who, under other influences, would have no disposition to exhibit an assumed recklessness, nor to descend to low vice. The sailor, during his short sojourns ashore, is on exhibition—he is only dramatizing the part allotted to him by public expectation. The man, to be seen in his true character, and out of his stage costume, must be studied in his ordinary and every-day life on ship-board.

In the prosecution of his duty, the writer has been brought into much and intimate association with seamen on ship-board, and he has found them to be selfish, narrow and base in proportion to their devotion to animal indulgence and degrading vices; to be equally with other men obedient to degrading or elevating influences, and to be trustworthy in proportion as they obey the latter. It is well known to officers, that when a special duty is to be performed, requiring confidence to be reposed in those to whom it is entrusted, such, for instance, as taking care of the sick, that if possible those are selected who have characters for sobriety, discretion and prudence, above that which is usually attributed by popular prejudice to sailors.

The time is only passing away when to be even an officer of any marine service it was thought almost necessary to be what would characterize the citizen as a blackguard; and it is a proud and happy reflection that the individuals composing the commercial and government marine of the United States, have more than any other elevated the character of their pursuit. In the commercial marine, where there are no legislative

obstacles counteracting the elevating influences of our institutions, this improvement is more marked; and it is not an insignificant fact, that with increased respectability, the American merchant sailor abandons the external badges of his calling. After his voyage is made or his day's work is done, you meet him in the garb and with the manners of any other respectable citizen. This goes to show that there is nothing in his calling to individualize him or to remove him from the influences which affect other men; nothing to endow him with especial good qualities and nothing to entitle him to the indulgence of bad; and consequently a terrible responsibility rests upon those who, in the spirit of blind indulgence, cry "Give Jack his grog." Upon this principle our national ships were once legitimated brothels, and in foreign ports, commanding officers, who claimed to be respectable men when at home, thought they did no more than right by filling their vessels with prostitutes and facilitating open, general and disgusting licentiousness. Thanks to the moral sense of the community, we have reached a step above this degradation, and there is hope that

“Jack” may yet be elevated above the necessity for grog.

If, then, there is nothing in the character of the sailor which protects him from the influences which are found to be demoralizing in men generally, and nothing which gives him the right to demoralization, there must, it would be supposed, exist some good reasons for exposing him to so dangerous and destructive a habit as the repeated daily exhibition of ardent spirits; rousing his passions and exciting and inflaming his physical and moral temperament. Can such reasons be found? All impartial observation, and all established physical laws show that they can not. The grog ration neither contributes to the strength of the body, nor preserves it from the influences of cold or heat. It diminishes the ability and the disposition to labor; all of which facts have been established by close and accurate observation, as well as deduced from natural laws.

In a most scientific and impartial paper on the “Physiological effects of Alcoholic Drinks,” published in the British and Foreign Medical Review for October,

1847, the writer, Dr. Carpenter, an eminent physiologist, says:

“In the exercise of our duty as cool-judging critics, we now propose to inquire, in the first place, into the present state of our knowledge as to the physiological action of alcohol on the human body; next to consider how far the results of the comparative experience of those who make habitual but moderate use of fermented liquors, and of those who entirely abstain from them, under a variety of circumstances, warrants the assertion that total abstinence is invariably, or nearly so, compatible with perfect health, or is even more favorable to health than habitual but moderate indulgence.”

The writer then goes on to show by a body of conclusive scientific evidence that, from the laws of animal chemistry, alcoholic drinks can contribute nothing to the muscular substance of the human body, and refers to the practical application of this fact among men whose success depends upon the development of

muscular power. "In the preparation of the body for feats of strength, the more experienced trainers either forbid the use of fermented liquors altogether, or allow but a very small quantity to be taken."

Animal Chemistry also shows that alcohol, although it may temporarily stimulate the nervous system, is not necessary to the supply of nervous matter; and so far from being useful "to keep the cold out," its being taken into the system retards the evolution of animal heat. Having set forth these facts and principles, Dr. Carpenter remarks:

"The inference to which we are thus conducted by physiological reasoning, instead of being negatived by general experience, (as it is commonly supposed to be,) is fully confirmed by it. The Esquimaux, Greenlanders, and other inhabitants of the coldest regions of the globe, effectually maintain their animal heat by the large consumption of fatty matter; and whatever may be the *temporary* effect of an alcoholic draught, we believe that all arctic and antarctic voyagers agree that continued resistance to cold is most effectually

maintained without alcohol, or at any rate with a much smaller quantity of it than is commonly supposed necessary. A very striking proof of this is afforded by the arrangements recently made for the overland arctic expedition, on which the best authorities have of course been consulted by government.

“In the programme of these arrangements, it is expressly stated that no fermented liquors are to be used by the parties who proceed upon it. We have heard many of the now almost extinct race of stage-coachmen, who had been induced to give up their former habit of imbibing a glass of ale or brandy and water at every stage, and to substitute an occasional cup of hot coffee and a rasher of toasted bacon, speak most decidedly in favor of the superior efficacy of the latter system, and we doubt if any man who had the resolution to adopt it, ever returned to his habits except for the love of liquor.”

So far as cold is concerned, there is no advantage derived from the use of alcohol. It gives no increased ability to labor, but, on the contrary, diminishes the

power to do so. Much and carefully collected experience goes to show that "alcoholic liquors ingested during the performance of severe labor, in very hot situations, cause a very rapid and decided failure of strength."

Not being necessary as a protection against cold, and being an obstacle in the way of labor, few, it is presumed, will imagine any benefits from its use in warm latitudes. It is in warm seasons and climates that the wisdom of nature, by diminishing the appetite for food, proportions its supply to the languor and diminished power of the human system. Stimulants counteract this wholesome provision, and enable the stomach, by an artificial, temporary and delusive vigor, to oppress the system by an amount of food which it neither requires nor can dispose of, and the result is disease and death. In the information which Dr. Carpenter gives us upon this subject, he tells us that the official returns of the Inspector-General of the British army in Bengal, "for the first six months of 1838, show that the average daily percentage of sick belonging to the Temperance Society was $3\frac{2}{3}$, while

the daily percentage among the remainder was 10 1-5." The best medical writers upon tropical climates have but one opinion upon this subject.

Among the many and overwhelming facts which are given, showing the effects of alcoholic drinks upon laboring men in hot situations, we quote only the following:

"In the manufacture of 23 millions of bricks, the abstinent averaged each season 35,131 over the beer drinkers. The head of a firm, employing between one and two thousand men in the manufacture of machinery, reports that he allows nothing but water on his premises, and that in the summer time the men engaged in the strongest work, such as strikers to the heavy forges, drink water very copiously. In general, the men who drink water are really more active, do more work, and are more healthy than the workmen who drink fermented liquors. The same testimony is adduced from large numbers of laborers in harvest fields, whose work for a succession of years has been carefully compared with that of those using stimulants,

and the conclusion is very much in favor of the abstinent workman both as regards the amount of work and the condition of the laborer, and the economy of the work, allowing compensation for the drink which had been relinquished."

In this article there is not space, nor is it perhaps necessary to detail the immense array of evidence in favor of abstinence brought forward from forges, foundries, glass and gas works, and other laborious pursuits; but the following is so appropriate to the subject of this paper that it must not be omitted:

"A vessel on her passage from New South Wales to England sprung a leak, and the continued labor at the pumps of the crew, officers and passengers, was necessary during the remainder of the passage, three months, to keep her afloat. At first, the men were greatly fatigued at the termination of their "spell" at the pumps; and after drinking their allowance of grog, would "turn in" without taking a proper supply of nourishment. The consequence was, that their

vigor was decidedly diminishing, and their feeling of fatigue of course increasing, as our physiological knowledge would lead us to expect. Coffee and Cocoa were substituted for the grog—a pot mess of these beverages being provided, with biscuit and meat at the conclusion of every watch. The consequence was, that the men felt inclined for a good meal off the latter, their vigor returned, their fatigue diminished, and after twelve weeks of incessant and severe labor, (with no interval longer than four hours,) the ship was brought into port with all on board of her in as good condition as they had ever been in their lives.”

If then the use of alcoholic drink renders the human frame more susceptible to cold in cold climates, brings upon it disease and death in warm climates, imparts neither muscular nor nervous matter, and unfits the system for continued labor, why should it be continued, even though it brought no other evils? But are these impairments and diminutions of usefulness all its effects?

There being no good reason for the retention of the

grog ration, the inconveniences and insecurity, to which it subjects a ship's company, would be sufficient motive for its abolition. The space now devoted to the spirit stores could be given to the increased accommodation of the ship's company, or to the storage of provision, water and wood. For a cruise of six months a frigate carries three thousand gallons of whisky; a sloop of war carries twelve hundred. The risk of fire would be diminished by the removal of so much inflammable matter, and the ship relieved from the many annoying precautions necessary to protect it from this danger. For instance, when the spirit room of a vessel is about being filled, the alcoholic vapor pervades all the apartments; she smells like a distillery, and it becomes a necessary precaution to extinguish the lights and fires. In the larger ships, the spirit room is in the vicinity of the apartments of officers, and all these being below the reach of daylight, renders the constant use of candles necessary. Every time the spirit room is opened, six times a day, once to take out, and once to return the grog tub at each serving, the occupation of the inmates of these

apartments is interrupted by the extinction of the lights. This would of course not be an inconvenience to be complained of, only as an attendant upon a provision not only unnecessary, but useless and highly injurious; but that it is no slight annoyance will be readily appreciated by those in the habit of any continuous useful occupation or study.

But we will proceed to notice more positive evils. Long before the temperance spirit exercised the influence which at present belongs to it, and before the idea of abolishing the spirit ration was much debated or generally entertained, the writer was in the habit of observing the general effects upon the ship's company of the three times served daily allowance of grog, and it early led him to doubt the advantages of this long established usage. After taking their grog, and particularly that portion served before the morning meal, the faces of the men are seen to be flushed and turgid, their tongues voluble and their tempers irritable. Of this evident condition of artificial morbid excitement, the stomach and digestive organs participate, and the first effect is the ingestion of an unnecessary amount

of food; and of this excitement and overloading the system the consequences must be the generation of a variety of diseases, enfeebling the service and charging the government hospitals with a heavy burden of chronic invalids. Let gentlemen who are not strictly abstinent men, but who are in the occasional habit of taking a glass of spirit and water, ask themselves what would be the effect upon their habits and health, of taking a glass of spirit and water three times regularly every day, and beginning before breakfast? Let them ask themselves what would be their opinion of the habits of an acquaintance whom they saw devoted to such a custom? The expenses incident to the disease generated, directly or indirectly, by the grog ration, would render its abolition a measure of economy, even with a substitution of some other article, and an increase of seamen's wages.

It is unnecessary to enter into an argument to show that the grog ration must be promotive of intemperance, for should any dispute this, it is hardly to be supposed that any argument would convince them. No justification of so dangerous a usage is found in

the facts that it is optional with each person to draw grog or not; that it is a matter of volition whether he become a drunkard or not, and that intoxication is followed by its appropriate punishment. Men are so much under the influence of surrounding circumstances that the government cannot be permitted to avoid its responsibilities by such pleas as these. In civil life, it is a matter of every day observation that men whose habits are not fixed, use stimulating drinks or not, according to the society in which they happen to be at the time. But when whisky is legitimated and justified by statutes and dignified by formalities and ceremonies, its dangerous power is entirely lost sight of, its use becomes respectable, and one of the preservatives of good habits — shame for bad — is removed. Observation will show that the habits of men, as regards intemperance, will be greatly influenced by the views entertained by the officers under whom they serve. Unfortunately there are officers who, entertaining the erroneous notion that sailors are an exception to human nature, honestly believe and encourage the idea that true sailors must get drunk and must be

flogged. A commander of one of our ships of war, upon its being reported to him that a certain seaman had returned from a visit to the shore sober, observed openly — “Well, he must be a d—d rascal, and will run the first chance.” In that ship the punishments for intoxication, and its consequences, were most frequent; the crime and the flogging were not looked upon as being disgraceful, but as a natural circumstance incident to the service. The very men who, under such influences, felt it to be right and proper to get drunk, when occasion offered, being brought under the direction of officers who manifested, by a manner of disgust and contempt, their opinion of the low position in the scale of humanity occupied by the drunkard, had their pride aroused, and in some instances voluntarily reformed themselves. This shows that the sailor is susceptible of elevation of character, even under unfavorable circumstances.

Under the official sanction, many go to the grog tub, who under other circumstances would blush to be seen there. Should a youth, new to the service, in obedience to principles which have been inculcated

upon him, or to a proper caution and prudence, avoid the tub around which his associates are crowded, the grog laws find many active disciples to aid their influence in his conversion. The influence of numbers and example is against his continued resistance; he is hunted by the insults, jeers and censure of those to whom his abstinence is a tacit reproof, and against the proverbial tyranny of a safe majority — there is no refuge, and the grog-drinking crowd, as at the roll of the drum they gather around the tub, welcome the reluctant youth, over whose good sense and better resolutions it has triumphed. It is the most heartless tyranny for the government to enact punishments for the drunkard, its laws and usages have thus been educating. Such inconsistency and such tyranny become the most unjustifiable cruelty if, as scientific writers now assert, intemperance is an uncontrollable physical and moral disease, requiring medical treatment rather than physical punishment.

In a recent treatise upon intemperance, by Dr. Hills, of Ohio, it is asserted that the habitual drinker is as much and as certainly the victim of disease as one

with phthisis pulmonalis, another with ascites, or another with gangrene. He says:

“I know not why we should thus delay our ideas of the existence of bodily ailment in this any more than in other affections, until the closing scenes of secondary stages are developed. In their contemplation we go back to the remotest period, when the slightest variation from a state of health becomes manifest; and why not in this? If we do, will we not finally arrive at that point when, from the occasional use of intoxicating beverages, a thirst for more is produced—a constant longing for the repetition of its influence? * * Thus it is rendered *probable*, if not *certain*, that the ordinary opinion upon this subject as to cause and effect, should be reversed. That habitual drinking is an involuntary consequence of diseased action, that may have been started by occasional voluntary libations, is true; but that the habit is a true and legitimate consequence and evidence of disease.”

Such views being correct, the government is put in the position of disseminating a most destructive poison, and then scourging the backs of those unfortunate enough to be infected by it; and if the subject is still one of doubt, worthy of scientific discussion and investigation, the government has no moral right to assume the question settled, and to blindly take the hazard of propagating the disease or of punishing its victims.

It is not often that the victims of legalized grog-drinking have the disposition, the opportunity or the ability to testify to the steps by which their ruin has been accomplished; but if one speaks, he utters the experience of multitudes, and the following remarks made by a criminal before a court-martial for an offense, the result of drunkenness, are sufficient in themselves to mark the grog ration with criminality. They were furnished the writer by a talented and cultivated friend, who was at the time an officer of the Navy and member of the court before which the culprit was arraigned. The substance only of the defense is given:

“I was brought up in the county of —, in the State of —. At the age of 12, I went to sea; shipped in the service; rose rapidly, and as soon as I was of legal age received the rate of ordinary seamen. *I never had tasted liquor* until that time. My shipmates persuaded me to draw my ration. I did not wish to do so, but thinking it more manly and seamanlike to drink my grog, I was induced to do it. I forced myself to swallow the whisky. The effect was stupefying and disagreeable in the extreme. The other boys laughed at me. Gradually I acquired the taste for rum. The first time I went on shore, I got “*mad drunk.*” Step followed step. When paid off, I gave full vent to my *new* passion. *I was ashamed to go home.* In a few days, plundered, stripped and beaten half to death in —, I shipped again. To cure the *horrors*, I got drunk on board of the receiving ship, was insolent to the officer on deck, and put in irons. Through the forbearance of the officer, I was let off without a court-martial. Nothing can equal the misery I endured while lying in irons expecting to be tried for my life. I firmly resolved, and

most solemnly swore before God, never again to taste rum. For twenty or thirty days after I was released from confinement, I was enabled to keep my resolution, and when the drum tolled for grog, I would remain at the top to keep out of the way of temptation. In an evil moment, I lingered one day on the main deck, while the men were drinking their rations. I was overcome. *I drank too.* It was like pouring oil on a fire. I could no longer contend with my appetite. I parted with all that I could dispose of to procure rum from shore. The ration was not enough for me. When I got to sea, I was forced to keep sober, but a few days after our passage to —— I again got liquor enough to make me drunk, was mutinous, tried for my life, and received in commutation of death one hundred lashes. From that time I have become more and more the slave of drunkenness, and I now stand before this honorable court a second time in jeopardy of my life. I have nothing to say in my defense except what you have heard. I throw myself on your mercy; but I beg you to reflect upon the causes which have brought me to my present miserable

condition. I was trained up to drunkenness *by that very government* which has pronounced the crime of which itself is the *cause* a high offense. I am to be punished for violating laws which, with one hand, tempt and lead to sin, and with the other prepare a halter for their own victim. Give the sailor rum, make him a drunkard from his *youth* up, and when you have fully confirmed him in his evil habits, *then hang him* for doing the very act toward which the whole system of education necessarily tends. Before God, I solemnly believe and honestly assert that I should never have been guilty of the offense for which I expect to suffer had there never been such a place as a spirit-room, and such a destroying poison as it deals out. *At the door of the government will be my blood.* I leave myself in your hands. Your duty is to make me an example, and I wish that I shall be justly dealt with. I should be willing to suffer the utmost if I thought that my sad case would be the means of banishing whisky from among my ship-mates." This man was sentenced to ——— lashes.

The evil effects of the grog ration are not limited to the men. By inducing degrading habits in the mass of the naval community, some of this unhappy influence must be extended to the officers themselves.

The importance and interest of their nautical and military duties become almost secondary to the necessity of watching and guarding a drunken crew. Often are they obliged to prowl through sinks of iniquity in search of men who, in drunken recklessness, have abandoned their duty and broken their laws; and often, too, are their men seen wounded, bloody and dirty, conducted in charge of their officers through the streets of foreign cities. Officers in constant contact with such beings must, to a great degree, lose their respect for their kind, and will almost involuntarily descend to a language and manner discreditable to themselves and unworthy of their position. Losing sight of the influences which have produced such effects, they learn to regard the sailor as a being *sui generis*, and below the elevating influences to which humanity is obedient. An intelligent and efficient officer, one who appreciates all the mischief of the

grog ration, in speaking of this subject remarked, that his most constant and harassing duties were those which imposed upon him the necessity of playing the part of constable and jailor to a drunken crew. If the grog ration promotes drunkenness, (and who can doubt it,) then is the grog ration mainly responsible for these disgusting scenes. Its abolition would not, probably, put an end at once to all this mischief, because the service has yet to recover from all the evil which has been done; but so long as the grog ration is continued, there is no commencement of improvement, and no hope for it; but when it is terminated, there is much reason to believe that such an elevation and tone will be given to the service, that men disposed to lawlessness, riot and intoxication, men worthy of the lash and needing it, will be driven from the service, or find themselves compelled to amend while in it, and officers would learn to look upon sailors as beings not necessarily associated with the grog tub, drunkenness and the cats.

If the grog ration contributes nothing to the power of labor, affords no protection against inclement or

exhausting climates, why retain it? If, on the contrary, it promotes fatigue and exhaustion, begets moral and physical disease, fosters drunkenness, embarrasses duties, endangers and annoys ships, leads to court-martials, fills hospitals and taxes the government, degrades men and officers, why not at once abolish it? Shall the government continue to sanction and sustain all these evils? shall it legitimate obstacles and barriers to the elevation of the character of the sailor, rather than accord in the tendencies of our institutions to elevate and dignify those who live under them? Shall it adapt the naval service to the character of the respectable young men of our country, or shall it invite into the service the low and mercenary refugees from foreign services, and thus bring our young men down to their standard?

The grog ration and many of our usages are blindly conformed to the character of the British seamen, or *tar*, as novelists and poets prefer to call him, without any reference to the different conditions of the two countries, and two peoples.

The British sailor, however respectable the individual

may be, belongs to a class so low in the artificial scale of aristocratic institutions that vice can scarcely place him socially lower, and virtue has no power to elevate him to social respectability. He is, therefore, beyond the power of true influential principles. We have no such fixed class from which our seamen can come. Every one feels that his respectability and position in society depend very much upon himself, and the American sailor, after being relieved from his obligations to the service, may move in a family and social circle equal to that of any other person. Scarcely any citizen of the United States could enter the naval service, but who would be conscious of some degree of family respectability to be maintained, and, to their honor, many refuse to enter a service which inculcates vicious habits as part of its system, and requires the relinquishment of self-respect; and so long as these usages continue, we shall never have a Navy worthy of the Republic. Our principle should be, not to bring our Navy up to the standard of other Navies; but, as we have done in other things, up to the standard of the nation; and it is to be hoped that the

thirty-first Congress will begin the work by putting an end to the grog ration, and then look further into this huge bundle of time-rotten usages and antique mouldy formalities which the country has borne as a burden upon its back until the people begin to ask, *Cui bono?*

THE
Liberal Institutions of a Republic.

AN ADDRESS

WRITTEN FOR

THE IRVING LITERARY INSTITUTE, OF THE CITY OF ERIE, PA.

PREFACE.

REFORM—naval reform, is the general cry. Every rank and grade of the navy calls for it.

Those who hold the position of command say: there is no efficient discipline, and we have more trouble with officers than with men. Put two gentlemen of the highest grade in the navy on board ship—one to command the ship, and the other to command the squadron to which she belongs—and even though they both be men of good sense, and good feeling, the ill-defined position of each soon leads to discord and dissension; and, if the government is not burdened, and the service disgraced by a court-martial, one is compelled to abandon the duty which has been assigned him, and to return to his home.

“I have the command of the ship,” says one captain, “assigned me by government, and your interference is an infringement of my rights.”

“If that is your view,” says the commodore, “I am but a passenger here, and one of us had better go home.”

“Reform!” cry the subordinate grades of the line: “we have no defined rights or duties, and are old men in junior

grades, some of us, even, in that of our apprenticeship." "Reform!" cry the staff corps, "we grow old in the service, not only without any progressive rank to mark our length of service, but without any defined rank, to protect us against the assumptions and arrogance natural to military power."

Each grade has the remedy for the single defect apparent to itself, while almost the whole country cries out, in conjunction with part of the navy, "Throw the grog-tub and the cats overboard, and all is right." This is sheer quackery; it is treating the single symptoms, by a pretended panacea, while the diseased constitution is untouched.

There is an entire want of conformity between the organization of the navy, and the character of the people and country to which it belongs; and sooner or later, one must be brought into harmony with the other; the sooner the better, for all concerned.

We have inconsiderately "put new wine into old bottles;" and patched an old and rotten garment with new cloth. We have put the new and elevated energies of our people into the old forms and institutions of past ages.

The remarks of this lecture, upon the evil influence of our naval institutions must not be construed into a sweeping declaration, that every individual is corrupted by them. Forms of government, forms of religion, despotism, monarchy, aristocracy, Mahometanism, may all be attacked, as not the best institutions, without any imputation upon those who live under, advocate, and adhere to them. While there are honorable, upright, and intelligent men in every

grade of the service, its organization is not such as to give to these qualities their proper influence — the same as they would have in civil life — or to prevent the undue ascendancy of those of imperfect character.

To effect reform in the navy, the subject must be taken up by the people ; if left to navy boards, it is too apt to be lost in the influence of preconceived opinions. The general principles of naval government, make too low an estimate of the material it deals with ; there are not appeals enough to man's higher nature. Napoleon is an authority, worth listening to, upon this subject ; he understood the matter when he said,

“Mankind are, in the end, always governed by superiority of intellectual qualities, and none are more sensible of this than the military profession. When, on my return from Italy, I assumed the dress of the institute, and associated with men of science, I knew what I was doing ; I was sure of not being misunderstood by the lowest drummer in the army,”

This being the principle, it is our duty to get the best ability in the highest place.

ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN OF THE IRVING LITERARY INSTITUTE.

In reply to the invitation, extended to me by your Society upon a former occasion, I had the honor to write you a lecture upon subjects, in my opinion, appropriate to the purposes of your organization, and being willing, so far as lies in my power, to contribute to your efforts for the public good, I again submit to you an essay, which, in default of other and more competent respondents to your call, may aid in the accomplishment of your views.

I have chosen as the subject of my remarks, "THE NAVAL INSTITUTIONS OF A REPUBLIC."

Principles and Facts.

A service of nearly a quarter of a century in our own navy has afforded me the opportunities for observing to some extent, and reflecting upon, the nature, peculiarities and wants of naval institutions. The correctness of my judgment, and the feasibility of my views, it is for time and others to determine.

Feeling it to be my duty, as an honest citizen, to communicate to the people — the real owners of the navy — facts which my official position has enabled me to learn, and which the interests of both navy and people demand should be generally known, I have done that duty and leave the matter with you.

The subject is one of great and varied interest to this nation — of interest in a political and pecuniary point of view. All that concerns the condition and constitutional organization of the individual states of this confederacy is considered of general interest; and particularly would it be so, if there were any features of an individual state, inconsistent with, or adverse to our principles of republican government.

Your navy is a most important state; it belongs to you all; it is limited by no boundaries short of the entire world; it represents you amid the gilded thrones of Europe — in the distant isles of the ocean — amid Arctic savages and snows — and to all nations and peoples on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of this vast continent. In a pecuniary point of view, the navy claims the attention of prudent and practical men. The annual expenditure of this nation for military purposes, is more than half the entire expenditure of the government. The annual expenditure for the navy alone, is more than one-fourth of the whole national cost — including that of Congress, the Executive, the Judiciary, Foreign Ministers, and miscellaneous.

The annual expense of your navy is more than the annual cost of the six New England states, the great state of New York, and New Jersey together. Then, surely, such an institution is worth your attention; and it is the duty of the people to see that so important an organization is not one which defies the principles of our government, and gives the lie to all the political theories of our constitution.

The history of the navy, or of any similar institution, is not alone the record of its deeds, be they glorious or ignoble. Its deeper and more significant history is to be found by an inquiry into the influence it has had upon principles; in destroying or modifying those in existence, or, in creating new ones; its influence upon human rights, political institutions, and the relations of men to each other.

The capture of an enemy's ship or squadron is justly a subject of national and patriotic pride; it is enthusiastically hailed by loud huzzas, from one end of the Union to the other. Let us beware, lest, amid the rejoicing, we lose sight of some false principle, stealing upon us in the noise, the fire, and the smoke, marring the beauty of republicanism, and corrupting the purity of our institutions; let us beware, lest the victory has a dearer purchase than blood and treasure, and be careful that the flashing glory do not sink into a darkened shame.

When history was written for the gratification of great personages, it charged upon republics ingratitude for public services. Now, that history is being

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written for the people, it discovers that individuals may value their services too highly, and cry out ingratitude, unless, in addition to the just award of glory, their country places itself, its institutions, and its fortunes at their feet. When people have permitted their gratitude to go thus far, we have Cæsars, Cromwells, and Napoleons. In like manner, a grateful nation may, in the glory of an institution, lose sight of the increasing despotism of its principles, which, worse than personal tyranny, live and grow from age to age; die not with the life of any individual, but require either a violent convulsion, or years of labor and patient perseverance to loosen their hold.

Under a monarchical and aristocratic form of government, a navy, like an army, or the church, may be organized, to meet two purposes; one, the service of the state, or the propagation of the gospel; the other, that of making places and provision for the members of aristocratic and exclusive classes; and in such an arrangement, the rules and regulations of government and discipline will be as much to keep up the prestige of aristocracy, as to affect a healthful and efficient organization.

Very different should be the state of affairs, under a republic. In it, there should be no exclusive classes to provide for, and all its rules and discipline might be concentrated in effecting the most efficient service for the state.

In this singleness of object, a republic, if it remained true to its character, would have great advantages over an aristocracy, in the creation of a powerful navy; and just so far as it condescends to imitate the organization of a monarchical institution, does it yield its high position, fetter its own power, and dwarf its greatness; it sacrifices the nation, and national interests, to individuals and exclusive classes.

The population of a republican navy consists of the efficient power of the crews, or men, and officers to direct and control it; both, equally citizens of the commonwealth which they serve, in different, but associated capacities. The arrangements should be such, as would secure in all grades, the best talent, and mental, and physical energies which the country can produce. The relations between these grades, their dependence, one upon the other, should be just that

which would best accomplish the national purpose, for which the navy is organized and paid, and in nothing should the one be made tributary to the personal pride and arrogance of the other. Definite laws should protect the rights of the inferior, or commanded class, and restrict the exercise of the controlling power to its legitimate use.

So long as a naval establishment observes these legitimate relations, and is in harmony with, and subordinate to, the political institutions of the country, its character will be both republican and efficient. But mark how stealthily, gradually, and insidiously change may come over such a body, even if originally organized upon proper principles. The class exercising military authority, is too apt to lose sight of its true official character, representing the laws of the land — an honorable and dignified station — it learns to feel that all the pomp and parade of high station is a personal tribute to those who receive it, and a distinction to them, as of superior blood to other men, with an intrinsic claim to higher privileges. From this error, it is an easy transition, to exact a blind submission

to every whim and caprice, as a necessary part of military subordination and discipline; to believe that they have no responsibilities, and their subordinates no rights; until, finally, it becomes more than a vague idea, that ships are built, men paid, and the navy kept up, chiefly for the benefit of the influential classes in the navy. Questions are considered, not so much in reference to the interests of the country, as in reference to the institution. Innovation is dreaded, and opposed, lest it should shake exclusive privileges. The broad principle of patriotism is narrowed to that of class interest; and any one who, faithful to the navy, would throw the protections of reform around its honorable members, and make the whole an honest, and working institution; any one who, with honest motives undertakes to point out existing evils and their mode of correction, does it at the risk of being stigmatized as a traitor to the service, and must be content to be hooted at by those, who, like fowl birds, do not see the corruptions of the nest to which they cling.

Such are the gradual changes, which, without the constant vigilance of the people, may influence a

naval establishment, even if it had a fair beginning, which ours never had; and when this change has been effected, new principles have been introduced, entirely at war with republicanism. A privileged class has been instituted, to whom a large share of the wealth and honors of the country belong, irrespective of any claim of merit or service. The general character of our institutions has been departed from, and as positive a nobility created, as though its members received the titles of Lord, Earl, Marquis, or Duke — a more obnoxious nobility than belonged to kingly France, when her titles, instead of being the inheritance of families, were the meed of distinguished service. A subordinate instrument of the government has thus become an independent institution, and, without altering one word of the constitution of our country, principles have grown up contrary to its whole spirit and purpose.

Such evil influences are more operative during the quiescence of peace, than during the activities of war. In war, the value of every grade, and of each man in every grade, is felt; the work and the purpose for

which they are put there, are more plainly before them all; their responsibility to their country is more apparent, and commanding officers feel that their own position, honor and glory are dependent upon the hearty co-operation of all departments of the ships or squadrons placed in their charge: the instruments of success have then their proper weight in the work.

In peace, on the contrary, there is no such conservative dependence; there is no definite and great object before the eyes of all, to which their energies, in proper relation and subordination, are to be directed, and for which those relations have been established. It is merely seen that one set of men has great privileges and power; and that another set is subjected to the former; relations which, as we have seen, are apt to grow into false views of the position of each.

Nabal Law.

In the year 1800, at the very commencement of this century, an act was passed by Congress, for the "better government of the Navy of the United States," and, incredible as it may appear, characteristic of stagnation in the midst of progress, this law of more than half a century's duration is that which governs the navy now, without a line or word of alteration, excepting the repeal, by the last Congress, of those portions which authorized the punishment of flogging, and the continuance of this improvement is now strenuously resisted. If this law had no greater age than that of its enactment by our Congress, it would still leave the navy far behind the progress of a progressive age, and in this respect there would be a want of harmony between the navy and the country; but when we come to examine this law, we find that it wears but the mask of the republic, and behind this will be seen the wrinkled features of a barbarian antiquity.

The two first articles open the law with injunctions

to commanding officers to observe the duties of honor, morality and religion, but no penalty for a disregard of the injunction is mentioned—of course any attention to them is optional. The third article relates to offences in which subordinate officers and privates may be implicated, and becomes a little more vigorous. It reads as follows:

“Any officer, or other person in the navy, who shall be guilty of oppression, cruelty, fraud, profane swearing, drunkenness, or any other scandalous conduct tending to the destruction of good morals, shall, if an officer, be cashiered, or suffer such other punishment as a court martial shall adjudge: if a private, shall be put in irons, or flogged, at the discretion of the captain, not exceeding twelve lashes.”

When we come to examine the nature of courts martial, it will be evident that this pompous and cumbersome machinery is little likely to be brought to bear against “profane swearing, conduct tending to the destruction of good morals,” or even drunkenness: and public observation teaches that much of this part of the law is a dead letter. Not so that which

prescribed the lash. The reports made to the navy department, and called for by Congress, show that, whilst the law permitted this punishment, it was dealt out with an indiscriminating severity, little, if any, modified by the character of the offence, and with a recklessness which should forever prohibit its restoration. The cats and the colt were relieving substitutes for energy, thought, and judgment in the correction of vice. It was much more easy to say "give him a dozen with the cats," than to exercise an intelligent and judicious prudence in selecting the remedy for crime.

The remaining articles, relating to such varied offences as "breach of duty, disobedience of orders, cowardice, negligence, disaffection, treachery, spies, murder, mutiny, sedition, desertion," have one uniform termination—"death!! or such other punishment as a court martial shall adjudge."

I would particularly call attention to the 31st and 32d articles, as characteristic of the enlightenment and spirit of the whole code.

The thirty-first says: "Any master-at-arms, or other person of whom the duty of master-at-arms is

required, who shall refuse to receive such prisoners as shall be committed to his charge, or having received them, shall suffer them to escape, or dismiss them without proper authority, shall suffer in such prisoner's stead, or be punished at the discretion of a court martial."

The idea of hanging a jailer because his prisoners escape, is nautically summary.

The whole of this truly wonderful code for the government of the navy is comprised within five octavo pages. The minute and specific law under which our army is governed, composes a volume of over three hundred pages, and on the front of this book it is written:—"Every officer of the army will be furnished with a copy; and it is enjoined upon them strictly to observe the rules therein set forth; and every change, alteration, or departure therefrom, unless sanctioned by the War Department, is *positively forbidden.*" Such a code leaves but little room for the tyranny, the caprice, and the dissension of individual opinion. But on the meager pages of naval law, at the 32d article, it is written:

“All crimes committed by persons belonging to the navy, which are not specified in the foregoing articles, shall be punished according to the laws and customs in such cases at sea.”

Here is a broad latitude for the exercise of a capricious tyranny. Who is to be the judge of the laws and customs, when every commanding officer makes, to some extent, his own laws and customs, and the internal regulations of each ship may differ as widely as though they belonged to different services? If crimes were of sufficient frequency to have established usages, they admitted of definition and specification. This regulation unbinds the hand of power, and leaves the service open to capricious opinion. Under so loose and undefined a system, every variety of view and character impresses itself upon your national ships. One officer may encourage sobriety, morality, and religion; another pronounce these humbugs, but willingly give his men liberty to visit the shore for a drunken frolic, and then flog them for the language and conduct of intoxication.

A specimen chosen from the reports of punishment

from different ships, shows how absurd and unequal is the punishment of naval crime.

From one vessel we have a report of seventy-three cases of punishment in two months, for varied offences, and the record shows a uniform allowance of twelve lashes, the limit of the law, to every offence, with the exception of two, and in one of these the crime is "suspicion of theft," and for this the unfortunate suspected received six lashes with the cats on his bare back. From another ship we have the same offences punished with only six lashes on the bare back; and in a third the flogging is given over the shirt. Such are the different degrees of criminality as measured by punishment, attached to the same offences in ships of the same service. Such is the character of the code of law, which, without revision, amendment, or alteration, has governed the navy for more than half a century, and which, with the exception of the abolition of flogging, still governs it. Destitute of rewards and encouragements, destitute of securities for the natural rights of men, it offers no inducements for the respectable American seaman to enter the navy.

Although he may not be flogged now, he has nothing to look to beyond his subordinate station; and may, though characterized by every good quality, be confined, for months, within a few yards of the shore, to the narrow limits of a man-of-war, and tantalized by seeing officers and officers' servants hourly passing in and out of the ship, enjoying a freedom denied to him, who finds the floating castles of your country but prisons for their defenders.

The history of mutinies, from those of the Nore and Spithead, down to those in our own service, shows that one of their most effective causes has been the confinement of men on board ship; one of the first demands is for liberty to visit the shore; and the fact that all authorities, from officers of ships up to ministers and kings, have been compelled to yield to those mutinies, is proof that discipline cannot be effected by severity; and also that law should secure to ship's companies the privilege, when duty would permit, of freely visiting the shore. The opportunity of getting out of a ship under such circumstances becomes an intoxicating excitement, and leads to excess; whereas, if the privilege of liberty,

like that of food, was guarantied by law to the deserving, it would become a natural enjoyment, instead of a morbid excitement.

I have seen the strongest men tremble with agitation, at the privilege of visiting the shore for a few hours, after long confinement on board ship.

Can desertion, under such circumstances, be a matter of surprise? The very human nature of men is driven to crime by the imperfection of the law, which then comes down with its bloody penalties.

With such an organization can you expect to create an American Navy, from such stuff as American citizens are made of? Would it not be a disparagement of our boasted American character if you could? The best tribute to our country, and severest commentary upon our navy, is found in the fact that so many foreigners enter our naval service.

If it were possible that such a code as governs our navy had been devised by wise heads, after careful deliberation and with an intelligent adaptation to the institutions of our country, and the character of our people, it would still be likely to require alteration and

improvement; but, I may ask, does this law bear one single feature of our country in all its changes from the stern landing, upon a wintry rock, of the freedom-seeking Pilgrims, to the waving of our national banner over the golden hills and pearl-gemmed waters of our new Pacific ocean state?

Its Old Age,

It does not. This code of law is older than our government, older than our people, older than modern civilization! As a pretended American law, it is an imposture, disgracing our statute books. It is a blind copy, almost word for word, of the British articles of war, framed under George 2d, in 1749, one hundred and three years ago, but actually based upon, and embodying the ideas, condition of things, and spirit existing at the remote origin of the Royal Navy. This is your American, republican code of naval law. But were it a code proposed or devised at the present day for the British Navy, it would still have no applicability to a single feature of our country.

One nation has its people, artificially separated into

ranks and classes. Those who serve, are regarded as of another blood from those who command.

The other nation acknowledges no difference between men, but that which shall be made by the inequality of talents and virtue. It takes its highest functionaries from the most humble occupation; and might find its chief magistrate in one who had been a common sailor, as it has in one who had been a common soldier, provided he had the vigor of intellect for the duties of the station; it acknowledges no government of hereditary succession, or divine right, which may make a chief ruler of a feeble infant, or a weak woman.

The seamen of one nation belong to a fixed rank, or class, so low in the social scale as to be below the sense of degradation, the stimulus of ambition, or the protections of pride. The seamen of our country may represent a respectability equal to that of their commanders, or civil rulers. Such broad distinctions would alone be sufficient to prevent the adaptation of a British aristocratic, monarchal code to our republican navy.

Here is a picture of the royal navy which furnishes the code; not drawn by foreign prejudice, but given by a Briton himself:

“Founded at a period when slavery was universally tolerated, from liberty being comparatively speaking, unknown, the first record we possess of what may fairly be termed a royal navy, goes back to the reign of the 7th Henry, who, in 1488, caused the Great Harry to be built and launched.

“The arbitrary measures which, at that remote period, directed every department of the state, naturally extended to the maritime service, and while the brutal and irrational system of impressment formed the means of manning the navy, the allowance of pay and provision were worthy the system which provided the seamen to consume them.

“Of all the anomalies which have proved a reproach to the British constitution, and an inherent cause of gangrene and disorder, the press-gang has been the most odious in its origin, and the least excusable from its results. Under this remnant of feudal villanage, the arm of indiscriminating violence was made to sweep

up for the noblest uses of the country, all who were so poor, so ignorant, so unfriended, or so vicious as to be thrown at large upon the highways of the empire, without the protection of those inconsistent immunities which arbitrarily acquit the wealthy from protecting their own possessions, to force this onerous task upon those who have nothing to protect. In a community where reason had the slightest voice, or justice the least authority, it would naturally be imagined that those possessing nothing to make life cheerful, should, at any rate, be spared the cares which Providence has fixed as the alloy of prosperity.

“In contradiction of every axiom of this equitable nature, the abject and friendless were seized for no crime, but their poverty and insignificance, and imprisoned in our men-of-war, after no trial, save the capricious will of our inebriated master of the press-gang. Thus a number of outraged individuals were collected in our fleets. If they behaved well, fought the battles of their country, and drudged unrepiningly through the severe life of privations, which alone the navy has to offer, they become valuable to their

tyrants, and thus unwittingly riveted around their own necks, the chain of that servitude which has to gall them through life.

“When the pen of truth records the atrocities of such a system in the nineteenth century, which still witnesses its inactive existence, the mind, unaccustomed to dwell upon such a complicated detail of villany, can, at first, scarcely credit the demonstration of such facts. But the press-gang was merely the first step to the barbarities which, in the Royal Navy of Great Britain, ignorance and helplessness have suffered on the one side, and cruelty and power have inflicted on the other.

“Our fleets having been manned by a force so resistless and relentless, the unhappy wretches imprisoned on board, were treated in every manner befitting felons condemned to so awful a punishment.

“The unoffending being captured by armed violence, for the naval service of the state, was only allowed, but at rare intervals, and in many cases, never again to land upon that shore with which every thing worth estimating in life, was connected. From the hour he became an involuntary seaman, he was too often cut

off from all communication with friend or relative, and generally sent to an unhealthy climate.

“There, predisposed to disease from the sudden transition, life was either lost, or rendered merely a burden for the future; exposed to a duty harrassing in the extreme, he was placed under the absolute disposal of a petty monarch, whose slightest caprice, was indisputable law; yet, under all these oppressive afflictions he possessed no appeal from any wrong, save to a code of jurisprudence, so severe, that every line appears to have been traced in blood, and every other penalty is a shameful death !”

In addition to these press-gang victims, the jails were emptied to man the fleets; and the code of laws devised for these captured slaves and jail felons of a despotic government, is that which we have condescended to adopt for the government of a navy of voluntarily enlisted citizens.

But the picture is not yet complete; the poor wretch felled beneath the club of the press-gang, and torn perhaps forever, from his family and home, with the fiendish humanity worthy of such a pandemonium,

has the intoxicating draft presented as the balm for his sorrows, that his whirling brain may lose, in this new frenzy, the madness of his wrongs, and all the respect of the man be sunk to the level of his associate felons, to whom the same cup comes as the familiar solace of vice. All this you have borrowed, too; the spirit-room and the rum cask, still disgrace your national vessels, and the roll of the martial drum is daily heard, calling your crews around the "grog-tub," to receive the potion which shall send them away with inflamed bodies and fired minds, ready for the quarrels, the insolence and insubordination to their officers, which, heretofore has consigned their backs to the "cats," and still turns the sailor over to handcuffs, imprisonment, and the sentry's charge.

The whole system is, clearly, one calculated to manufacture crime, to degrade man, to nurture the spirit of cruelty, and to supply the food for its exercise. The degradation is not confined to the masses; the contact of officers with such men, the disgusting criminal police duties, growing out of the those relations, have a deteriorating influence upon all. How long

shall this system be permitted to continue? The people of this nation are responsible for its existence, and every citizen who does not do his utmost for a reformation, is responsible for the evils he may deplore and condemn.

I know that our naval triumphs are pointed to as a reason for a continuance of the system under which they have been won. They only prove the difficulty of eradicating all that is noble in man; under the worst influences, and after the loss of every other virtue, he still has left that animal courage, which leads him to desire and strike for victory. The navies of Europe, under the worst possible institutions, have won glorious victories. The debased machine soldiery of Europe has won splendid triumphs, but they were as nothing, compared to the magic glories of Napoleon, who peopled his army with citizens, and opened the way from the ranks to the marshal's baton. The history of our glory does not prove that crime, intoxication, and degradation are essential to glory, whilst, upon the contrary, all history does prove, that the more elevated in tone and character a military body, the greater are its incentives

to action, the less the trouble of its government, and the more sure the probabilities of success.

The routinists of Europe were frequent in their predictions that our militia would always be easily scattered by defeat. The events of the late Mexican war, dissipated their theories in astonishment, and then the press of England proclaimed that the American army, was an army of Knights. Why, from the same materials, cannot we have a navy of respectable American citizens? We can, and we will.

Ships without "Cats."

But where will the reforming influence come from? Whose business is it? It is the business of none so much as the people, and they must impress their wishes upon their representatives in the national legislature; otherwise, what is the course the matter takes? Persons interested in a particular measure of reform bring it singly and alone to the notice of some member of Congress; he is pressed with what he regards as more important business, and which may, in reality, be more important than the single measure to

which his attention is asked, but can scarcely be more so than the general defects from which the single evil springs. He is referred to some other gentleman, who is more prominent in naval matters, and this latter, perhaps, owes his prominency to special views, derived from some relative, or intimate friend, in the service, and is already prepossessed against the innovation. The proposition can scarcely get a hearing. Suppose, however, it advances a step farther, and attracts general attention; it may then, with the best intentions, be referred to the executive, and by this to a navy board, with all its prejudices arrayed against change and improvement. "Boards are screens," says Jeremy Bentham. Thus reform revolves in a maelstrom which finally swallows it up.

That gentlemen who, from childhood, have grown up under the present system strongly advocate its continuance, should not cast any imputation, either upon their intelligence, or the honesty of their opinions. There is nothing which so controls the judgment and the opinions of the most powerful minds as the systems and institutions under which men have had their

minds formed. It is almost an impossibility to shake off this influence. Even the restoration of the lash is strongly advocated by gentlemen in the service, of honorable and upright purposes and intelligent minds. At the first view, this seems like the irresistible testimony of practical experience. But, is it such? In all inquiries after truth, it is a principle to measure the value of testimony by the bias and influence under which it is given. These gentlemen were honestly opposed to the abolition of the lash, and, consequently, were not in that unprejudiced condition to give the reform a fair trial. Would any administration commit its peculiar principles to its opponents, however honest and intelligent, and expect them to be reported upon successfully? The enemies of a measure like this cannot give it a fair trial; and, conceding to most, honest efforts to do so, there may be some who would willingly throw odium upon the measure by creating obstacles to its success. Until the attempt to command national ships without the lash shall have been committed to those in favor of its abolition — those not bound to the notions of a lifetime — there is no

testimony upon the subject which meets the character of available evidence; it is all mere one-sided opinion. By this same kind of testimony, given by the most powerful minds and honorable men who have ever lived, it can be shown that human happiness and prosperity are dependent upon "sovereignty by divine right," hereditary aristocracy, church establishments, entailed estates, and primogeniture, all of which we deem fallacious impositions upon men; and there is no institution so glaring in its wrong but it will find advocates in those brought up under, even though oppressed by it.

One of the most distinguished and deep thinking philosophers of England has illustrated this tendency by the assertion, that if it was proposed to introduce a law authorizing the king, at pleasure, to murder any number of his subjects, there would be none to second it; but if, such a law being in existence, it was proposed to repeal it, if it passed at all, it would only be at the end of a considerable number of years; during which, every session, would have been emptied upon it the whole quiverfull of those fallacies irrelevant to

the proposition they are employed to combat, and having an equal force in their application to others.

To get at the truth of this matter, say to those officers who are not committed against reform, who are not the fossilized conservators of usages a thousand years old, "Those of you who can successfully command ships without the lash shall be promoted to the rank of command;" then permit them to recruit their own men, shut up the grog-tub, give them a system of rewards as well as punishments, suited to the character of our times and people, and then, if you take the testimony of all, you will reach the truth; its golden sands, instead of being swept on by the rushing stream of prejudice, will be deposited in the eddy of conflicting opinion and experience. Do this, and you will hear no more of the necessity for the lash for the government of American seamen.

Appointments.

Having thus indicated the defects of naval government, I will now direct your attention to the fact, that the plan upon which the navy is officered is anti-republican;

does not present the opportunity of getting into the public employ the best abilities, and may exclude those who have the best claims and the most fitness.

When appointments are to be made to the lowest grade of officers in the line of promotion — midshipmen — instead of being thrown open to general competition, and given to those who, after a proper examination, give evidence of having the highest mental, moral, and physical qualities for the station, they fall only to those youth who have the aid of family or political influence; and thus your officers are made by accident, and not by the claim of capability. Fortunately, the general character of the youth of our country is such that a majority prove worthy of their selection, and under congenial circumstances would develop high character. But the questions are: Is the plan republican? Is it the most expedient? Is it honest, either to the country, or to the youth of the country? It is neither. That plan is not republican which does not offer an equal chance of elevation to the deserving, be he the child of the chief magistrate, or of the most humble citizen. It is neither expedient, nor honest, for either

party, if it diminishes the chances of securing the best services for the use of the country, or excludes those capable of rendering them from a trial of their merits. Whilst the accident of influential friends may pension upon the country an unworthy incumbent, the friendless youth who, gifted with the qualities to honor his country, desires an opportunity of serving it, must seek it, as an enlisted hand, at the rendezvous; and once there, the stigma of caste is upon him; he is in a class from which officers are not made; encircled by a rigid barrier of inferiority, and cut off from the hope of elevation, he soon ceases to deserve it.

“Excelsior” is an impulse of the American heart, and whilst this impulse beats, our youth will not enter an employ which binds them to inferiority; consequently, by this plan, we inflict a double injury upon the country. We exclude respectable young men from the ranks of the navy, and, as above stated, we limit the chances for the best selection of officers. Suppose that when vacancies occur in the junior grade of officers, they were, in the true spirit of republicanism, thrown open to general competition, and given to

the most competent; the probabilities are that those who had the advantage of some nautical education, with other proper acquirements, would have the best chance of success; and thus would be established a principle elevating your whole naval service; instead of being the hiding place of the reprobate and criminal, those who need

———“The hangman’s whip
To haud the wretch in order,”

would find no home in your ships. They would be peopled by the energetic, the enterprising and respectable youths of the country; and with such crews and such officers, defeat in war, where victory was within the scope of human effort, would be impossible.

But what is better, your ships, instead of bearing to other nations the wretched and servile imitations of their own deformities, would carry your country abroad in all the features of its noble, beneficent, and original institutions. Navy and country would be in harmony, and your squadrons abroad evidencing more than the physical power of the nation, would throw

light into darkness, would be eloquent teachers to despots and their victims, of the humanizing influence of all institutions organized upon an acknowledgement of the rights of man; and their presence in peace would do more than their armaments in war to shake down old traditions, and to disenthral our fellow men.

Such are some of the principles for the organization of a republican navy, but we have not yet completed the work.

Seniority.

Defective and unjust as is the mode of appointment to the navy, the principle which decides promotion to the higher grades is still more defective, and is calculated to impair the good qualities which may, accidentally have been brought into the service by the young officer.

It would be thought very senseless, ridiculous and absurd, if it was proposed that those of your borough and county magistrates who lived the longest, should be the judges of the Supreme Courts of the states, and

those of the state judges who lived to the greatest age should form the Supreme Court of the United States, or that the longest-lived members of the Legislature, should be your representatives and senators in Congress. Absurd as such a scheme appears, it is precisely that upon which naval promotion is regulated.

The youth who has gained admission upon partial selection, when he arrives at twenty-one years of age, is examined as to his character and acquirements. If successful in this examination, his destiny for life is fixed. This test in his early youth determines the duties, honors and station he shall fill at thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, or more years of age, no matter how much his character may change in the mean time, or whether, being fit for one class of duties he is entirely unfit for others. The simple rule is, that the longest liver shall have the highest rank, and the most pay. Such is the seniority rule of naval promotion. The un-republican character of this rule is manifest. Honor and station being the consequence of the accident of long life, constitute a nobility as much as if they were the accidents of birth; a nobility existing independently

of the ordinary responsibilities of men. A mechanic, business, or professional man is dependent for success upon the abilities he shall establish in the community to which he belongs; so is it with your public men; and if these shall, in the progress of their lives, forfeit the confidence they had once merited, they lose the public support. Not so with the naval officer; his promotion is independent of the community to which he belongs. The officer of the highest talents and most efficiency may grow old in an inferior station, whilst the most inefficient may occupy the highest. The disastrous effects of such a system are painfully evident in our naval service, and common sense ought to have anticipated them. In the first place the ordinary incentives to continued labor and improvement are removed. What good can it do the individual? None, officially. In truth the rewards of such a system are for worthlessness and incompetency; because, if an officer becomes known to the service, and to the department, for objectionable, or incompetent qualifications, he is not put on duty, but permitted to remain at home, on good pay, whilst those of better reputation

do his duties, and yet if he lives up to a vacancy in a higher grade, unless he is eminently notorious, he steps into it with its rewards and honors. The consequence of all this is, that those officers who represent the greatest vigor of age, and of mental and physical power, are growing old in subordinate grades; some of them in that of apprenticeship. There are now many passed midshipmen, older than were Perry, McDonough, and Decatur, when they achieved the victories which have given their names to history.

Courts Martial.

But, it will be said to me, you have your judicial tribunals; your courts martial; true, we have; and fit courts for such a state, keystones of the whole arch of wrong.

In civil life, just and wise laws provide that every bias of interest shall be removed from the judicial bench, and particularly, that every influence hostile to the prisoner, shall be provided against. In courts martial just the reverse is the state of things; every

interest and prejudice of power; every influence of grade against grade, of station against station, is in operation, to say nothing of the bias of personal partialities, and enmities growing out of the relations of service.

An assemblage of men in solemn state around a table, each one glittering in gold, embroidery, and epaulets, has an imposing effect to the eye; but it is our business to look behind this covering, at the human beings and human hearts it disguises, and we shall find them with, at least, all the ordinary defects and weaknesses of our imperfect nature.

Even if there were no truth-distorting influences to act upon these defects, the habits of thought, the acquirements and the occupations of those who constitute courts martial, are not those which best qualify men for judging evidence, and sifting hidden truth from contradictory, artful, and interested testimony. Some conscientious and intelligent officers admit this themselves. The members of courts martial being always commanding officers, or those exercising military authority, if a subordinate is brought before them for

trial, or one of their own number is arraigned for acts of oppression, the question is not between two equal individuals, before a disinterested tribunal, but between two hostile principles; between that of power, seeking increase and irresponsibility, as power naturally will, and that of men, defending at least, supposed rights — and it is left to power, and the sympathies of power to decide it. It is unnecessary to say what that decision generally would be.

Further, there are grades in the service, representing your most important interests, and a conscientious performance of the duties of these grades, may bring the officers of them into conflict with those who will bear no questioning of their authority. The questions may concern matters of which the officers to whom they are entrusted, can alone judge, or, at least, can best judge, and yet these officers are never permitted to sit in courts martial, even when one of their own number may be tried for a conscientious discharge of his duty. The interests confided to these officers, require as great an amount of intelligence and acquirement, and as honorable a character, as possibly can be demanded by any

naval duty. For instance; there is a grade of officers to whom is confided the responsibility of administering the finances of your ships; each of these officers give heavy bonds for the faithful and honest performance of his duties. There is another grade to which is entrusted a responsibility, for the health and lives of ships and squadrons.

A commanding officer may do that which would endanger the public funds, and involve the disbursing officer and his bondsmen; or, he may, without cause, neglect the precautions, for the preservation of ships and their crews, from disease and death. In either case, the disbursing, or medical officer, for doing his duty, may be arraigned before a tribunal of the sympathizing associates of his prosecutor, without the presence of a single officer of his own grade, to aid in the investigation of truth, and to diminish the chances of an erroneous and unjust judgment.

The decision, a few years ago, of one of these courts was such a violation of evidence, truth, and justice — the question being between a medical and commanding officer, just such a question as we have stated—that

an indignant, and independent secretary of the navy annulled the proceedings; in a letter of caustic severity, severely censured the court, and yet, the members of that court are in high and honorable station, and eligible to other courts martial, and most probably have sat in them.

An essay published by myself ten years ago, contained the following words.

“ In the national legislature, constantly varying with the varying politics of the nation, the navy has no permanent and practically informed representation. The presiding officer of the navy department deriving his official existence from the same unstable contingencies, that existence is but temporary with the individual; consequently, each new Congress, and each new secretary derive their information from, and have their actions controlled by those engaged in service, and naturally seek their advice and directions from the highest grade in it; a grade which has the advantage too, of holding with them intimate social relations.

“ Commanders necessarily become, from these circumstances, the creators of the powers under which they

act; and the court of appeal from their own injustice; powers, which would tempt angels from their purity, and which tend to launch humanity upon an unbounded sea of corruption." Soon after the publication of this essay, I received from London, a volume by an English writer, upon this subject, from which I make the following quotations, and I do it, to show that if two persons, divided by the Atlantic, without communication, come to the same conclusions, the one respecting the iniquity of the original system, and the other respecting that of its deformed progeny, it offers some evidence that their conclusions are correct. Unless the innovating hand of reform strikes down the evil planted upon our soil, and originates improvement, there can be but little hope of our borrowing it from sources which have sent us the evil. From the writer alluded to, I quote the following remarks upon courts martial. "The only court known to naval law, by which wrongs could be redressed, and injuries punished, was a court martial. Under the blood-thirsty enactments to which we have alluded, these courts martial were composed exclusively of admirals and

captains, and if the party tried was of this rank, there naturally arose a prejudice of the court in his favor. On the contrary, if the party complaining, were beneath this rank, there naturally arose a prejudice of the court against him. All the oaths that were ever taken by mankind, are insufficient to turn back the current of the human heart; this bias might have been most abundantly made evident in numberless instances, that have since occurred. So perfectly well known has this feeling ever been, and so prevalent does it still continue to be in the British Navy, that an axiom has been generated from long experience of its truth — that no man, however completely in the right, can safely venture to bring a charge against a superior officer, without being irretrievably ruined in the service.

“That the barest semblance of justice can be retained, under such an iniquitous system is impossible and that it is to be borne without murmuring, by any but a set of helots, is equally unnatural.

“The climax of this thrice revolting mode of government, has yet to be told. Whenever, by any

interposition of Providence, some unblushing tyrant, after an uninterrupted career of cruelty and power, committed some crime so flagrant, that not even the abettors of this system could pass it over — whenever the long reluctant hand of authority was obliged to order the criminal to his trial, and even his prejudiced compeers were unable to acquit him — when all these too rarely occurring events of Providence brought about that extraordinary effort of justice, the cashiering a culprit from his rank, the convict retired awhile, it is true, from the command which he had disgraced; but some parliamentary, or other influence, was always ready to be made with a corrupt minister: and after a temporary secession, and most inadequate punishment, he was restored to that rank, which he had so infamously abused, and in which he was again placed to enjoy the opportunities of torturing one of the most valuable, best-disposed, and ill-requited classes, in the kingdom.

“By the laws of England, the felon who commits the most brutal of all crimes, the most savage of murders, can only be tried by twelve of his equals. Of

these, he has not only the unlimited right of rejecting as many as are open to any legal cause of objection, but a further privilege of dismissing from the jury-box, twenty more, without assignment of reason or cause." Against this humble wretch, the merciful majesty of English justice, allows not one word to be urged in prosecution, that can possibly prejudice the prisoner's case; not one particle of evidence to be received, that is not in strict accordance with those laws and precedents which the experience of ages, and the most refined wisdom of English judges have laid down through the long practice of centuries. Not one witness is permitted to open his lips against the prisoner, without being subjected to the severest scrutiny as to his means of knowledge, his motives, his own previous good, or bad character, and the degree of credit which may be attached to what he swears. The whole proofs against the criminal are then sifted by a judge, whose entire life has been devoted to the law, and the investigation of truth.

"Every possible care seems exercised, not only that the seaman shall not be tried by any one, who can be

imagined his peer; but, that a set of jurors or judges, call them which you will, shall be got together with every possible prejudice of rank, station, habit, and command, militating against the lowly and unfortunate prisoner.

“As this mockery proceeds, the worst evidence is as often admitted as the best, and hearsay finds quite as much admission from the skillful tribunal, as direct testimony. But for this glaring absurdity, and rank injustice, there is a weighty reason; scarcely one, if any, of the judges could command the knowledge necessary to distinguish the one from the other. If the most perjured and forsworn of witnesses presented himself against the prisoner; the only attempt that can be made to supply the want of that safeguard of our personal liberties and happiness, cross-examination, is the slow administration by the prisoner of such questions as the court chooses to allow, and which must generally, if not always, be written down before the witness can be compelled to answer them. By this almost inconceivable folly, the sole hope of examination, rapid question and answer is swept away, and

the corrupt perjurer, the malicious forswearer, gains the most ample time to fabricate any untruth that may most conduce to his ends.

“The prisoner having made his defence, the court is cleared; those who have dovetailed the widely and properly-revered officers of judge and jury, hold a secret conclave with closed doors. No impartial head, clear from the agitating and often distracting responsibility of pronouncing on life or death, reads over to them the evidence, or lends the light of past ages and experience to elucidate what is dark and doubtful. Be the prejudices and liabilities of those men what they may, they are left to expound the statute by which alone, their authority is supported, to decide how far the facts come under the exposition of the statute, and to apportion the degree of punishment to the facts; an extent of powers, which, on shore, it often requires jury, judge, and crown to compass.

“If those only, are free whose liberties are unshackled; if those are slaves from whom such liberties are withheld; if the first right of liberty be as Britons boast, a fair unbiassed trial, and English courts

of justice form, as mankind generally admit, the most perfect specimens of even-handed justice, what then, let it be demanded, is the position of the officers and seamen of the British Navy, at this hour? Are they freemen, or they are slaves? This is clear, under the present system of naval courts martial; justice as it is known and worshiped on the shores of Great Britain, is a thing as little to be expected on those high seas from whence the greatness rose, as that the sun reflected on their eternal mirror, shall renounce his light."

Thus does the honest subject of an aristocratic, monarchical government, stigmatize the enormities of that court martial system, which we, of republican America have condescended to adopt.

Do any of you think it consistent with the character and institutions of your country? Is it a judicial system, calculated to winnow the navy of that defective material, which your partial system of appointment may have introduced, or which the deteriorating influences we have examined, may have created.

Some other plan then is necessary, to remedy defects which have now become so apparent, that the

navy itself, congressional committees, and the executive have all proclaimed the necessity for reform, and ask for its institution.

One plan proposed is, to annul the blind seniority rule, and leave with the executive the discretionary power of promoting by merit. As nothing could be worse than our present system, so any change would be an improvement, and, therefore, even this might be acceptable. The objections to it are, that the executive would be ignorant of the characters of officers generally, and would be influenced necessarily, by information derived from others; and these would be the few officers of high rank, in immediate contact with the government, and thus the real power of selection, would be with unknown and irresponsible persons; a kind of secret tribunal, which could thus gratify the personal partialities or prejudices of its members. This method of selection would likewise be open to family or political influence.

Another suggestion is, to commit the selection to a regularly constituted board of officers. Similar objections lie against this; it would make all subordinates

dependent upon the good feeling of the few officers likely to constitute the board, and the personal predilections of these would have too much weight. It is suggested as the best plan, and that most conformable to republican institutions, to make each entire grade a board, to say which of their number have the highest claims for promotion; every officer being required to give his opinion, and prohibited from voting for himself. The president still having the nominating power, his judgment would be aided by the most instructed information, derived from the verdict of the entire community to which each officer belongs.

The advantages of this plan are numerous; the most prominent, only, can be alluded to. The character and peculiar abilities of every officer are known to the grade to which he belongs, and, therefore, its opinion rests upon certain knowledge; as none could advance himself, there could be no inducement to withhold a correct verdict; personal prejudices, enmities, and partialities would be neutralized in the decision of the entire grade — there would be no undue dependence of officer upon officer, and none of commanding upon

subordinate grades, as each officer would owe his promotion to his equal, and not to those below or above him; there would be a beneficial influence upon character and constant stimulus to improvement, because one promotion would not determine others, but every step must, as in civil life, be won from the good opinion of the community to which the individual belongs; and this is an influence from which no man should be released.

Present Wants and Future Glory.

To create a republican navy, therefore, it is necessary to remodel our whole establishment.

To throw its commissions open to the whole community, selecting for the public service, only those who upon proper investigation, are found to have most fitness.

This is no great innovation, as necessity has compelled its adoption in relation to two corps of the navy, as the only plan to fill them with competent officers. I allude to the medical and engineer corps; as family

or political influence cannot give capacity for the duties of these corps, so these influences can gain no one admission to them. All have the right of competing, and frequently, those of wealth and station, are excluded by the superior claims of those who have raised their fortunes from the friendless gloom of obscurity.

Next, we want a plan of elevation to the higher grades which shall be independent of seniority, or any other mere accident, and the mode of selection committed to a body at once informed upon the subject, and free from the bias of partiality and prejudice.

Then we want a code of laws framed upon the character of the age, the people, the country, and its institutions, and finally,

A judicial tribunal, which shall be instructed in the nature of law and evidence — the best mode of interpreting the one, and investigating the other; which shall form its judgment free from the bias of caste, station, rank, grade, with all their conflicting sympathies, prejudices and interests.

Glorious sea-fights have given victory to all forms of governments and institutions, from the time of that

of pagan Athenians and pagan Persians, at Salamis, down to the present hour. Two hundred years ago, the Dutchman, Von Tromp, with a broom at his mast-head, insolently swept the British Channel. Much less than that, English and Dutch fleets succumbed to the naval power of a despotic Bourbon.

And then we have the whole pile of British glory, St. Vincent and Camperdown, the Nile and Trafalgar, with our own seventeen naval victories, one of which* with its booming cannon shook the air of this spot, all gained under an organization embodying, not only the spirit of monarchy and aristocracy, but that of feudal barbarism.

Are these victories a reason for returning to paganism, to political and civil institutions of the days of the Armada? Do they present a sufficient reason for keeping our navy under the principles which we cast off and far away in 1776?

Shall it not rather be brought up to a level with the country to which it belongs, as that country now

* Lake Erie.

is, and be to other navies, as this republic is to other nations, a star in the west for their light and guidance? Manned by those who, humble in position and duties, were yet animated by the consciousness of an ennobling republican citizenship, with its rights and its protections, the navy would be a fitting instrument in the sublime contest in which is yet to be won its highest renown — that coming struggle between despotism and constitutional government — and no stain of degradation will then accompany the glories of our flag.

The loud and million-mouthed shout which welcomes the tidings of each ocean triumph, will not be the outburst of that animal exultation which equally greets the victor mastiff at the bull-fight, or bear-bait; nor will it be swelled alone by the glory of national power — the pride of conquest adding other stars to our constellation. It will burst from our shores over their boundary oceans, and be echoed from the hearts of hoping men of all nations, who will hear the roar of your victorious cannon, proclaiming the spread of our political light over the darkness of despotism and illuminating all institutions of government, on sea or shore.

HINTS TO THE PEOPLE
UPON THE
PROFESSION OF MEDICINE.



HINTS TO THE PEOPLE

UPON THE

PROFESSION OF MEDICINE.

It is told of an ignorant, but shrewd and impudent individual, who became a wealthy and successful quack, that upon being called upon by a wondering friend who had known him in his lowly estate, and asked how, with so few claims, he had risen to fame and fortune, he took his friend to the window which looked out upon a crowded London street, and asked how many wise or sensible men might be in the passing crowd? "Not more than one in a hundred," was the reply. "The remainder are mine."

The success of quackery, and the popular obstacles thrown in the way of true medical science being based upon those deficiencies of human judgment which are generally called human folly, and which,

proverbially, form so large a portion of human nature, it is almost a hopeless task to correct the evil, and the attempt to do so may be only another manifestation of the general infirmity. Individuals who occupy positions of learning and influence, theologians and lawyers, and who in their general character have not the reputation of being either arrogant or conceited, constantly and confidently place their own views and opinions in opposition to those of the whole medical profession, and lend the influence of their names and position to the support of opinions which have not been to them a study, in opposition to the judgment of that profession which has made them a matter of most careful investigation. This fact proves that folly is not confined to the illiterate or to those who are marked specimens of imbecility, but that it pervades all classes, dilutes learning, and humiliates station. It shows also that the nature of the profession of medicine is not understood, and that the popular ideas in regard to it are formed from a most narrow and limited view of what constitutes the profession. These ideas are most probably

derived from an acquaintance with but one class or division of the medical profession, that class which alone is brought into contact with the people. It is composed of those who pursue the profession as an art; its working men, who laboriously and carefully drudge in the application of its means and details to their designed end. It may be that this acquaintanceship is limited to the medical working men of one locality, or at most of one country; and however able and skillful the individuals of this class may be, still they constitute but one, though an essential one of the many divisions which are embraced within the whole art and science of medicine. Again, the art of medicine is most probably understood as signifying only a mere routine acquaintance with the symptoms and names of diseases, and the application to those symptoms and diseases, of certain remedies which experience has taught to be available. Such limited views fall far short of the nature and scope of the profession of medicine. As well might the genius of Sir Humphrey Davy, the science which he adorned, and the philosophic inspiration which

deduced the safety lamp, be sunk in the wire gauze of the little implement, or a view limited only to the miner who carries it. But were such views correct, and sufficiently extensive, it would still seem that a decent modesty would teach those who feel the necessity of deferring to the judgment, in his vocation, of their tailor, shoemaker, or blacksmith, to pay a similar regard, upon medical subjects, to those who have made them their study.

A very different, and much more expanded view is presented by the profession of medicine to one educated in it. He sees it in the various divisions, and vast arrangements spread out over the civilized world, and acting with all the power which can be derived from an aggregation of the highest order of intellect, disciplined and strengthened to the utmost for its work. In every one of the various departments of his profession, the medical student sees, not one only, but a collection of names designating individuals whose mental power demands the admiration of all who can appreciate their labors, — labors to which nothing short of the greatest

intellectual strength is adequate. Follow, then, the eye of this student, as it sweeps over the cities of his own country, of England, France, Germany, Egypt, Prussia, and Turkey, and see with him the several divisions of the profession, studying man in health and disease, from the microscopic elementary atom of each organ, up to his full development and arrangement in families, tribes, and nations.

Medical chemists, day and night, amid the machinery of their laboratories, are hunting nature in her hidden recesses, and exposing the principles and laws of combination. Medical microscopists are finding beauty of form and structure, where the naked eye sees not at all, or sees only a confused speck, and they are developing systems as wonderful in their minuteness, as that of astronomy in its magnitude. The anatomist, the physiologist, the pathologist, concentrating all their powers and observations upon the various subdivisions of these extensive sciences; the medical statistician, estimating the influence upon health and life of social and political conditions; of occupations; of population; of concentration in

towns or diffusion in the country; the medical psychologist, studying the health and morbid manifestations of mind. Look, too, over distant parts of the globe, and see the medical corps of armies and navies adding to the common stock, their observations upon climates, the habits, diseases and remedies of different nations. Specially devoted to such observations and inquiries is the medical traveler, of whom the stationary practitioner may say, he

“Seeks intelligence in every clime,
And spreads the honey of his deep research
At his return—a rich repast for me.”

The professional inquirer finds, in the large cities of Europe, Asia, and America, extensive hospitals and medical institutions: cities of disease in themselves; some of them devoted to a single variety of disease; and most of them presided over by men whose names have been for years before the profession associated with every constituent of professional greatness. These men, placed above the competition of general business, are occupied in gathering in discoveries, in trying supposed truths under every

disadvantage, and with every precaution against fallacy, and then sending forth the proven results of their investigations. We must not, in this analysis of the components of the profession of medicine, lose sight of those professional martyrs, who, sacrificing all occupations of ease and profit, risk fortune, health, and life in the pursuit of scientific truth. Some inoculate themselves with disgusting and poisonous diseases; others pursue truth side by side with the pestilence, until the fearful race terminates in death. In this general survey of his profession, the physician sees yet other important aids and appliances. Associations of medical talent issuing annual and learned treatises in their volumes of "Transactions," giving an abiding place to every established fact, or subject for further investigation. Medical conventions and national pharmacopœias, the latter treating of every remedy which has the least claim to respect, and the whole undergoing revision, addition, and improvement at stated periods. We have also before us medical missions and medical missionary societies, in the words of Professor Allison, of Edinburgh,

establishing "the intimate connection that should ever subsist between the pursuit of scientific knowledge, and the reception of the blessed truths of Christianity."

The glance we have so far taken over the profession of medicine, rapid as it has been, is yet sufficient to show that it is not sought, in the words of Lord Bacon, "as a couch whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit, or a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect, or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon, or a fort or commanding ground for strife and contention, or a shop for profit and sale, and not a rich store-house for the glory of the Creator, and the relief of man's estate."

All these various fountains of knowledge are irrigating the whole profession by the channels of the medical press, and bearing to its humblest and most remote member whatever of fact, truth, and wisdom has been found worth the freighting. In the various modern languages we have, going forth, periodicals upon the profession in general, or upon

branches of it. Most of these journals are in charge of men of eminent literary and professional ability, and any one number of either of the leading journals presents a specimen of intellectual ability of which not the profession only, but human nature may well be proud. Opening by chance one now lying on the table, we find thirty-two periodicals—English, French, German, American, on its exchange list for the quarter. To present an idea of the scope of such journals, we find a single chance number to contain thirteen analytical and critical reviews of works in German, French, Italian, and English, the works being generally by the most distinguished medical authors of their respective countries. Then, besides medical reports, memoirs, and cases, we have, in the same number, fifteen bibliographical notices of works upon chemistry, diseases, anatomy, social problems, and natural theology; each notice being an interesting synopsis of the work.

Could all see the profession of medicine even in the dim and feeble light by which we have endeavored to show its broad and comprehensive operations,

the mind which could charge upon such a profession limited, selfish, and interested motives, opposed to truth, would only manifest its own incompetency to understand the nature and tendency of mental action; and nothing saves the many who utter such illiberal sentiments from contempt, but a general allowance for the blindness in which they are uttered — a blindness which must pertain to those not educated in the profession, and not living under its obligations. The professional man sees, with an enlarged vision, into regions closed to his unprofessional brother; in his discourse he proclaims results of this vast system of moral, intellectual, and mechanical machinery, while the latter forms his positive opinions upon a few crude and disconnected facts, or supposed facts, seen in the limited circle of his own untutored experience and observation. It is, as though one upon an eminence looks over a broad landscape, and speaks of its brilliant light, varied hues, and strong contrasts of color, while the man blind from birth, obstinately contends that no such things exist, and that all is of one uniform

darkness; or, it is, as though one by unaided vision sees only a black speck in the intellectual atmosphere, while the telescopic aid of art and science shows it to be brilliant with glittering stars. Such considerations prevent us from impugning either the honesty, or the absolute intellectual ability of those who dogmatize boldly upon medical subjects, and though we must still wonder at their imagining themselves more familiar with medicine, embracing a range of sciences, than with any other single science or language which they have not studied, the magnitude and boldness of their error become the measure of their ignorance, and present their claim for forgiveness. For the benefit of all such, and for those who illiberally charge upon the medical profession a bigoted adherence to a limited system, or to selfish interests, inconsistent with its nature and mission, a few reasons will be presented why, upon the very constitution of human nature, such a limited action is morally impossible.

The love of truth is a principle implanted in the human mind, and which, in all ages, and in all

sciences, has asserted its influence against every opposing circumstance. Under its direction men have surrendered every thing else dear to the human heart — suffered imprisonment, chains, ignominy, banishment, and death. None will deny these facts.

The science of medicine, in its very nature, must be under the influence of this principle, because it is the study of the Deity through his works. Here, then, we have a law of nature, imposing upon the science of medicine a no less boundary than pure truth; and the next inquiry is whether the modes of medical investigation are those calculated to reach the truth.

We, in pursuit of the answer to this inquiry, see the human mind, such as it is, working in the science of medicine, not on a prescribed line, and up to a limited mark, but spreading out in every direction, according to its inclination and powers, every man according to his “proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that,” and each class of laborers presenting its claim to the discovery of any truth, and finding reward and honor in the

approbation of the mass of his co-laborers. Here, then, we have every guarantee that attainable truth shall be reached. We have the natural love of this virtue, we have the efficiency growing out of a chosen direction and concentration of power, we have scientific rivalry, vigilance and ambition, and, finally, we have the interests of every professional working man, stimulating him to make the acquaintance of these elaborated truths, and to apply them practically in the treatment of disease.

Whilst the profession of medicine is thus working in the main business of its vocation, it casts rich contributions upon subordinate and collateral sciences. To these sciences and their contributions the popular mind gives its admiration, and does not see that they are but chance jewels dug up on the way to the great mine. Look at Comparative Anatomy and Chemistry, Botany and Zoology, Geology and Mineralogy, and, in the words of a distinguished medical writer, "strip these sciences of what has been contributed to them by physicians, or by those who have had the discipline of a medical education, and

a chasm is left which it would be difficult to fill."

A profession such as this is, rests upon principles far above the dogmas of any master, school, or Sir Oracle. It has every protection against fallacy which human reason can know, and is alike independent of the eccentricities of brilliant individual genius, and of the follies and vices of its unworthy members. Whilst there can be no influence sufficiently extensive to warp the common sense and common judgment of all, the intellect of any single individual may be subjected to honest or dishonest influences leading to fallacy or to wilful deception: hence the student of medicine learns, as the first step in the search after truth, to place no reliance upon individual authority, farther than such authority may be sustained by reason, and the testimony of established facts. Brilliant names, therefore, when they leave the proper ground of scientific truth to wander in the regions of fancy, are no authority for him, however imposing they may be upon the public. They are not suns, but meteors, and equally unimportant is the clamoring

testimony of the applauding crowds who may be dazzled by them. The medical student is too familiar with such things in his profession; and out of it he remembers that Hume and Gibbon were infidels, and that France dethroned christianity to set up the goddess of reason, and yet christianity resumed its place and power — because it is true.

The misapplication or misunderstanding of a single word is often a fruitful source of a train of false ideas, false reasoning, and false conclusions. This is the case in regard to the word “system,” as used in popular conversation upon medical science, and some considerations will now be presented upon this subject, which should be borne in mind by all desirous of forming a correct judgment upon the profession of medicine. The word “system” as applied to any medical dogma, theory, or scheme, on the one hand, and to the science of medicine on the other, naturally suggests the idea that the science of medicine is limited to some other and opposing dogma, or theory, to maintain which all its energies are directed. Hence, the advocates of any peculiar

dogma are fond of using the terms — new system and old system — new school and old school — and by the acknowledgment of such distinctions, a whole train of error is founded. From what has already been said, the impropriety of such an application of terms, it is thought, must be apparent. A science which seeks for truth cannot be limited by any system, but must pick up truth how and where it can; hence, that of medicine, in its very nature, repudiates systems.

“In the present state of medical science, we feel well assured that the only true system is the absence of all systems. No premature attempt to generalize can have more than a temporary success. Be it ours to seek for light wherever it shall break in; to amass knowledge, even if we have to pick it from the mire; to draw wisdom from the errors and follies of our rivals, without disdaining to profit by their success;” and, then, “other systems will pass away, ours will be permanent; nourished, indeed, to some extent, by the very elements which come from their decay, as the eternal oak flourishes and grows green for ages from the decomposition of the tran-

sient vegetation, of which generations are springing up and perishing around it.”

Before a correct and exact mode of investigation was established, all science, morality, and religion, were wrapped up in the dogmas of the schools and of the fathers, and men surrendered their minds to captivity and submission. Astronomy and chemistry, so exact now, wandered in the mazes of astrology and alchemy. Visionary theories agitated the profession of medicine; and as there was no law of truth and fact by which to try them, there was no limit to the wildness of unrestrained and imaginative intellects. Taught by such experience, all true science now repudiates systems and theories, or only recognizes them as based upon established facts, and as offering a reasonable supposition or direction for seeking the law of those facts—a conjecture as to the right road, formed upon the best existing knowledge, but which conjecture a little farther progress may show to be wrong.

That investigation which works within a system, has too limited and narrow a space to embrace the

whole truth: a system can no more contain the whole science of medicine than a part can contain the whole. But, in their subordinate relations, all systems may be made tributary to science. For instance, a certain series of facts is observed, their phenomena, and the relations of those facts are seen and admitted by all—there is no dispute or difference in regard to them. Genius, taking the facts, endeavors to devise or discover a theory or law which shall embrace all of them. Different individuals suggest equally plausible theories; each has its partisans, investigation is carried on in various directions, to confirm the views of one set of theorists, and to confute those of others. In the progress of this investigation new facts are discovered which none of the theories will cover, and however satisfactory and beautiful they have, before this, appeared, they must now give way to those having a broader foundation in truth.

The entire profession of medicine may, then, be in accord as to certain facts, but may differ as to the general law influencing these facts. The facts

alone are part of the profession. Such theories are very different from the wild schemes and visions which are engendered in some individual brain, and then the facts to sustain them imagined or asserted. Fever and inflammation have both afforded the material for many theories, and yet the facts constituting these diseases have been apparent to all. Difference of theory does not necessarily imply difference of treatment; indeed, the treatment of a disease upon which all are agreed, may be one of the facts upon which is founded different theories as to the nature of the disease. One set of theorists contend that the phenomena of inflammation depend upon an increased action of the blood-vessels of the part, and hence the heat, swelling, redness, and pain; other theorists say that these symptoms are the result of a diminished action, a want of tone in the vessels, in consequence of which the blood accumulates and stagnates in them. Both theorists, however much they may argue about their opinions, agree upon their remedies, but one explains their action by saying that the remedies allay excitement, diminish tone,

and the other contends that they impart strength and power to the debilitated vessels.

Many of the theories and systems in medicine have been splendid monuments of the power and wealth of the human mind; but as the rich materials of their creation lie scattered in ruin, they emblem the fallibility of the most exalted human intellect, and show that no genius can dare to leave the foundation of fact and truth, and yet hope to erect a firm and enduring structure. The science of medicine sits in judgment upon them all, and examines the claim of each in calm and philosophic impartiality, but refuses to any the privilege of fastening its link upon the chain of established law, until it presents that link in all the unyielding firmness and crystal transparency of truth.

The science of medicine, then, by its very nature, by the principles which govern the human mind, by every stimulus of interest and ambition, can limit itself to nothing short of attainable truth, and it cannot be limited by, or bound to any system. In the science of medicine there can be no "old school"

or "new school," and the use of such terms creates a false impression, and misleads the popular judgment in regard to any scheme or pretension which aspires to independence of the profession of medicine. It has been endeavored to set forth the means, powers, combinations, and appliances necessary in so extensive an inquiry as that of professional truth, and they are seen to be such as impart efficiency to the human intellect and offer the best guards against fallacy. The decision of such a scheme of mental and scientific operations ought surely to claim respect and confidence from the popular mind. History has sustained its decisions upon by-gone medical delusions, no matter how strongly those delusions have been supported by popular enthusiasm, and it is certain that, what the science of medicine now pronounces to be delusions will prove to be such. If any system or scheme sets itself above that professional investigation which is bound to seek for truth, and claims to be a new school or system, the claim and the pretension are alone proof that it is not true. If it contains any grain of truth, according to the laws

which mind must obey, that single grain must be found and added to the stores of general medical science. It is no argument to say that any "new school" system or sect has its colleges, hospitals, and journals, independent of general medicine. If such is the case, it only proves that the disciples of such an arrangement have shut themselves within a narrow circle, and prohibited themselves from the broad search for truth, wherever it may be found; they have bound themselves to a one-man dogma, to a system, and not to a science. As well might theology be taught by schools of Swedenborgianism and Mormonism; and if they become schools of general science and theology, they cease, of course, to be those of a sect.

Persons who regard with favor some new scheme or pretence in the art of healing, strengthen their faith, and justify their opinions, by pointing to people in the respectable ranks of society who have given it their support. It may be that they name those distinguished in the literary world, or famed for their eloquence in the pulpit, and ask triumphantly,

if it be not true, would such intelligent persons as these be found supporting this system? It is, perhaps, too common a mistake to imagine, because some particular merit, or accidental circumstance, elevates an individual to a superior station, that he necessarily has a correct judgment upon all matters. It may be that the very qualities which give him distinction, unfit him for close reasoning, or accuracy of judgment. If an excursive imagination, ingenious speculations, or that faculty of view and argument which can make the bad appear the better reason, are the causes of distinction, the chances are that the individual would be a bad interpreter of the truth, even were he acquainted with the particular sciences in which it is sought. But when an individual, unacquainted with any one of the series of sciences which constitute the profession of medicine, undertakes to give the support of his name and opinions to some system in opposition to general medical science, this act proves him to be wanting in common intelligence and correct judgment, whatever may be the general intelligence of the class or occupation

he represents. His course is no less absurd than would be that of an individual who, without any knowledge of the sounds, letters, construction or meaning of a language, should dispute the interpretation of that language by those skilled in its knowledge.

The adherents of any special system, whether they may be its professors, or its disciples and admirers, are incompetent to judge of truth independent of their system. Their minds are filled with that and nothing else. The student of general medical science sees, that while the stream of scientific truth has pursued its steady course from age to age, many such systems, schemes, and wild imaginings, have risen on its banks, and attracted the clamoring admiration of unthinking multitudes, whose fidelity only endures until a new pretence raises them from that which preceded it. The student of general medicine sees these peculiar notions in every age, making the same claims, presenting the same evidence, sustained by the same enthusiasm, and pointing among

their followers to persons of the highest rank and respectability, and pretensions to intelligence.

If the retrospect runs back into the days of classic antiquity, pagan gods are seen to have been infallible physicians, with emperors for their patients, and whole nations testifying to their skill and success. In more modern times and countries, the altars of saints are seen covered with votive offerings in wax, silver or gold, representing arms, legs, hearts, heads, and whole figures of those whom the saint has cured of disease. The medical student can refer to one pill whose virtues were testified to by seventeen earls, eight viscounts, seventeen lords, fifteen bishops, six right honorables, seventeen coronets, five reverends, and many members of parliament, and yet the name of that pill is no longer heard.

When any individual, representing a respectable station in society, is asked to give his name to the support of quackery, or novel and peculiar systems, let him remember that while he may be flattered by his importance in the eyes of charlatans, quacks, and pretenders, science smiles in pity and contempt to

see him registering his name among the long list of those who have certified to their own ignorance, vanity and folly.

Continuing our review of some of the prominent delusions to which reference has been made, it is remembered that all France was once mad after the quack Mântacino, when all the continent, with a Prussian empress and princess, were subject to the delusions of the count and countess Cagliostro, who professed to restore, not only health, but youth and beauty, and received five thousand louis d'ors as a single fee. Mrs. Mopps' "Crazy Sally," as she called herself, ruled the popular mind of England, patrician and plebeian, and drove once a week to the Grecian Coffee House in a coach and six, with outriders. "We all remember," says the historian of this folly, "that the absurdity and impracticability of her own promises and enjoyments, were by no means equal to the expectations and credulity of those who ran after her; that is, of all ranks and conditions of people, from the lowest laborer or mechanic, up to those of the most exalted station; several of whom

not only did not hesitate to believe implicitly the most extravagant assertions, of an ignorant, illiberal, drunken female savage, but even solicited her company — at least seemed to enjoy her society.” Add to these, the advent of mesmerism, the reign of Perkinism and “tractation.”

No delusion of the present, however strongly it may be supported, has more general, more respectable, or more intelligent unprofessional advocates than had those past medical schemes which all unite now in calling folly and delusion.

Familiar as the student of medicine is with such and similar transactions, he may well be excused for paying more deference to the calm, cautious, and philosophic decisions of his profession, than to visionary schemes and fanciful systems, however supported by the authority of names, rank, and numbers.

Whilst showing the unavoidable obligations which the profession of medicine has to the pursuit of truth, and the varied means by which it pursues the investigation, it cannot be supposed, by any, that it is

claimed for every individual practicing the healing art, even under the sanction of a college certificate, that he represents that profession;—far from it. Unfortunately the popular judgment of the profession is generally formed from those members who misrepresent it; and the illiberal, and ungentlemanly intercourse which grows out of professional rivalry, has given rise to a proverb, which is passed from mouth to mouth, conveying a fallacy in reference to the profession at large. We shall endeavor to disabuse the public mind of that fallacy. “Doctors differ” is the general expression of the general sentiment, and if it is meant that like rival statesmen, rival authors, rival mechanics, they manifest the jealousies, and business animosities of human nature, there is no disputing the unhappy fact; indeed, it may be admitted that their differences, or business quarrels, are more conspicuous, perhaps more frequent, because, in the pursuit of their vocation, they are brought into personal contact with each other. But the popular interpretation of the proverb, “Doctors differ,” means much more than business quarrels.

It means, that each individual of the profession, is the embodiment of certain professional principles, which differ from those held by each other individual, and that the difference is a legitimate one. It implies the fallacy that each practitioner is the founder, or inventor of his own peculiar system of practice. From the nature of the view we have taken of the profession of medicine, it must be seen that they cannot be so, but, in proportion as the practitioners of medicine are instructed in the scientific truths and principles of their profession, they must agree. They represent general truths, not individual opinions. Information, with honesty, must produce concord. But if illy instructed, each practitioner, instead of being influenced by fixed principles, may become the advocate of ignorant and opposite opinions. For instance: a case of disease may be marked by known and determined symptoms, and for these symptoms or their cause, there may be a fixed and rational mode of treatment. Now, gather around this case, practitioners who are badly informed, ignorant of the mode of investigating disease, ignorant

of the signification of symptoms, and ignorant of their management when ascertained, and each one will make his own guess, and maintain it with a warmth proportioned to its want of truth. Bring to the same case well informed practitioners from America, from England, from Germany, from France, and they will agree as to the nature of the disease, and as to the principles of its treatment.

Differences, therefore, among medical men, however disgraceful to the individuals, cannot justly be imputed to the profession of medicine. From these circumstances it is evident that none are worthy of confidence, as practitioners of medicine, but those who, with intellectual capacity for acquirement, have had mental training, time and opportunity for studying the vast range of medical science, and that industry, application, and sense of moral obligation which ensure the fulfillment of the high responsibilities of the profession of medicine. Such a rule of judgment would exclude a great many who are now successful practitioners, but if people would only keep before them the common sense view of the

science of medicine, and see it not a string of mystery and magic, but one requiring, for even the most talented, long and laborious application, they would exercise a safer discrimination as to the qualifications of their medical attendants. There are, undoubtedly, many practitioners who honestly believe themselves qualified for the duties they undertake, simply because they have not penetrated sufficiently far within the domain of medical knowledge to perceive its broad extent and varied character, or else are naturally incapable of this extended vision. Such ignorance may give a boldness in proffering relief, which better information would very much moderate.

Besides those too credulous persons who believe in all medical novelties and pretensions, there are others who repeat the maxim "nature is the best physician," and refuse all aid for their maladies. Such sceptics imagine that their view is sustained, because the most intelligent teachers of medical science inculcate that our wisdom is to be derived from the observation of the laws of nature. There is no

relation, whatever, between the popular opinion to which we have alluded, and scientific obedience to the laws of nature. An acquaintance with these laws implies a vast amount of information, and teaches the natural means by which their irregularities and aberrations are to be corrected; and teaches also the certain and overwhelming danger, which permits the aberrations of nature's laws to go without correction. If an individual had one of his arteries divided, and saw his life blood pouring forth with fearful rapidity, he would not wait and say "nature is the best physician," but he would apply to some one who, from the observation of the processes of nature, has learned how to stop the flow of blood. As great and as fatal injuries, from the progress of disease, may be going on in internal organs; the truster in nature, or rather, the willful contemner of nature does not see it, and therefore does nothing and dies of a "medicable wound," which would be very apparent, to the physician whose eye had been taught to search it out. It is true, nature is the best physician, but she requires an industrious and devoted worship to

secure her attendance, and is very apt to visit the penalty of disease and death upon those who neglect her. The best ministers of nature, then, are those who most assiduously study her laws; and an acquaintance with those laws constitutes extensive learning. Unfortunately, too many of those who look to the physicians for medical aid, expect him to be the bold controller of nature, instead of her vigilant observer, faithful follower, and intelligent assistant. Certain and mechanical results are confidently looked for where true and high science teach that nothing but probabilities could be reached by human skill. Correct scientific or professional knowledge increases those probabilities, but those who study the science of medicine most profoundly, know, that while their chances of arresting disease depend upon the extent and variety of their acquirements, nothing attainable by human faculties can give the power of certainty. Hence, the conscientious practitioner of medicine is stimulated to add to his professional attainments, and feels it to be a moral duty to go from one acquirement to another.

One so enlightened will promise no certain cure for the slightest ailment, for he well knows that under the mysterious agency of vital laws, which are hidden by Providence from the scrutiny of man, death may result from the slightest derangement of the human organism:— a scratch may terminate in fatal mortification; lock-jaw and death result from the extraction of a tooth, or even a too close clipping of the nails; and the sting of a wasp has been known to terminate life in fifteen minutes. Hence the well informed physician, although he may be confident of his abilities to select with knowledge and judgment among the various remedies with which he may be familiar, and though he may know that they are naturally suited to the case he may be treating, awaits with cautious hope, rather than bold assurance, a result it is not with him to determine.

The uncertainty which attends the profession of medicine, is applicable to every avocation connected with the laws of nature. All such professions must acknowledge the same subjection to influences beyond their control, as that which attaches to the art

whose province is to deal with the living, thinking human being, and must submit all their hopes to contingencies, which they can never foresee nor prevent.

The agriculturist, who, with a practical knowledge of his pursuit, has an intelligent acquaintance with the principles which influence it—with the control of climates and seasons, and with the nature of soils—has a much greater chance of success, than one who works in blindness and ignorance, and, during a series of years, his average returns will be much greater and more secure; but with the application of all his knowledge and skill, he cannot, on any one year, feel an assurance of success. Drougths may parch his fields, or floods drown them, frosts nip his fruits in the bud, or blight his grain in the ear.

The prudent and intelligent navigator, carefully studies the currents which sweep noiselessly through the ocean, and the laws which govern the winds blowing over its surface, and when his vessel is trusted to this vast machinery of nature, it is in no igno-

rance of the forces and powers to which it is subjected. The addition made of late years to the stores of nautical knowledge in all its branches, has not only shortened the time of distant voyages, but added to the total average security with which the ocean is traversed; and it is evident that the probabilities of a safe voyage will be greater for the vessel, in proportion to the intelligence and professional acquirements of those having her in charge. But, the finest ship that ever floated, navigated with all the skill that man's intellect can display, may never reach her port — may be cast, a shattered wreck, on the shore, or if she be brought into harbor, it may be dismantled, rigging, spars, and cargo all gone, and yet, in this crippled condition, she may be the witness and trophy of more nautical science than if she had made her voyage unharmed.

Such considerations apply with yet greater force to the art of medicine, which deals, not only with nature and its physical law, but with the moral and intellectual constituent in man; and this wonderful combination of average and increasing success, with

an ever existing uncertainty, is a beautiful exhibition of the harmonious laws by which the wisdom of Providence reconciles apparent contrariety. A general and progressive success is given to stimulate man to general and progressive exertion; but were he to reach certainty, where the laws of nature are concerned, he would be robbing the Deity of his prerogative, and become independent of his Maker; and hence, all the arrangements and protections of science and philosophy are prostrated before the asserted omnipotence of the Deity, and yet man has no excuse to refrain from the acquisition of knowledge.

It is an ignorance of, or want of reflection upon these principles which forms the foundation for the prevalence of quackery. The pretender to medical science meets the popular expectation by promising infallible remedies for every disease. The quack, however, is not always an imposter. He partakes of the popular ignorance, and popular expectation, and promises infallibility because he believes infallibility to be a possibility; and ignorant of the laborious process of scientific induction, believes that he

can jump at the results of those processes, as certainly as those who reach them by the steps of learning.

The reasonable expectations of professional usefulness being thus lost sight of—the common sense means—those in which cause and effect bear an apparent relation, are set aside also, and to accomplish wonderful expectations, wonderful means are resorted to—means whose mode of action is as incomprehensible, as their expected effects are inconsistent with the teachings of nature, and the designs of Providence.

For all this ignorance, misconception and error, a fearful retribution is visited upon the community. It pays the penalty of half its life, and consequently half its usefulness and happiness. With all the elements of health and long life in our country, statistics lead to the fearful conclusion that our average length of life is but little, if any more than half that enjoyed by overcrowded, overworked, vicious, and half-starved Europe. There, some care is taken that those to whom is entrusted the health and lives of

the people shall be qualified for their duties by suitable education. Here, every ignorant or conceited pretender is permitted to assume the solemn responsibility of managing the health of his fellow-citizens, and their lives become the plaything of his blind folly and vain presumption.

That so terrible an evil as that which results from the existing popular notions of the art of healing, should permanently continue in an enlightened community or age is impossible. The dawn of a better day is seen in the fact that the Executive of the state of New York has made special mention of the subject of medical education. The following is taken from a message of the late governor of New York: "No subject more universally affects all classes, and all members of the community, than that of the public health. I therefore earnestly request your attention to the existing laws on the subject, and suggest their careful review and amendment, especially with a view to secure the benefit of the combined experience of scientific and learned men throughout the state, with respect to the origin, the causes, the

progress and the treatment of all malignant or infectious diseases. It may also be well to consider whether the time has not arrived when the state is called upon to contribute its aid, more efficiently than it has hitherto done, to advance the cause of medical education. Every inhabitant of the state, at some time or other, feels the need of the physician, and is interested that he should be learned and skillful."

"Learned and skillful," yes! these are the requisites, but how are they to be attained? There are medical schools in the north, the south, the east, and the west, and every year sees these schools sending forth crowds of young men certified as being qualified, "learned and skillful" in the art of healing, and this after a term of study too short to acquire thoroughly any one of these sciences, which, in the aggregate, make up the profession of medicine. Almost every country neighborhood sees some young man too sickly, too lazy, or perhaps too stupid to learn a mechanical pursuit, go off to study medicine, provided that, for two or three winters, he, or his

friends can raise a few hundred dollars; and at the end of this time he comes back a qualified doctor, with a diploma in his pocket. Every one knows that he was entirely deficient in that preliminary education which is the key to professional knowledge. The people soon learn to feel as much respect for the spontaneous quack of the neighborhood, as for him of college growth, or perhaps the natural shrewdness and intelligence of the former give him an advantage. Of course so long as the granting of diplomas is a mere trade, and medical schools are but shops for their sale, the multiplicity of these shops begets a competition which lowers the terms and standard so as to attract the greater number of customers, and those who should be the guardians of the profession of medicine, send forth such representatives of it, as lead to the erroneous popular opinions of the nature of the science itself.

No one may here oppose the popular objection that we would limit the facility for acquiring a knowledge of the profession of medicine to the few whose wealth would enable to attend expensive

schools remote from their homes. Just the reverse; we would make the domain of medicine a true republic, and only ask of its members if they have the requisite knowledge; not, where they got it;— whether amid the halls, laboratories, and libraries of large cities, or, through the inspiration of genius, by the light of a pine torch in a forest cabin. Let every village have its medical school, if it may be thought expedient. Indeed it is a question whether, if medical education, or a knowledge of the principles of medicine, were a part of general education, there would not be greater confidence in the profession, and more respect awarded to those who pursue it? An illiterate person might apply to a quacking juggler, or to any one less illiterate than himself, for information upon some abstruse point of chemistry, geology, mineralogy, or astronomy, but all having only the ordinary school knowledge of these sciences, would know that only those eminent for their learning would be likely to give the required information. The same thing is seen when regularly instructed members of the profession apply for

information to those of the profession having greater skill and learning than themselves. Many gentlemen, particularly in the southern states, study medicine for the sake of mental occupation, with no intention of pursuing it as a business, and many who have been in the profession, abandon it for other pursuits; yet these gentlemen, who are informed upon the nature of the profession, seek the best attainable medical advice for the relief of the ailments of themselves or their families. These facts lead very strongly to the inference that popular medical education would be fatal to the existence of quackery, and would leave the practice of medicine in the hands of those having the best natural and acquired gifts for its pursuit; and those so gifted would occupy a high and honored place in the confidence of an intelligent constituency.

Whilst, then, we make no objection to the multiplication of schools and teachers of medicine, we doubt very much the expediency and propriety of these schools and teachers having the interested power to grant diplomas—to certify to the merits

of their own numerous offspring; and while this system endures, the public is justified in its contempt for diplomas. It is suggested that a better mode would be to compose an examining board in each state, in which all the schools might be represented, and thus examine each other's pupils, or all candidates presenting themselves; the faculty of the state might also be represented, and even the people, through their executive, or a committee of their legislature.

If some such system as this were adopted, the results would show what teachers and schools were worthy of most confidence; the despotism of institutions which have grown powerful from adventitious circumstances would be broken down, and the people, having a part in the process of conferring medical degrees, would be more ready to oppose quackery by legislation.

In setting forth the influences which tend to degrade the profession of medicine from its true and high position, it would be a serious and disrespectful omission to say nothing of that of the public press,

at once the exponent, and controlling power of public sentiment. If the stately essays and the dignified leaders of respectable papers are alone taken into consideration, the profession of medicine has nothing to complain of. These generally pay a formal tribute to scientific principles, institutions, and men. Their columns contain paragraphs for the instruction of the people, and cautions against humbug, deceit, and imposture; but turn to the page for advertisements, and, for the lure of an advertising fee, we find columns of absurd notices of quacking pills and potions, such palpable impostures as to have no influence with the educated and discriminating, but intended, and too successfully effecting the intention of deceiving the ignorant and unthinking. None but those whose professional avocations bring them into association with the humble and laboring classes, can imagine the amount of money which is robbed from these classes by such advertisements, particularly in the country districts; and the amount of disease and suffering caused by these ignorantly compounded, and ignorantly administered poisons, is deplorable.

Many of these notices are upon subjects which should never be obtruded upon the public eye, and convey licentious and obscene ideas into the bosom of families, and they propagate the vices for whose effects they pretend to offer a remedy. All this is certainly a great moral wrong, and it argues much against the moral sense of the community, that the press, the assumed custodian of the public virtue, shall be guilty of this wrong, and yet claim to be respectable.

The list of varied and contrary diseases which these nostrums pretend to cure, is alone sufficient evidence of their false pretension, and should be such to those who become the vehicle of imposing the falsehood upon the public. Any of the ordinary and every day diseases of which people complain, may have their origin in a variety of morbid changes, each one requiring a different mode of treatment, and of course, no one means of cure being applicable to all. We will take "headache" as an illustration. This painful and distressing affection may have its cause within the contents of the skull, or in its external covering, and may arise from

different affections of these parts. It may, as is most frequently the case, depend upon derangement of remote organs—the stomach, liver, or bowels. It may be a symptom of debility or of a too full and plethoric habit. The following list of causes which excite headache into action, is taken from the Cyclopaedia of Practical Medicine, and they are sufficiently varied to show that no remedy will reach all.

“1. Rheumatic affection of the pericranium. 2. Inflammation, or a more chronic morbid condition of the pericranium. 3. Inflammation of the mucous lining of the frontal sinus. 4. Intense mental excitement. 5. Strong impressions on the external senses. 6. Excessive impetus of blood to the head. 7. Impeded return of blood from the head. 8. Congestion within the head. 9. Suppression of accustomed evacuations. 10. Inflammation of the brain or its membranes. 11. Tumors, or other morbid changes of structure within the head. 12. Morbid affections of the stomach;—as from over excitation or distention; from irritating ingesta; from imperfect digestion; the presence of bile in the stomach, &c.

13. Costiveness. 14. Narcotics. 15. Worms. 16. Diminished pressure of the atmosphere. 17. A heated, humid, or deteriorated atmosphere. 18. Sudden changes of temperature. 19. Exposure to a current of air, or to a cold wind, especially from the east." Headache has been chosen as an illustration, from the frequency of its occurrence, and not because it has a more varied origin than any other of the every day diseases for which quack remedies are offered.

It is not probable that those who are most exposed to the wrong of quack advertisements, will see these remarks, and hence it is the more incumbent upon all who may accord in the views now presented, to use their influence to prevent the spread of dangerous errors amongst those classes of the community, in which they may do the work of mischief, and be without the reach of correction.

Assailed as the profession of medicine is by popular misconception; misrepresented by unworthy members, and unsustained by legislative protection, it is thrown upon itself for protection, purification,

and elevation, and these ends it is now endeavoring to accomplish by voluntary association. The "American Medical Association," or national congress of the profession, organized by members from the various medical literary institutions, from state and county societies, is using its influence to elevate the standard of medical education, and is concentrating the wisdom of the profession in this country upon the investigation of subjects of importance to the health and happiness of the community. It has promulgated, for the guidance and government of its members, a code of morals defining the duties of medical men to the community, and to each other, upon principles of courtesy, honor, and christianity, and preventing the evil results of local rivalries and jealousies. The county societies serve as tribunals or courts to secure the observance of the moral laws of the profession. They also indicate to the people what medical men are in good repute with their brethren, and under obligations for the conscientious performance of their duties. These local societies also collect from their vicinity, and from the members

who form them, those facts of interest to the public weal, which would otherwise be lost, but being contributed to the general store, form a vast amount of valuable information; for, it is a mistake, and one fruitful of evil to the community, to regard the medical profession as limited in its duties to the relief of the sick who may come under the charge of individual members of the profession. It has a far more extended mission than this. To remove the general sources of disease—to prevent sickness and suffering—to ascertain the physical and moral sources of human depravity—and to indicate the means of their removal, are among the high objects of professional organization; and most nobly has the profession come up to its work. Notwithstanding the vulgar, illiberal, and ignorant sneers of those who charge upon medical men a wish for the increase of disease, their profession has been found the most active in the promotion of measures of general health and sanitary reform; although in its labors it has had to contend with popular prejudice,

egislative indifference, and opposing pecuniary interests.

The subjects bearing upon general and individual health, to which professional attention has been of late actively directed both in Europe and America, are, the water supply and sewerage of towns and villages; the drainage of the soil; the construction, arrangement, and ventilation of dwellings; the investigation of cholera and other epidemics; the establishment of public baths and wash houses; the registration of marriages, births, and deaths; and the temperance reform. The efforts of the profession to arrest the evils of quackery are correspondent to its whole sanitary action, although, unfortunately, they are attributed to interested motives; whereas, in truth, the evidence goes to show, that the more quackery prevails, the more is the employment for scientific medicine, and the "Family Medicine," whether a book or a pill, is a fertile source of fees to the family physician.

The organization of the profession in county, state, and national associations, has been efficient, among

other matters, in calling the attention of legislators to the necessity of the law for the registration of births, marriages, and deaths. The following remarks upon this subject are taken from the "Report of the Committee of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania."

"The Registry Law would teach the laws of human life developed by the natural constitution of our bodies as they usually exist under the influences that surround them, and how far they may be favorably modified and improved. This can only be done by an accurate knowledge of the facts that are daily occurring among us. These matters are important to the physician to aid him in curing the sick, but far more important to the people to aid them in learning how to live without being sick." It is estimated that the annual loss in England and Wales alone by preventable disease is greater than the loss of the allied armies at the battle of Waterloo. In the county of Lancaster, eleven thousand adults die annually of removable epidemics, and it is further estimated that the annual pecuniary loss of the

United Kingdom by preventable diseases, is one hundred millions of dollars. A committee of Parliament report upon a registration law, that, "It involved matter of great public and national interest as well as individual satisfaction; and rights and claims to property; that great trouble, vast expense, utter uncertainty, capricious changes, and local and general evils exist, while no means are supplied to obtain the information other countries possess and greatly value, as to the state of disease, the operation of moral and physical causes on the health of the people, the progress of the population and other matters, on which accurate knowledge can scarcely be too highly appreciated or too intensely pursued." A consequent bill, introduced by Lord John Russell, became a law in 1837. "The medical profession, with all that science and philanthropy that every where distinguishes them, have wrought upon these rich and abundant results of a varied registration, and elicited great truths. By sharp scrutiny, close and laborious comparison, they have established the comparative health of localities, and with an industry

not less active, having discovered the cause of disease, have pointed out the means of its removal." The following eloquent remarks are from an article upon "Sanitary Reform" in the British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review.

"The quarterly reports of the Registrar General are among the most interesting and instructive documents of the day. They are to us what, in an inferior degree, the Saxon Chronicles were to the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They engrave, in brief but expressive phrase, the national vicissitudes, prosperities, trials and calamities. With these faithful and unerring indices, marriages and deaths, the Registrar General measures the robustness of natural vigor, or probes the depth of national suffering. Backed by those ranks of expressive figures, which permit no exaggeration, and are susceptible of no fallacy, he presents to us a true picture of our country and nation. No false rhetoric, or untrue coloring is suffered to mar the truth of the hard and simple outlines. No political creed conceals the facts, or perverts their meaning. No unjust law orders

the distortion of half the truth, by the concealment of the other half. These reports are, indeed, something more than history; they are the judgment of the time upon itself, and, untinged as they are by party spirit, and unswayed by personal considerations, those judgments are as true and faithful as those of future times can be. It is no objection to the value of these records, to say they chronicle, with greater minuteness and accuracy, the national ills and chastisements, than the national happiness and success. The most dreary and painful side of human existence, is certainly most largely presented to us. The shadow of imperfection and decay tinges all things with its melancholy hues. Our path is rather through the gloomy valley, and under the shade of cypress, than on the invigorating mountain side, resplendent with the light of Heaven. But this seems to be the necessary result of all true histories of the social condition of the people. That which is strongest and most permanent presses aside that which is less vigorous and enduring. Happiness and comfort escape the chronicles; gaunt features of

misery and distress are ever before him. The happy hours of a nation's, as of an individual's life, are as the downy ripples which the advancing tide washes into smoothness; the hours of sorrow and of trouble are like those ripples fossilized into stone."

The enlarged sphere of duty pertaining to the profession of medicine, can only be properly met by professional organization. The people have their most solemn interests concerned in sustaining the organization, and have much reason to suspect those who affect to be independent of it. Medical men who voluntarily refrain from the work, are either behind the age, ignorant of their duties and of what the profession is doing, or else are seeking to hide sinister designs and selfish purposes under an affectation of individual independence, just as all do, who profess to be independent of the general laws of society. It is an easy mode of getting rid of wholesome obligation and restraint, by assuming to be entirely independent of it, and the people who cheer on such lawless spirits, must not complain if they find themselves the victims of lawlessness. An

irregular practitioner in one of the western counties of Pennsylvania, seeking to trap this popular sympathy, advertises himself, in the most triumphant manner, as *independent of the county medical society*:—a society to which he is, of course, entirely ineligible. Men may affect this independence who have an interest in shunning the light of professional investigation, and may claim the privilege of darkness as an independent right; but it cannot be awarded them; the interests of society forbid it. If the professional man is weak, he owes it to those committed to his professional charge to have the aid and counsel of his professional brethren, and if he is strong, he owes a portion of his strength to the profession and the good of society. The egotism of individual vanity, judgment, and interest, must be under subjection to the “Higher Law” of christian, professional, and general organization, or christian, professional, and general communities, have no security for the conduct of their members.

Those who take a correct view of the various difficulties we have suggested as connected with the

practice of medicine will see that it is not a profession whose paths are through smooth and flowery walks. But it may be as well to offer a few considerations for the use of those who are desirous of entering that profession, and, in doing so, our desire is not to diminish the number of "doctors," but to increase the number of those who are qualified to perform the obligations they take upon themselves. It is a maxim with political economists, that cheapening an article increases its consumption, and, in the aggregate, invites a larger expenditure of money upon that article. The maxim is perfectly true in regard to cheap doctoring; it costs the people a vast amount of money, and all that is received in return is a worthless and injurious article. It may well be questioned whether the same degree of benefit accrues to the people by cheapening their facilities for medication, as arises from the lessened prices of silk and cotton fabrics. A case, unhappily of every day occurrence, will illustrate this position. An individual is affected with some chronic, permanent, and incurable ailment, and yet it may not be one seriously affecting

his life and usefulness. Upon consulting some medical man well and thoroughly skilled in the laws and nature of disease, after, perhaps, not more than fifteen minutes conference, the patient is told that the use of medicines can be of no service to him, and will only be a fruitless expenditure of his money, his time, and his constitution. If charged for this advice five, ten, or twenty dollars, he may regard it as an outrageous robbery, and yet for want of this learned and honest counsel, he may go from doctor to doctor, and from quackery to quackery, paying but fifty cents here and a dollar there, not for advice, but for medicine, until he has expended hundreds of dollars, weeks, months, and years of time, and all the vigor of constitution which was necessary to sustain him under the burden of his disease. Hence, fewer and more competent medical advisers would be more to the profit and happiness of the people, and service will be done them, if a due reflection upon the difficulties of the profession shall deter any of the crowds now rushing to the medical schools from their purpose.

The entire difficulties of the study of medicine are rarely understood by those who commence it: but it may be appreciated when it is considered that the mental faculties and the physical powers are to be given to the acquisition of five or six different sciences, and to the languages of those sciences. The powers of memory, of observation, of judgment, are to be assiduously cultivated, and with no end to the labor. Those who have studied a language know the time and labor it costs, and those who have not the mental discipline as well as the facilities arising from the acquisition of a language, are unfit for the studies of medicine; and yet the acquisition of language is easy and agreeable, relatively to that of medical science. The medical student may and should have his healthful exercise; but he has no right to amusements or relaxations which distract his thoughts or lessen their vigor. He must have that devotion to philosophy and love of truth which will make the most repulsive investigations agreeable, and keep him days and nights, for much of his life, in damp dissecting rooms, in hospitals, and pestilent

dead houses. The severe discipline of mathematics must have trained his reasoning powers, and his eye and hand have been taught by skill in drawing. If his physical constitution be not good, he will sink beneath the burden of study and exposure, and add to the number of those, who are conducted to the grave by consumption and fever, before their studies are completed.

The granting of the college certificate, or diploma, is very far from ending the student's labors; it only opens to him another course of education and more pressing obligations to pursue it. If the diploma has been his object, he is unfit for a profession which imposes upon its members the most sacred obligations to preserve life, and to relieve pain, suffering and sorrow. If his object is merely to make money—to acquire fortune and honor, or to live at ease, he is as unfit for the profession as the profession is for him. Statistics go to show that among occupations that of medicine is the shortest lived, and the least successful in the accumulation of wealth. He must look for his reward to his own breast, in

the consciousness of being able to do his duty, and in having done it; even though misjudged and censured by those whom he has benefited, and who are incompetent to form any idea of his capabilities, or of the long and anxious labors by which they have been reached. He belongs to a profession which gives him frequent opportunities of practicing upon the command: "Do good to those who despitefully use you." He must give up all command of his time night or day, and be prepared any and every moment for the most harassing emergencies. Even when his active duties may not call him from his home or bed, he must expect to pass anxious hours and sleepless nights from the responsibility of intricate cases, and the consciousness that the lives and happiness of others are dependent upon his skill and judgment, and yet, after all this, he may find every one, from the shoemaker's bench to the pulpit, advancing the most positive and dogmatic opinions upon medical subjects in opposition to his own, and recklessly prescribing for patients which are to him such a source of mental anxiety;

"As fools rush in
Where angels fear to tread."

After large contributions of gratuitous labor to the poor, he must be content to see his services valued, by those able to pay him, by the standard of day labor, and may consider himself fortunate if he is not, when he has done his best, dragged before an ignorant and hostile jury, vilified and traduced by hireling lawyers, and robbed of his means and reputation by the testimony of unprincipled and rival quacks.

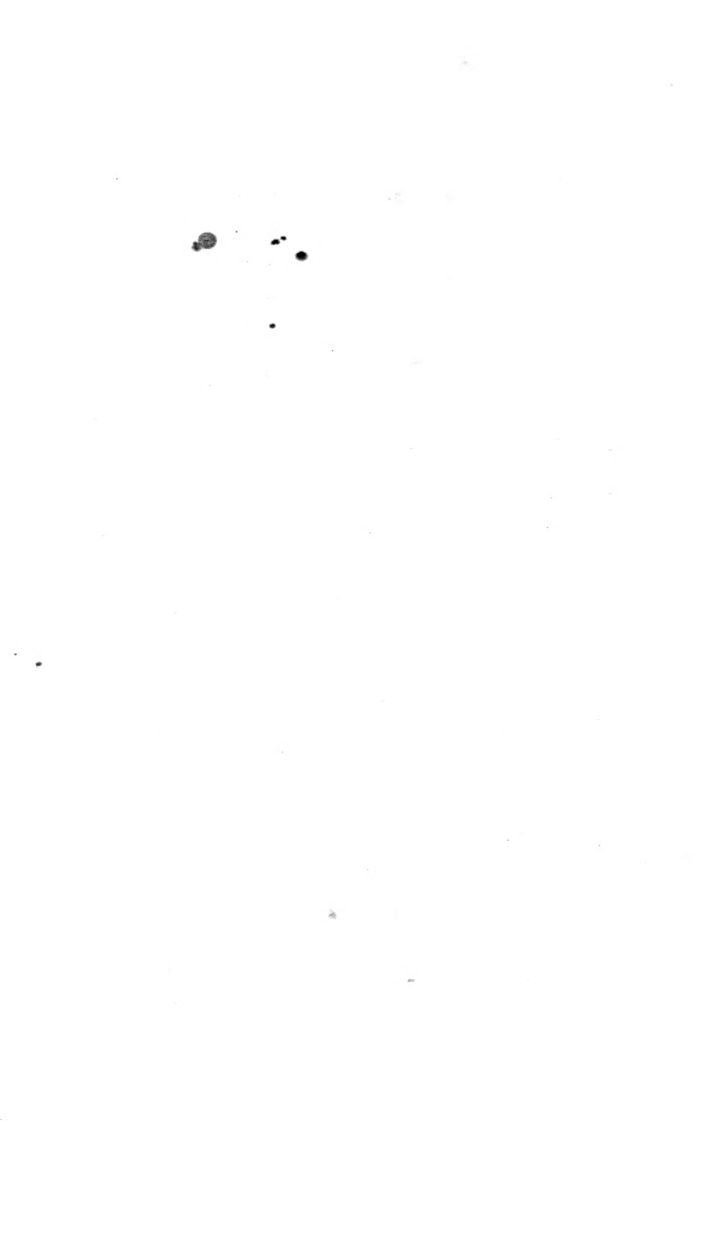
Such are the contingencies of the life of the skillful and conscientious physician; still more unhappy is the position of him who has undertaken obligations which he is naturally incompetent to meet, or for which he has not fitted himself. When such a one as this enters the darkened chamber of disease, and feels the anxious and hopeful gaze of relatives penetrating his soul, and yet is at a loss for resources to meet the demands made upon him; is bewildered, not by the intricacy of the case, but by his conscious inability to meet it, and fears that the trust reposed

in him is a false trust, which must close in disappointment, sorrow, and death, when proper medical qualification would be able to give cheerful encouragement, and to change the gloomy scene to one of happiness and joy: then, if he has any feeling of man, he reproaches his misplaced position, and remembers with bitter agony the hours wasted in selfish enjoyment, which should have been given to the solemn duties of his calling.

Better for the peace and happiness of such a man had he sought any trade or occupation, however humble and laborious, so that it was but honest and suitable to his character and abilities.

We have endeavored in this paper to draw the distinction between the true nature of the profession of medicine, and the popular view taken of it; to point out the causes of error, and to suggest certain remedies, which, if efficient for the purpose, will benefit the public by restoring the profession to its proper place, and making its representatives equal to the obligations they have taken upon themselves. Whilst health, life, and morals are matters of general

import, it is the duty of the educated classes, the pulpit, and the press, to aid the efforts now making by the medical profession to confer upon the people the benefits of true science, and to protect them from ignorance and imposture. The magnitude of the existing evil needs only to be known, to call for the energetic action of every conscientious member of society.



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