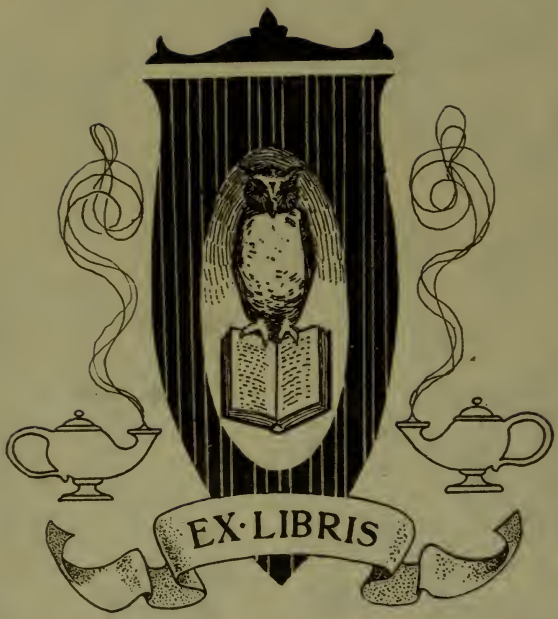

S. G. & E. L. ELBERT

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(By Samuel L. Knapp)

SKETCHES

OF

PUBLIC CHARACTERS.

DRAWN FROM

THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

WITH

NOTICES OF OTHER MATTERS.

BY

IGNATIUS LOYOLA ROBERTSON, L. L. D.

A RESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

——————————"He that writes,
Or makes a feast, more certainly invites
His judges than his friends; there's not a guest,
But will find something wanting or ill drest."

"But here, where Freedom's equal throne
To all her valiant sons is known;
Where all are conscious of her cares,
And each the power that rules him shares,
Here let the bard, whose dastard tongue,
Leaves public arguments unsung,
Bid public praise farewell;
Let him to fitter climes remove,
Far from the hero's and the patriot's love,
And lull mysterious monks to slumber in their cell."

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1830.

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DEDICATION.

TO COLONEL A. WARD,

OF WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N. Y.

Dear Sir,

I dedicate this little work to you, remembering, with pleasure and gratitude, your kindness in rendering me every facility in gratifying my curiosity, on my first visit to Washington, while you held a seat in Congress. I had been long enough in the United States to feel an attachment to the country; and I would not yield a particle of my reverence for the distinguished men of it, to any reviler of them, whoever he might be. There is only one point in which I am often constrained to agree with those who are unfriendly to this nation, and that from the truth of the remark, not the temper of it.

They say that "you never think of a man, however great his virtues, and his talents, when he is out of office; that sometimes, at the death of some one who has filled a considerable space in the world, your gazettes praise him to-day, and this is curtailed in to-morrow's paper; and by the time the next edition of an American Biographical Dictionary is printed, he appears in a flat, chalky picture, of half a column, as graceless as his epitaph, in some country churchyard, where his bones may rest; and this, perhaps, a character whose lights and shades, properly disposed of, might have been made a splendid portrait."

The writers of the day should speak freely of the living; the truly great have nothing to fear; the oftener their merits are discussed, the better for them. In countries like England and the United States, the abodes of free institutions and freer minds, every thing should be presented in full relief; political and civil rights should be closely examined, and the manners, habits, and morals of the people, become a common topic: the characters, services, claims, and pretensions of men in high places, should be searched out and precisely adjudged. The eyes of the pa-

triot writer should never be shut to the faults of men in power, whether their station or authority be executive, legislative, ministerial, or subaltern. I write my creed openly, my dear sir, because I believe in it sincerely; but ask no man to follow it implicitly. You and I have long since settled this, that to be friends, it is not necessary to agree in every particular in politics or religion; and that more light is to be obtained from a strong and an honest mind, that differs from us, than from a shallow one whose great merit is his acquiescence; neither you nor I love feeble spirits. I have spoken of men, of measures, and of things, after my own manner; no one is answerable but myself: if there is aught of evil in it, be it mine; if aught of good, place it, if you please, to the impressions received from friends and intimate acquaintances. You will probably revisit the seat of government again as a politician; your services and talents will be wanted. I shall not be there, *as a looker-on in Venice;* but whatever may be your pathway in the journey of life, whether in the courts of justice or in the halls of the legislature, may you be successful and happy, and still retain that bland and courteous

disposition, and that love to do kind things, which secures the good man's benison, and the orphan's prayer; and without which talents, office, and fame, are empty names.

Most truly,

Your devoted friend,

THE AUTHOR.

NEW-YORK, JUNE, 1830.

SKETCHES.

LETTER I.

Washington, Jan. 1830.

Dear Sir,

You are among the few in your country who take an interest in the affairs of this; and in compliance with your request, I shall from time to time send you such notes as I have made, or shall make of men and things in the United States. I have seen and heard much during the seventeen years I have resided in the United States, and think I can speak with honesty and candour of their institutions, their men, and of their affairs. Having assumed the responsibility of a citizen I shall call it my country. As the alarms of war have passed away, it is natural for the reading public to seek for descriptions of orators, statesmen, poets, painters, &c. rather than of warriors or heroes. This is an active, thinking age, and mind seems to be getting its proper influence in the community, on this as well as on the other side of the water. In my

remarks upon the good folks of this country, I shall not confine myself to any regular order, but give you my opinions as they arise in my mind, believing that in letters from one friend to another there should be no disguise. With this I send you several of the public documents printed by order of Congress, and a bundle of pamphlets containing some of the best American speeches, and also forward a slight notice of some of the most distinguished speakers. As the New-England orator, Mr. Webster, now occupies the largest space in the halls of Legislation, I shall give a sketch of him, which I have no doubt is substantially accurate.

The person of Mr. Webster is singular and commanding: his height is above the ordinary size, but he cannot be called tall; he is broad across the chest, and stoutly and firmly built, but there is nothing of clumsiness either in his form or gait. His head is very large, his forehead high, with good shaped temples. He has a large, black, solemn looking eye, that exhibits strength and steadfastness, and which sometimes burns, but seldom sparkles. His hair is of a raven black, and both thick and short, without the mark of a gray hair. His eye brows are of the same colour, thick and strongly marked, which gives his features the

appearance of sternness; but the general expression of his face after it is properly examined, is rather mild and amiable than otherwise. His movements in the house and in the street are slow and dignified; there is no peculiar sweetness in his voice, its tones are rather harsh than musical, still there is a great variety in them; and some of them catch the ear and chain it down to the most perfect attention. He bears traits of great mental labour, but no marks of age; in fact, his person is more imposing now, in his forty-eighth year, than it was at thirty years of age.

Mr. Webster was born in the state of New-Hampshire, in the Town of Salisbury, on the banks of the Merrimack; his early education was scanty, for at that time the public schools in that part of New-England where he lived were not in the same state they now are. A few months of instruction from some badly educated school-master was all that could be obtained at home. Mr. Webster's father was a man of note in his neighbourhood; sometimes a representative to the legislature, a county judge, and at all times a farmer; having several children, he did not feel able to give them the advantages of a liberal education; but the faculties of his son Daniel attracting the attention of all the intelligent part of the com-

munity about him, he made an effort and sent him to an academy to prepare himself for college. The sagacious eye of his instructer was not long in seeing his extraordinary capacity for his studies, for he strode before his classmates with ease, and left them to come up as they could.

In 1797 he entered Dartmouth college, and graduated in course in 1801. In this seminary he was distinguished as a young man of astonishing powers of mind ; but he coursed over too large a field of knowledge to allow him time for those minute and accurate studies which alone can make a thorough classical scholar. On leaving college he took the charge of an academy for a year, a usual course for the graduates of that college, and then commenced the study of the law. He remained a considerable time in the country in his native village in the office of a tasteful and an elegant scholar, but who was then engaged in the profitable part of his profession, the collecting business ; and this practice being soon understood, Mr. Webster was desirous of seeing courts and witnessing a more enlarged course of practice ; and for this purpose went to Boston, and put himself under the care of Christopher Gore, a distinguished advocate in that metropolis. Gore soon saw and spoke

prophetically of the talents of his pupil. Some political essays he wrote in the papers at that time attracted the attention of men of judgment, and these productions were spoken of as exhibiting great vigour and point. As soon as he was admitted to the bar he returned into the country and commenced the practice of his profession at Boscawen, the town adjoining his native village. It was not long before all eyes were turned upon him, and his business rapidly increased, but he deemed the field too narrow for him, and in about three or four years he left Boscawen for Portsmouth, the largest town in New-Hampshire, a place of extensive commerce and great enterprise. His fame had preceded him; he was soon known to all, and employed in most of the important cases in the courts throughout the State. Smith and Mason were then his competitors; they were shrewd and learned men, who had been brought up in a school of sharp practice, and the young aspirant for distinction had to fight them hard, and he did beard them by all the subtleties of special pleading; and with equal taunts and gibes and sarcasms and such weapons, inflicted equal harms until they acknowledged him as their peer, and made with him an amnesty that was perpetual. Mr. Webster has often said that this was a

good school for him. No doubt it was a good thing for him to be under the necessity of contending alone with his seniors, men who were at the upper row of the bar and had long monopolized the best business. But Mr. Webster had not been at the bar more than seven years when he shared with them the leading cases in all the courts.

At this time party spirit ran high, and the prominent men in New-Hampshire were anxious to see Mr. Webster display his powers in the halls of Congress.—He had taken sides in politics in early life, and had been active with his pen in support of his principles; but he never suffered his zeal to get the better of his judgement;—he was no demagogue. The first halo of political glory that hung around his brow was at a convention of all the great spirits in the county of Rockingham, where he then resided, and such representatives from other counties as were sent to this convention to take into consideration the state of the nation, and to mark out such a course for themselves as should be deemed advisable by the collected wisdom of those assembled. On this occasion an address with a string of resolutions were proposed for adoption, of which he was said to be the author. They exhibited uncommon powers of intellect and

a profound knowledge of our national interests. He made a most powerful speech in support of these resolutions; portions of which were reprinted at that time and which were much admired in every part of the Union. From this time he belonged to the United States, and not to New-Hampshire exclusively. Massachusetts seemed to take as deep an interest in his career as his native state. Not far from this period, a traveller passing through Portsmouth, when some election was near at hand, when at the inn it was announced over the dinner table that Mr. Webster was to speak at a caucus that evening; this news ran from one part of the town to another and all were enthusiastic at hearing that Mr. Webster was going to speak. The gentleman's carriage came to the door and he was about to get into it, when the hostler said, sir, are you going to leave town? Mr. Webster is to speak to night. The gentleman finding all classes so much delighted to hear that Mr. Webster was going to speak, ordered his horses to the stable, and put off his journey until the morrow.

At early candlelight he went to the caucus room; it was filled to overflowing, but some persons seeing that he was a stranger gave way, and he found a convenient place to stand; no one could sit. A tremendous noise soon

announced that the orator had arrived ; but as soon as the meeting was organized, another arose to make some remarks upon the object of the caucus ; he was heard with a polite apathy ; another and another came, and all spoke well, but this would not do, and if Chatham had been among them, or St. Paul, they would not have met the expectations of the multitude. The beloved orator at length arose, and was for a while musing upon some thing which was drowned by a constant cheering : but when order was restored he went on with great serenity and ease, to make his remarks without apparently making the slightest attempt to gain applause. The audience was still, except now and then a murmur of delight which showed that the great mass of the hearers were ready to burst into a thunder of applause, if those who generally set the example would have given an intimation that it might have been done ; but, they devouring every word, made signs to prevent any interruption. The harrangue was ended ; the roar of applause lasted long and was sincere and heart-felt. It was a strong, gentlemanly, and an appropriate speech, but not a particle of the demagogue about it ; nothing like the speeches on the hustings to catch attention. He drew a picture of the candidates on both sides of the

question and proved, as far as reason could prove, the superiority of those of his own choice ; but the gentleman traveller, who was a very good judge, has often said that the most extraordinary part of it was that a promiscuous audience should have had good sense enough to relish such sound, good reasoning, in a place where vague declamation generally is best received.

As the traveller went on toward the East, he found the fame of the speech had preceded him and was talked of in every bar room and at every public table. In 1809 he was put in nomination for congress and was elected. Parties were nearly equally divided, but his name gave great weight to the ticket. In New-Hampshire the members of congress are chosen by general ticket, without regard to districts, or without any further regard to them than that of consulting public feeling in selecting candidates. In Congress he soon became distinguished and was surrounded by the New England delegation, or rather a greater part of them ; and was considered as conspicuous among them, if not at that time precisely their leader. On the great question of renew- the Charter of the Bank of the United States he made a long speech full of well tried facts and sound principles. In any other but high

party times his reasonings would have been irresistible. The question was lost, but when the subject came up again after the peace of 1815, the advocates of the Bank did but little more than repeat his arguments in favour of its establishment.

On retiring from public life he found that his pecuniary affairs were deranged and his friends in Boston invited him to come there, as a wider field for his talents, and promised him business; he removed in 1817, and at once entered into full practice, and shared the best of it, with the elder luminaries of the bar of Suffolk. His practice was not confined to that county, but he was called into Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, and in fact to other counties as far as he would go from home. His fame was every day increasing at the bar; and he seemed to have forgotten that he was ever a politician. To his clients he was every thing, and they complained of nothing, but that it was difficult from the press of those who sought him, to obtain an audience to speak of their cases. Some of the bar fretted at his occasional sharpness and overbearing; and his greatest admirers will not deny that at times, he was petulant, and restive, and he seemed to have forgotten, that he was in a different latitude from that in which he was educated; but

on reflection he generally made amends for any pain he had given. There seemed in his day a common law in New-Hampshire, as well as in England, that every witness might, by examining counsel, be put to the torture and that it was all fair play. In Massachusetts it was not so. The rights and feelings of witnesses were protected by the court, sometimes fastidiously; he knew nothing of that at first, and when he had learned it, often forgot it. In 1823 he was elected from Boston to the legislature of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, but did not take an active part in any important discussion, perhaps there was not any thing which came up at that time to require his aid.

In 1824, Mr. Gorham, who had ably and faithfully represented the District of Suffolk in Congress, resigned his seat in that body. A merchant of talents, and polished education, was put in nomination. Mr. Putnam was one of the most decidedly popular men in the district, and all parties had made up their minds to send him, when some of Mr. Webster's friends put him in nomination only a few days before the election; and when it was ascertained that he would stand as a candidate, there was a strong desire evinced among his old friends to support his election; but not

a few were pledged to Mr. Putnam, who was a most unexceptionable candidate. In this state of things caucuses were held, and at each the speakers struggled to say the kindest things of the two candidates; and when they had made a choice, appeared to regret that both could not be members;. suffice it to say, Mr. Webster was chosen. He came in at the next election unanimously, he was of course the representative of a city, and a people, and not of a party. From the House, he was elected to the senate of the United States, and in that body he took the same stand he had held in the popular branch of the government. He came to it, at once, as he was known to all the members of the senate personally or by reputation. There is not, probably, a lawyer in the United States of his age, who has argued so many important causes as Mr. Webster, notwithstanding his long political services.

When he came to Boston, he could not have ranked among the first scholars of our country, for there were many in his own circle of acquaintance, before him in all the nicities of classical learning. He had not felt this before, and he now devoted many of his leisure hours to classical learning, not merely as an amusement, but as a study; and at the

same time made himself master of the history of his country ; a branch of learning in which most of the American politicians are greatly deficient. In this latter course, he saw minutely the origin of our institutions, and the principles on which they had flourished.

These acquirements give a ripeness and finish to his speeches on all national questions which they had not before ; like Lionardo da Vinci, he added to the magnificence of his early designs, all the gatherings of experience, and the improvements of taste. It is seldom that the bold outline is patiently filled up.

The situation of every man has much to do with his reputation, if it does not alter his character. If it be true that

" Pigmies are pigmies still, though perch'd on Alps,
And pyramids are pyramids in vales,"

yet when the latter are placed on an eminence, their morning and evening shadows are cast at greater length, and the vast pile is seen in all its magnificence at a much greater distance. Coming to the metropolis of New-England, was indeed setting himself on a hill. It was a happy change, for he was made for that city, and that city for him. He seems to have the same power over the people of Boston, and indeed of all Massachusetts, that Pericles had over

the Athenians, and for aught I know is likely to last as long ; for fifteen years it has been waxing apace without feeling any wanings of public opinion. It may be that the measure of his fame is filled up, and that he has reached his acme ; but it is impossible for him to become unpopular while he retains the powers of his mind, and continues his exertions for the honour of his country.

But to speak more particularly of his mental endowments ; he is not wanting in originality, but has not so much of it as to lead him perpetually after novel creations. His memory is strong, and the stores of his knowledge are laid up in admirable order, and ready for use as exigences or circumstances may require. His early friends say that his imagination was once of a high order, and that he wrote vigorous poetry whenever he chose ; and as farther proof of the strength of his fancy they produce a splendid eulogy delivered by him on the death of one of his classmates when in college. It has the gorgeousness of youthful genius about it, and was for years considered the most extraordinary composition ever written at Dartmouth college ; but if imagination was then his most striking characteristic, it is not so now. The severe discipline to which he, on coming to the bar, put it under, soon de-

stroyed the inspiration of the muse, and laid her lifeless at the feet of reason. That power of the mind, whatever metaphysicians may call it, that looks over the utmost extent of a subject at a glance ; that which grasps all its near and remote bearings, and comprehends its dependencies and relations, and can throw out all the results of reasoning upon it to the public in the smallest compass of time, is his, —pre-eminently his. It may be called genius, judgment, talent—any thing—no matter what: it is greatness, mental greatness, abstracted from circumstances or accident.

There are men who say that Mr. Webster has been over-rated—this is not true ; some of his over-weening friends, have at times for want of discernment, spoken of his ordinary efforts at the bar, and other places, as wonderful productions, comparing them with his highest efforts. The greatest minds are sometimes common-place, and many of his speeches should have passed away as other common-place matters have done. It is equally wrong to look to his orations on great occasions for the proudest productions of his intellect. These productions are noble compositions, powerful discussions of the subject in hand, abounding in deep strength, pertinent remark, and striking illustrations ; but they are not, af-

ter all the praise which has been bestowed upon them, his most felicitous labours. He cannot lash himself into passion in the closet ; he requires excitement that he cannot find there ; he must be roused by some spirit of emulation, rivalry, or resentment; he must be awakened by the cry that the Philistines are upon him, before the strength of his seven locks are felt.

It is before a court and jury, or in the deliberate assembly that the full extent of his powers can be understood ; and even there it depends much on who his opponents may be, whether he shall be great or not.

But if the oration at the landing of the Pilgrims, is not his greatest effort, it was indeed a fine one ; the production abounds in depth of thought and majesty of language.

The oration at Bunker's Hill was literally delivered to the world. In the open air, exposed to sun and winds, stood an orator ripe with the thoughts of manhood, before all the impressions and the glow of early days had gone; myriads of listeners were around him ; heroes were clustering near him, among them the representatives of other hemispheres ; holy men who were just entering eternity, were ready to implore a blessing, and depart ; the bones of friends, and enemies, were shaking in their graves beneath the feet of new and old gene-

rations, and passing time, was announcing that half a century had elapsed since the roar of battle had broke over the sacred ground; the corner stone of a time defying monument was then resting at his feet, and an hundred thousand bosoms in his sight were swelling and heaving with patriotism and republican pride; how sublime the scene! what a moment for "*thoughts that breathe and words that burn*:" and is it not enough to say that all were satisfied?

His next oration was on the death of Adams and Jefferson. It was delivered on the 2d of August, 1826, in Fanuiel Hall, the cradle of American liberty. Not more than one tenth of those who strove to hear him could get admittance. The excitement was wonderful. Happy is the orator who has an audience that love him; his glory is more than half perfected before an accent is heard, or his lips move—

I have seen
The dumb men throng to see him, and the blind
To hear him speak: the matrons flung their gloves,
Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchiefs,
Upon him as he passed: The nobles bended,
As to Jove's statue; and the commons made
A shower and thunder, with their caps and shouts:
I never saw the like.

CORIOLANUS.

His manners at the bar, and in the deliberate assembly, are peculiar. He begins to state his points in a low voice, and in a slow, cool, cautious and philosophical manner; he goes on hammering out link by link his chain of argument with ponderous blows, and while thus at labour, you rather see the sinews of the arm, than the skill of the artist. It is in reply, that he comes out in the majesty of intellectual grandeur, and lavishes about him the opulence of intellectual wealth. It is when the darts of the enemy have hit him, that he is all might and soul; it is then, that he showers down words of weight and fire. Hear him, and you will say that his eloquence is founded on no model, ancient or modern, that he never read the works of a master for instruction; all is his own, excellencies and defects. His voice has an extraordinary compass; for he fills the largest room without great effort. His emphasis belongs to himself alone; it is founded on no rule—nor can it be reduced to any.

Fanueil Hall, and the largest room of the capitol, are within the power of his voice, and he speaks in them with apparent ease. The style of his eloquence is also all his own; he resembles no American orator we yet have heard; he does not imitate in the least, the Addisonian eloquence of Alexander Hamilton,

which was the day-spring in a pure vernal atmosphere, full of health and beauty; nor does he labour for the sweetness of Fisher Ames, whose heart on all great occasions, *grew liquid, and he could pour it out like water:* nor like him, could Mr. Webster, by the magic wand of the enchantress make a paradise, and people it with ethereal beings; no; all the subject of this notice did, or could do, was to work in a straight-forward course, with mortal engines, and show himself mighty in earth, air, and water; but in these his sway was Herculean: He had all the elements at command, and he used them as one of earth-born mould, but of gigantic proportions. He never strives to dazzle, confuse or astonish; but goes on to convince and to conquer by legitimate means. When he goes out to battle, it is without squire, aid-de-camp, or armour-bearer; although hundreds are ready to take any part in and about his person. In his conflict he trusts to no arm but his own—he rests only on the staff of his own spear.

I believe that it can be said of him, that he shows none of that vanity in debate, which belonged to the very nature of the great father of Roman eloquence, and was conspicuous in all his acts of a public nature; but if he never said with him "*Video, patres conscripti, in me*

ominum ora, atque occulos esse conversos ;" yet from his lofty carriage, his haughty brow, his swelling veins, and curled lip, you would judge that he had no small share of that sin "*for which fell the angels.*"

Some of his admirers talk of his wit in debate. There is often a piquancy and girding retort in his arguments, that by some may be called wit ; but it is not the wit of Sheridan or of any professed wit ; nor that wit which sparkles out, and illumines the subject under discussion, and seems to be the offspring of the moment, but is a matter of long and previous deliberation, perhaps, of frequent rehearsal. Instead of those pyrotechnics, of the war of words, Webster's speeches abound in the burning intensity of that heat which sheds a flash of light around, such as we see proceeding from a glowing mass of iron, when drawn by a powerful arm across the anvil. In the United States, there have been, and there now are, men of some one, or more qualifications superior to any single trait of Mr. Webster's mind. Some have more learning, others more wit, some have a sweeter voice, others have a more refined taste ; and not a few of more imagination ; but in the combination of all these powers, he has no equal. He seizes his subject, turns it to the light, and however difficult, soon makes it fa-

miliar, however intricate, plain, and with a sort of supernatural power, he *possesses* his hearers, and controls their opinions. His friends yield at once with a delighted willingness, and his opponents give up after a few ineffectual struggles; even those who talk on against him, show that their tones are altered, and that they are conscious of the victory he has achieved over them, and the thraldom in which they are placed. The "*reluctantes dracones*," after he has brushed the swarm of flies away, soon become quiet in his grasp.

There are many, and those too of no little intelligence, who think and avow their opinions, that the present race of politicians are inferior to that which has just passed away; and to account for their opinion, they say it requires less of talent, to administer a government, than to make a constitution, and less energy to cultivate peace, than to fight out a revolutionary war. We are not converts to this doctrine. To equipoise the general government with state rights, to keep all safe on the waves of party violence, to keep the great states from infringing on the rights of the small, and to take care that no state should oppress its own citizens, is quite as hard a task, and requires as much mind, prudence, labor, and calculation, as did the great work of the

preceding generation, that of establishing national independence, and agreeing on a form of popular government.

Mr. Webster has every advantage for intellectual discipline, having been born among the yeomanry of New-Hampshire, he became early acquainted with their capacities, feelings and habits, and from his practice as a lawyer among them, at the commencement of his professional career, he became still more accurately acquainted with their whole character. There is no profession, equal to that of the law, to teach one a knowledge of human nature; entering on a political course, his views were expanded and he saw men playing higher games with pretty much the same motives. One of the evils attending great men in England, and other aristocratic governments is, that they have but little acquaintance with the middling classes in society, and many of them from being educated privately, have never tried their corporeal and mental strength with beings of their own age.

When mind contends with mind, without any of the distinctions of society in a public school, the powers of each are very accurately measured—and the youth grows up to manhood with a proper knowledge of his own capacity. These school exercises are efficacious in ta-

king out of the mind that vanity, and conceit, that partial friends are apt to infuse into forward boys. The college in which Mr. Webster was educated is most favourable to this mode of testing minds. The scholars are all on an equality the moment they enter the institution. All have their way to make in the world—and the moment they have graduated, fly off to distant places and begin their labors as those well aware of what they have to do.

In every place where Mr. Webster has been called to act, he has been prominent, in courts of justice and in halls of Legislation. Before he was thirty years of age, he stood unequalled in congress as a debater, and even then, his claims were acknowledged by a most powerful, but generous political opponent, Mr. Lowndes. In the convention for altering and amending the constitution of Massachusetts, the Patriarch of that numerous and highly intellectual body, John Adams, stated openly, that Mr. Webster, was the first man among them; and indeed, he did not hesitate to say, that he had never met in his long acquaintance with statesmen, a superior mind, viewing him in every respect.

His enemies say that he is ambitious; this will not be denied by his friends; but can there be such a thing as a statesman, without

ambition? Even the martyr's bosom is not free from ambition; he looks to the crown of glory in another world. That Mr. Webster has failings, no one will deny; for who is without them? but they are not those which impair his mind, or injure his political usefulness. Some may have cause to complain of his distance or coldness; others of his forgetfulness or want of generosity in acknowledging their merits. The *nil admirari* is frequently an ingredient in a statesman's creed, but after all, justice in making out her balance sheet, has to allow for the jealousies of the mediocre and the little, as well as for the coldness of the great. The writer of this article is no follower, vassal, or even lover of Mr. Webster; but he thinks him a man of whom his country should be proud, and one that every honest politician should honor and protect; for if he sometimes acts with a party, his general sentiments are truly national and noble.

In every country the character of a public man is common property, and in most countries they speak of them with great freedom, and often with much profligate severity. Mr. Webster, however, has suffered more from injudicious and indiscriminating admirers than from the bitterest enemies he has ever had. Those nauseous flatterers and cringing toad-

eaters who exist always near a great man, and who are ready to lie, fume and cry aloud in his praise, disgust honest admiration and offend common sense; no man has suffered more from this pittiful race than Mr. Webster. They are not content with showing the size of the man from the impressions of his footstep; nor inferring his strength from his deeds of prowess; but they must deal in the miraculous: Such a man as Mr. Webster requires no such abettors or false aids; he is above them.

On the basis of his own merits he may rest his fame; it will support through all the ages of this republic a collossal figure for the pride of the nation, and the delight of those who love to contemplate the finest efforts of human genius.

LETTER II.

Washington, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

The Vice President, Mr. Calhoun, now occupies a large space in the eye of the nation. He is, indeed, a very considerable man in the political world, and no ordinary one as a statesman or an orator. He is now about forty-eight years old, born in Pennsylvania, and bred in South Carolina. He received his education at Yale College, and was a favourite of that great instructor, Dr. Dwight, then president of that Institution. Soon after he was admitted to the bar, he was sent to Congress, and at once took a leading part in the business and debates, of that period. From the House of Representatives he was made Secretary of War. In this office he made all his calculations on a broad, bold scale; he reorganized the army and got rid of no small share of the blustering ignorance which is always found among the fair character and talents of such bodies after a war of some continuance.

His plan of fortification for the most exposed parts of the sea-board and frontiers was a bold and magnificent one, worthy of the war

department and of a great people. The parsimonious were alarmed at the extent of his expenditures, and the very prudent thought him lavish of the public monies ; still the wise and calculating supported him from a belief in the utility of his measures. He hated that parsimony which is always in the end the worst of prodigalities. Such was the state of the army when he came into office that it required a bold hand like his to reform it. There can be no doubt but great injustice was done to individuals in razeeing, yet, on the whole, the public were benefitted by the reform.

From the head of the war department, Mr. Calhoun was elevated to the Vice Presidency, and served one term with Mr. Adams, and is now on his second, with General Jackson.

The vice Presidency has not been a place for an ambitious man heretofore. He was not until the elevation of General Jackson considered a member of the cabinet, and had but little more to do than to preside in the Senate. This requires but little talent. Mr. Calhoun was a candidate for the presidency, but at length sent in his *declinature* in favor of general Jackson. This gave a shock to his popularity, for he had then enlisted in his cause some of the first spirits in the country. These were all at once afloat and some confusion ensued.

Mr. Calhoun is now prominently before the public. He has high claims and many friends; but he, nor any one else can divine his fate. The changing winds are not more uncertain than popular favour; *it bloweth where it listeth, and no one comprehendeth it.*

Mr. Calhoun is a man of great readiness, sagacity and daring. He comes quickly to a point, and acts fearlessly upon what he thinks is well for him to do. In conversation Mr. Calhoun is fluent, rapid and ingenuous, and the productions of his pen are of the same stamp. He stops for none of the graces of finishing. His eloquence is not of a high grade if manner and voice make up any portion of eloquence. His action is vehement and his words flow in torrents. When Secretary at war he brought forward some of the young men of talents he had known in college or as fellow students at law, and every selection justified his knowledge of character, and his just appreciation of ability and tact for business. He is ambitious; but who would moil and toil for many years for place and power if he were not ambitious? The thorny pinnacle of power must be reached by long and painful labour and countless privations, anxious days and sleepless nights belong to him who seeks distinctions in any path of life.

LETTER III.

Washington, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Everett you have seen, and therefore I need not describe his person to you; when in Europe he was, as you know, much caressed as a learned man; his course has been singular and prominent. While at Harvard University as a student he was distinguished, though very young; on leaving college he studied divinity and was ordained and settled a youthful prodigy. In elegant literature he had no equal of his age and the world was delighted with his pulpit eloquence; whenever he preached crowds of the most accomplished of both sexes assembled to hear his splendid sermons; these discourses if they had not so much of the holy unction in them as in some sermons of graver men, still there was a purity of taste and a sweet solemnity that made him delightful to hearers of all creeds. A few years after his ordination he was elected to a professorship in Harvard University. This office he accepted on condition of being allowed to visit Europe and reside a year or

two in Germany. He set out on this tour with all the ardour of a young man panting for knowledge and ambitious of surpassing all, in his accomplishments. In his absence he visited Rome, France, and England, and tarried for some time at Gottengen, and became enamoured with German literature. He extended his travels to Greece, and there drank inspiration among the relics of ancient taste and greatness. He examined the Parthenon in its ruins with great minuteness, as well as all other things worthy of notice. He returned to his Alma Mater with a mind filled with "the spoils of time," and a memory stored with the *humanities*, the great object of his travels, and commenced his labours as a professor, and at once became the pride of the University and the delight of his pupils.

He did not confine himself to the instruction of college classes, but gave a splendid course of lectures on Architecture, which was numerously attended by the most enlightened persons of both sexes in the metropolis of New-England. At this time he was considered the Editor of the North American Review, which was well conducted, and took the lead in the periodicals of the country. His portions of the work are distinguished for taste, talent and learning; there is a variety and

raciness about his productions that mark one born and bred among the Muses; In fact he was a scholar by profession, and wore the laurel among all the lettered and polite as an every day ornament. In an evil hour for American literature the politicians of his District turned their eyes upon him as member of Congress, and he left the lecture room, perhaps never to return. In Congress he is respected for his learning, and talents. When he rises all are anxious to catch every word he has to say—not that his eloquence there, is as good as it was in the pulpit, or the lecture-room, but that the information he gives may be relied on, for he has day and date, chapter and page, for every thing he says, and the purity of his language forms a great contrast to that of many of those around him. He has too much refinement for the *rough and tumble* of Congress skirmishing. In this body he has frequently been selected as Chairman of committees to make reports, on important subjects, and these are generally admired for their clearness of reasoning and appropriateness of style; these reports are said to prove that he is greater in the closet than on the floor of the House; but he is great every where.

Such men are wanted in the American Congress, for loving the country so much as I do,

I am constrained to confess that there is no little ignorance in the National assembly, and that learning does not always receive its due honour. Mr. Everett's eloquence is characterized by taste, sweetness, harmony, delicacy and correctness. It has the Ciceronian flow, ease and purity, and all the great Roman's accuracy and marks of scholarship. He is said to be ambitious, and to dearly love political distinctions. Of this, it is probable, he will soon get cured in the shiftings and changings of party, and in the fulness of his genius, return from the bustle of the Hall of Legistion to the groves of the Academy he deserted. If it should so happen, it will be well; for learning should have more knowledge of the world than it generally has, and the world should have more learning than it is disposed to honour and cherish.

LETTER IV.

Washington, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

Edward Livingston, of the Senate, is a hale, vigorous man, past the grand climacteric. He has been active in professional and political pursuits for more than forty years. He was born in the state of New-York, and by brilliant talents, and family connexions, was early brought into public notice. As a lawyer he was conspicuous and took a high stand, at a very early age, at the bar. In 1793 he was in Congress, and took an active part on the questions which arose upon Jay's Treaty. He was, of course, in the minority; which is the best school for a young, aspiring politician. He can discuss measures without being responsible for them, and learns the science of attack and defence without danger of injuring his reputation. After being in Congress for some years, he was elected mayor of the city of New-York; an office then next, in point of emolument, to that of the President of the United States. It is said that he was a very

effective, energetic executive officer; and "that there never was a better judicial officer on the bench than Edward Livingston." He was succeeded by De Witt Clinton.

When the United States extended their sovereignty over Louisiana by purchase, Mr. Livingston went to settle in New-Orleans. Here he was at once the first lawyer of that country, and was employed in all the important cases. Being master of the French and Spanish languages, and well read in the civil law, he was called upon to compile their code; which was so ably done that his compilation is considered the law of the land in all the courts. Since that period he has been employed by that state to form a penal code of laws, a code of procedure and of state prison discipline. All this he has furnished; and Congress are about to take a part of it for the District of Columbia. In preparing this he has spared no labor, and suffered no obstacle to deter him for a moment. A very considerable portion of the manuscript of his code was burnt in the city of New-York, at ten o'clock in the evening, and at seven next morning he sat down to begin his labors upon it anew. What cannot be accomplished by such perseverance? In making up these codes he has ransacked the annals of all ages and

nations, and read every treatise on crime and punishment that the lettered world affords: and in addition to this, held a correspondence with all the philanthropists of the age: nothing has escaped him.

"To him familiar every legal dome,
The Courts of Athens, and the Halls of Rome."

Those who have read these codes, do not hesitate to say, that for comprehension and clearness, exactness in defining crime, for distinctness and simplicity in making out the modes of proceeding to ascertain the guilt or innocence of a prisoner, that his surpasses all other codes that can be found. And another excellence of it is, that it leaves as little for the discretion of the judge as possible.

Although Mr. Livingston's life has been a busy one, and he has done much at the bar and in Congress, and out of these walks of life he has contended with principalities and powers in more than a ten years warfare, and come off with success; still he looks to his code for permanent fame. Besides its learning and wisdom, there is a living and immortal principle in it, that will bless it for ever. It is a benevolent code. His justice is not a confused, sanguinary Deity, who lifts her devouring sword at every offence; but

one who punishes in mercy, making discriminations in the nature of punishments as she discovers differences in the nature of crimes. If Mr. Livingston does not, in his lifetime, see it adopted entire, by any state or country, he will find that its spirit will silently enter the penal codes of all civilized nations, and sweeten the bitter fountains of penal vengeance.

Mr. Livingston is one of the most learned men of his age; for he has been assiduous in acquiring knowledge, and has lost none of his acquisitions by ill health or decay of mental powers. If his style is less copious than it was in his earlier days, it has lost nothing of its vigour or spirit: even his imagination has all the creative powers it had when he first appeared before the public, as his last speech in the Senate, on Mr. Foot's resolutions, will fully show.

LETTER V.

Washington, Jan. 1830.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Wirt you have heard of as the Author of the British spy and several other works which have been read and admired in this Country and in Europe. He is now about sixty years of age, a stout, fair, good looking man. He has been for many years a laborious lawyer, and for several years past Attorney General of the United States, which office he has filled with credit to himself and to the Nation. His manners are bland and courteous, particularly, to those who seek him, tinged with a little of that Virginian trait—self-consideration, which gives a dignity to a public man when it does not degenerate into the affectation of high bred fashion without many early advantages. Mr. Wirt, in the midst of the business of an arduous profession, has made himself a fine classical scholar. His imagination is strong and refined. He sees every subject in its true light and paints it with a master's touch; some of his descriptions glow with all the colours of fancy and are yet most admirably true

to nature. Many of his intellectual portraits are of the first order of genius, and some of his narratives are wrought up to a dramatic affect. His often supposed that one so imaginative could not have a logical mind. This is an error: No one would deny to Shakespeare or Milton a good share of logical power, yet they "*exhausted worlds and then imagined new.*" Strip the arguments of Mr. Wirt of all their beautiful drapery, and tear away all the clusters of diamonds that sparkle around them, you will find as sound reasoning as in the dry speeches of a professed logician, who from an iron throat and hide-bound brain, give his hearers a string of tasteless sylogysms. By many Mr. Wirt is held up as the first orator in the United States, and no one will venture to say that he is not among the first. His fame had reached its acme before he was made Attorney General; there is nothing in the duties of that office, in quiet times, to increase a man's knowledge or his fame. Most of the business of the United States is done by the district attornies, who are generally men of talents and do their work so well, that but little of it goes to Washington, for the attorney general to attend to. Mr. Wirt is held in high estimation by the Supreme Court, and the bar of that court at Washington. In Virginia and in Maryland Mr.

Wirt was familiarly known as an advocate; but the good people of the East had never heard him in a cause until last year. In an equity cause of importance involving reputation and large sums of money, he made his appearance in Boston. No great actor that ever crossed the Atlantic was more talked of before his arrival than Mr. Wirt. The learned, the Thebans of both sexes assembled to hear his argument, but with the most kindly disposition imginable. He was pitted against their Champion, and the interest was wound up to a high pitch. The race was as well contested as that great one between Henry and Eclipse; and like that won by half a neck. In other words it was thought a fair match; bone and muscle contended with blood and spirit. Mr. Wirt lost his cause but came off with the affectionate respect of the people, even of his opponents. Those interchanges of civilities among Eastern and Southern men, united with a display of the powers of each have a good effect in removing prejudices and establishing friendships among the people of different sections of of the country.

Look into the Supreme Court of the United States, almost any day of its session, and you will perceive a small man with a solemn

countenance, a slow, low voice, with a head covered with thick hair growing rapidly grey, and with eyes fixed upon his papers, talking to the court as if they were statues, but in a strain of most powerful reasoning: This is General Walter Jones, one of the first lawyers in the United States. He was educated at William and Mary College, is a good classical scholar, and one of the best metaphysicians of the country. He is unlike the orators of the south; there is no dash of eloquence in his speeches, but a neat, elegant and appropriate choice of words is found in every remark that falls from him. Those who know him speak well of him as a gentleman; but it is only as a public man that I know him. He resides in the city of Washington and is engaged in all the important causes that originate there, and in many from abroad. When once engaged he touches every point in a subject before he sits down; and he is sometimes tedious from the great length and minuteness of his arguments, but in making an analysis of them, when he has finished you find that they have been as close and particular as the subject would admit of, and the reviewer would meet with no small difficulty in suggesting any alterations for the better. The Supreme court have a profound

respect for General Jones and never lose a word of his argument however long he may be in a cause. He meets the arguments of his opponents with more ingenuity, if possible, than he shows in makng his own ; he seizes the weak points with acuteness and turns them to his advantage with great adroitness, but without sneer or sarcasm. In the circuit court of the District of Columbia he is engaged in all the trials, and is as good a jury lawyer as any man at the bar. There are times, when warmed with his cause before a jury, that he is thought to be eloquent ; certainly he is very impressive and successful. His is a species of eloquence, and that of the very best kind to an enlightened jury ; and the manner of summoning a jury in the District, secures the best of the citizens for the pannel. In the street and in the court room, Jones seems to be in a constant state of abstraction, a sort of disease of the mind. This is adduced by his city friends as a wonderful proof of mental labour. It may be so in his case ; but abstraction of mind, and absence of mind, are frequently taken for the same thing; they are not so : the former is the power of concentrating thoughts on one subject, and calling them in, as it were, from all their wanderings, to increase their force in its consideration ; while

absence is an unconsciousness of any thought, and may belong to one grade of intellect as well as to another. There are no uniform symptoms of mental greatness ; it shows itself, when it exists, under all guises and in various modes ; but under any, it can never be entirely concealed. How unlike each other are these distinguished lawyers ! as unlike as Cicero and Sallust. All hearers like both ; but each has his devoted admirers.

LETTER VI.

Washington Jan. 1830

Dear Sir,

I have often seen that most singular man you enquire after ; and often heard him speak. Many of the sketches of his person have been more accurate than those given of his mind. It must be confessed that his person and dress are so unique that a just representation of them would, to those unacquainted with Mr. Randolph, seem a caricature. He is about six feet in height, perhaps his narrow chest and long legs make him appear a little taller than he is. His head is small, his shoulders high, and all parts of his physiognomy, except his eye, altogether unintellectual. He is beardless, or nearly so, and his muscles and his skin about his face shrivelled, although he is not more than fifty-six years of age. Notwithstanding his height, his frame is so slender that his weight is not more than one hundred and thirty pounds. His long legs support a short body that is *not more than a talon in the waist.*" His arms are very long and small and his fin-

gers bird-claw-like, and in debate he makes them very expressive. His hair is dark, thin and lank, and lies close to his head. His movements are rapid and awkward. His voice is shrill and high, and perfectly soprano : latterly his voice has lost most of its power ; his throat seems to be dry and husky. This is the effect of disease, for he has long been an invalid, the fine piercing and fife-like notes of his voice are nearly extinct. So much for his person. His mind is still more singular than his person. His perceptions are, I speak of him as he has been, quick and his impressions strong ; but it is in the strength and elevation of his imagination that he is above most men.

His judgment, from every evidence I have ever seen or heard, is either feeble or never consulted in his acts or speeches. His memory is good, often minutely accurate ; but it is now somewhat impaired. His attainments are considerable, rather miscellaneous than political or professional. His knowledge of the English language is critical and extensive, and he is quite fastidious in his choice of words ; and one of his best things about him is that he keeps a constant vigil over the good old English, his mother tongue. His acquaintance with English history is minute ; and it may be said of him that he is well read in gen-

eral history ; but saving and excepting the annals of his own state he knows not much of American history. His classical knowledge has been overrated. In the common latin classics he is quite at home, and quotes with great readiness, but his acquaintance with those less read in this country must be limited, for in his passion for display he never mentions them.

Mr. Randolph has been in congress most of the time since he was eligible from constitutional age, and at all times has been conspicuous as a declaimer, but never has shown the slightest tact for business. I believe the Journals of congress do not show that he ever made a report in all this length of time ; and no one recollects of his ever having drawn a bill. He has nothing more to do with the ordinary proceedings of congress than the last comet that appeared in our solar system had in regulating the motions of the planets.

The only congressional business he ever set seriously about, was the impeachment of judge Chase, and in this he failed. He made a splendid declamation on this subject, mostly unsupported by the facts in the case ; he laboured hard to demolish the judge but did not succeed ; the good sense of the Senate saved the

enroachments on the judiciary. Randolph came out of the contest without a single laurel.

He has notwithstanding his pretentions to consistency been a politician that no party could for a moment, or but for a moment trust. He disliked Washington, and violently opposed John Adams, and was disappointed in Jefferson, as from him he expected much, but the philosopher could not, or certainly did not trust him. He openly quarrelled with Madison and never was cordial with Munroe. He raved like a madman against John Q. Adams, and said and did every thing in his power to injure his administration; and it is well known that he supported Jackson from his dislike to Adams, for he did not stop in Washington to witness the inauguration, but hurried off to Virginia, thinking he had done enough for the hero.

By profession Mr. Randolph is a democrat, by every habit an aristocrat, for he is proud as Lucifer, and except in his maudlin moments suffers no one to approach him with familiarity. His friendships are as capricious as an April cloud; and his enmities bitter and lasting. His tongue "*a chartered libertine*" has under it the venom of asps. No one can tell on whom his next cateract of abuse is to fall, and no one is secure from it. He has libelled

some of the best men the country ever produced, and praised many that no body else ever heard of ten miles from their native village. He has, like the jesters in the courts of Kings in former days, been previleged, to rail on all around him, and it must be confessed, that this same railer is diabolically ingenious in his invention of phrases, and in his choice of words, to give force to his fiendish disposition. He stole a leaf from the curse-book of Pandimonium to express his hatred for Henry Clay. The victim of his wrath called Randolph to the field, and fired an ineffective shot at the shadow, in order to convey away the agonies of his resentment. It may be asked by you, if there are no bright spots on his escutcheon, no fair side to the medal. It is said that he is generous at times;—that he is a kind master to his slaves;—that he is a good neighbour; and always popular in his district;—these things are something, and in a fair estimate of him should not be forgotten; and notwithstanding his love of English books, English manners, Baronial Castles and feasts, and his profuse panegyrics on Ducal pedigrees, which show more acquaintance with the blazonry of their armorial bearings than of his own Country's history, yet, there are men who say that he loves his country, and like his father

would have the courage to fight for it, that is if he could have his own way of fighting.

On the whole survey of his character Mr. Randolph may be set down as one of the most eccentric beings that any age ever produced, and perhaps this same examination would assist to confirm the moral philosophers in their opinions that all eccentricity is a species of madness.

LETTER VII.

Washington, Jan. 1830.

Dear Sir,

Col. Richard M. Johnson, now of the House of Representatives was last year of the Senate. He is about fifty one or two years old a full blooded Kentuckian, that is a man generous, warm-hearted, brave, ambitious; and supplying the defects of education, by perseverance, hardihood, and fearlesness. He was sent early in life as a representive in Congress, and at once took an active part; and quite a high-minded one, all things considered. Among the memorabilia of his life it should not be forgotten, that he had the magnanimity to espouse the cause of Mrs. Hamilton, on a petition for pay for the services of her husband, for many years in the revolutionary war. This pay, Col. Hamilton had relinquished, in order that his motives should not be questioned, in the course he was about to recommend to Congress in regard to his funding system. He had made a noble sacrifice on the altar of patriotism, and he was now no more. The great

man when living, had asked nothing. He was dead; and it was right that the nation should remember the wisdom of one so generous, Col. Johnson never gave up the point until it was accomplished. Story, and others came to the aid of Johnson in this cause of justice, and the bill was passed although prejudice and party strove against it. In this, as in many other instances, Johnson acted above party.

Col. Johnson was a zealous advocate for the war of 1812, and after voting for it, went home and assisted his brother to raise a regiment of mounted volunteers: took a Lt. Colonel's commission, and marched to join general Harrison, and was foremost in the battle of Thames river. To this regiment commanded by his brother and himself, then divided in the fight, much of the glory of that victory is due. He took his course against the Indians, and it is said that in this conflict he shot the celebrated chief, Brigadier General Tecumseh, the most renowned savage since the days of King Philip.

His own account of the deed is plain and modest. The Indian shot at him, and wounded him in the arm, when Col. Johnson fired his horse-pistol at him within six or eight yards and brought him to the dust. Johnson was

then ignorant of his rank, but at once surmised it from the instant retreat of the whole body of Indians, and the terrible howl that accompanied it. They who deny that this savage was the fierce Tecumseh never refused to Johnson the palm of gallantry and success in battle. Johnson is a plain unaffected man, a warm and persevering friend, a strong partizan, and both friends and enemies know where to find him. He has not a particle of hypocracy in his nature; he speaks of men in, or out of office, with great freedom; and poising himself at all times on his own magnimity never becomes the slave of any body, or set of men. He is honest, fluent and open in debate, and speaks *right on, what he does think,* whether it be politic or otherwise for party; though he has very good party tact, having been nurtured in it. There is nothing in his speeches either remarkable for eloquence or learning; but abundance of directness and honesty. Every body is pleased with the sentiments of the man, if they do not think him a first rate orator; it must however be acknowledged that there are those who think him remarkably eloquent. Something of his popularity arises from his having been a constant advocate for the abolition of imprisonment for debt. In season, and out of season

he has never deserted his cause; but has gone on to call the attention of the philosophic and wise to the sufferings of the unfortunate debtors throughout the country.

Col. Johnson is an invalid from the wounds he received in the battles in which he was engaged, and looks pale in his seat in the Senate or House, and is seldom seen at the convivial board or the evening party. He is careful of his health; but notwithstanding the feeble state of it, he manages to get through a great mass of business in the course of the day. The western members have an onerous correspondence with their constituents. It is any thing but a sinecure to be a Member of Congress from the other side of the Allegany. Col. Johnson is a popular man, and has many friends in various parts of the Union, who speak of him as Vice President of the United States for the next election. With politics I have nothing to do, there are a great many politicians and philanthropists who would be gratified to see him elevated to the second office of the nation.

LETTER VIII.

Washington Jan 1830.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Dwight is from the mountains of Massachusetts. The pure skies of Berkshire have given his person an athletic frame, but his polished manner and city air mark him as a well bred man. He is in Washington a fashionable man, not of the Brummel school of affectation and pretension, but of that easy dignified cast that shows the man of mind as well as of manners. If he moves down the dance with grace, his powers are not confined to the ball room; for the Belle who has been his partner there, the next day hears him as she listens from the gallery of the house of representatives, mingling in the debate ; and in a sweet sonorous, but manly voice, supporting or defending his side of the question in an argument at once lucid and powerful. If he were assiduously to cultivate eloquence, he would be second to none in the country, for he has every physical and mental capacity

for a great speaker. When any high responsibility is upon him he is powerful in debate. Mr. Dwight is a popular man in the House, for he is affable to all, and yields as far as necessary for courtesy to every one, but never gives up a jot of principle. His independence in his course of debating and voting is as great and as completely maintained, as that of the roughest member who makes a declaration of his independence at every paragraph of his speech. There is no small degree of tact necessary in understanding the temper of a deliberate assembly, and this he has equal to any member of congress. He has been long enough there to fathom all the depths of party policy, which after all has no witchcraft in it, to use his knowledge to advantage. Mr. Dwight does better in a complicated, than in a familiar question: as a strong man appears best when he has weight to carry to swell his muscles. He is yet young and will probably serve his country for many years, and were I his particular friend I would whisper in his ear, "*omnia vincit labor*," which is the true motto for a man of talents.

The present Attorney General John Mc Pherson Berrien is from Georgia but I understand that he is a native of Philadelphia. He

is a most eloquent speaker. In the senate he was a model for chaste, free, beautiful elocution. He seemed to be the only man that Webster softened his voice to, when he turned from his seat to address him. There is not the slightes dash in his manner ; it is as grave as it is pleasant. His views are clear, and he meets the subject manfully. In his arguments there is no demagogical praises of his constituents, no tirade of abuse against his opponents, or of the section of country from whence they came. He is said to have been a good judge on the bench, and an excellent lawyer at the bar, and surely he was a host for his party in the Senate. He is now an Attorney General, and a cabinet councillor as well as counsel for the cabinet. The public of all parties have great confidence in him, and he stands fair for higher promotion. It is so seldom that we hear in Congress a classical style of speaking, that a man who has any regard for the advancement of taste, admires such a speaker. He is said to be a lover of literature, and it is to be hoped that in his high office, he will advise the President to recommend its protection and encouragement. The President and heads of departments can do much for literature and science, if they feel disposed to do it. The records of the nation are not yet thor-

oughly examined. It is time the work was done. The present is the hour to begin, and the zeal of the future may atone for the apathy of the past. It is a solemn truth that the United States do not support a single literary man; as such, the nearest to it is the librarian of Congress and he is obliged to be a mere shelf and catalogue man, whatever may be his acquirements.

Mr. M'Duffie who has figured in congress, for several years past from South Carolina is an eleve of Mr. Calhoun. He is a fiery speaker? full of gesture, and one would think to see him, when speaking, and if out of distinct hearing, that he was wrought up to a frenzy, such is the violence of his manner. Mr. M'Duffie is unquestionably a man of talents; but like most men of talents whose early education was defective, he mistakes his own thoughts and opinions for original thoughts, because he is not sufficiently acquainted with the thoughts and opinions of those who have gone before him, and prides himself upon being the author of axioms that were promulgated ages before he was born. Mr. M'Duffie has been prominently brought before the public, and has been able to support a high character, for high intellect even in

his errors. His late reports on several subjects prove that he is industrious and, that he spares no pains in his researches; and all believe that when time has taken off the fiery edge of his spirits, that he will be a still more conspicuous statesman than he now is, for until lately he *tore his passion to the very rags;* when the subject might have been discussed in the quietness of a quaker meeeting.

Mr. Davis of Massachusetts is a fair specimen of the talent, gravity and solidity of the New-England people. He thinks correctly and talks well; not easily moved to resentment or worked up to passion; his speeches are one unbroken chain of argument; his language is plain but forcible; his manner calm, even, and manly; his voice is clear and strong, and precisely such a one as gains attention and secures it. He is always so self-poised that no one can shake him from his purpose; so well informed that he is never put down by any detection of a mistake in what he states for facts; so just to others that no one can complain that he misrepresents them, and he understands his subjects and his rights so well, that he is never called to order, without assuming to direct, he often leads the debate, for the productions of an honest and

powerful mind, have their effects on friends and opponents. His speeches are listened to and read for the information they contain, and they never offend taste by any extravagance of diction or inference, and some of his speeches are models of strength, symplicity and good English.

LETTER IX.

Washington, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

The rapid growth of this country has been the wonder of the world; but the causes of this growth have been overlooked or misunderstood. It has vaguely been attributed to their freedom; yet the aborigines were freer than they have been; and what did they do for the advancement of national prosperity? The secret of their growth has been the development of their civil institutions; the seeds of which they brought from their native land. They have grown up without fetters. The very independence of this people was a living principle in them, when they first reached these inhospitable shores; and in the fulness of time it burst into a flame. In all their reasonings they united the government of man with the government of God, and insisted *that the ruler over men should be just, ruling in the fear of God.* The history of the colonies is full of their wise sayings and doings, but I have not time to draw your attention to any portion of it;

at this moment my remarks will be principally confined to the current events, and to living men; but occasionally shall take a limited retrospection. It has often been remarked that elected rulers have not been as good as hereditary ones; and the history of Great Britain is quoted as proving it. That the house of Lords have been, and still are, a highly honourable body, no one will deny; and that it contains many true patriots is very certain; but I should doubt very much whether, at any time, it contained so much practical talent, and mental activity, as the house of Commons. The whole of the rulers in the United States are virtually elected directly by the people, or selected by those they have elected for that purpose. The seven Presidents that have ruled over the United States since 1789, is a proof that a man must have some rare qualifications to induce the great mass of the people to give their votes for him. He must have some strong hold of their affections for services rendered, or have given proofs of powers from which great services may hereafter be expected, who ventures to think of being President of the United States.

Those who have held this office have been men of distinction. The first can never be equalled, because he lived in an age that can never return; and circumstances gave him op-

portunities for exertions that no man ever had before him, or can have after him. He was raised up for the times. He was a warrior of that peculiar cast that such a struggle demanded. He inspired his followers with confidence in his capacity and courage, and the nation with the belief that he was born for their deliverer. His wisdom as a chief magistrate of the United States was as conspicuous as his military talents. He was advised by *the speech of the trusty*, but influenced by no man's opinions without sufficient reasons were adduced to support them. The shocks of party never moved him ; he was as quiet in the midst of the denunciations of demagogues and the startling prophecies of the wily, as if all had been peace and sunshine. He contemplated with great care, and acted with unequalled decision. He read men with great sagacity, and selected his officers for their talents and probity. He was seldom wrong in his judgment. He may have committed errors, but never did any foolish acts. He was truly the father of his country.

The second President, Mr. Adams, was a true patriot and a high spirited man. He entered on his duties with more of the experience of a statesman than his predecessor had done, but was wanting in the prudence of that great man. He was cast, indeed, on evil times, and was easily chafed by untoward circumstances.

There had begun to be less patriotism and more management among politicians than when the government was first organized. Party spirit had increased, and entered more into the proceedings of Congress than in the administration of Washington ; party spirit raged with violence every where ; the hydra heads of the French revolution were reared in every quarter of the country ; and the fiendish spirit of anarchy was in them. The political atmosphere was poisoned, and like the mother of mankind, many of the honest were seduced and overcome by that subtlety which the serpent once possessed, and which has since been so hateful to mankind. Mr. Adams breasted the storm with great energy ; and if not always with judgment, yet always with sincerity and capacity. He never cowered at opposition, nor shrunk from responsibility. One of the evils of his nature was that he had not enough of plausibility to qualify and soften his rigid determinations. He persisted in forming a navy against all opposition, and the result has proved his foresight. In most instances he put good men into high places, and never tolerated a feeble or bad man because he was with him in politics. Times have changed ; and those who were once his enemies, have become his friends.

He returned to private life after administering the government one term, and lived many years

as a sage whom all men, of all parties, sought to learn the history of past events and to hear him discourse on matters of government. His space in history will be an enviable one.

The successor of Mr. Adams was quite different from him in his mental organization and political views. He had drank deeply of the new school of philosophy, made conspicuous by Mandeville, Bollingbroke, and their successors, on both sides the Alps. It was studied in Italy and France, had reached Germany, and swept over the Netherlands. It had in it many good points; it inculcated the broad doctrines of equality in civil rights, and wared with the hierarchies every where. The theories formed in this school were beautiful and splendid, and have in part been realized by the present age. The predecessors of Mr. Jefferson had acted upon the maxim, *Adhere to that which has been found to be good and practical, and be cautious of the untried and theoretical; his, to venture on the untried, if it promised more happiness to mankind, fearless of the consequences.* They distrusted human nature, he reposed implicit confidence in it. Perhaps the change at this time in the parties was fortunate for the nation; it checked the vaulting ambition of many, and prostrated the pride of some who were beginning to think that they were made to rule. Some began to talk of family connexions and distinctions, who have

now passed away, and are forgotten ; and who, from a momentary political or pecuniary elevation, began to think that some way might be devised to give permanency to their importance by securities to succession. The policy of Jefferson and his party sunk all these visions in night, and broke down all the hopes of the aristocracy of the nation. The change that followed was not without its evils. New men arose, and many of them, the creatures of circumstances, were destitute of political wisdom or true patriotism ; and not a few who assisted in building up the republic, were not allowed to assist in administering the government. The navy was reduced, the vessels of war sold off, the army not thought much of, and the dreams of perpetual peace indulged. This did not last long, and Mr. Jefferson found that it would not answer, in the present state of mankind, to *beat swords into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks* too soon. He revived some of the doctrines he intended to explode, and consented to think it was better to whip insolent foes, than to buy their good will at too dear a rate. Public opinion is always fluctuating, but never so far out of the way as closet reasoners believe, particularly when the public are as enlightened as this.

Mr. Jefferson was communicative, free and generous in his disposition, and fascinating in his manners. He practised the republican sympli-

city he taught, and in a most extraordinary degree took the people along with him, and retained his office, and the place he held in their affection, during the eight years of services. Though historians will differ greatly upon the effect his course and character had on the national growth and prosperity, yet all will agree that the man was learned and philosophical, and that while he pursued a course of his own, he had the power of stamping his own impressions upon minds beyond any statesmen of the age in which he lived; that he was not avaricious may be known by the poverty in which he died.

It is curious to observe how the fate of an age is in some measure decided by a trivial matter. By a provision in the constitution of the United States, which has since been altered, the President and Vice President were voted for, without discriminating between them, or directing who should hold the first or second office. This was left to depend upon the votes. The highest number from the Electoral Colleges was considered as having been given for the President. Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Burr had an equal number of votes, and therefore, there was no choice by the people. In the House of representatives the states were for a long time equally divided. For a while it was thought Mr. Burr would have been elected to fill the office of President. The difference between the men was great. Aaron

Burr had in him the elements of a great soldier and a profound Statesman. He was sixteen years the junior of his opponent, full of activity and ambition; and that ambition that looks beyond the hour. He had been a soldier of the revolution, was with Arnold in his expedition to Canada by way of the Kennebeck. He had left the halls of learning at the age of nineteen to join this hazardous enterprize; had been selected by Arnold to traverse the wilderness alone to communicate with Montgomery who had pushed his way by the lakes. For this adventure he was made the aid of Montgomery, and was at his side when the lamented warrior fell. He rose still higher in the army during the course of the war, and had left his name high on the list of those brave and gallant youths who had given a spirit of chivalry to the American army. When the revolutionary conflict was over, he entered professional life, and at once took a decided part; was soon known as a most promising man. His legal attainments were great; and as an advocate he had no superior. Bland, smooth and eloquent, he guided the populace; sagacious, penetrating, insinuating, and learned, he influenced those in high places in the courts, or deliberate assemblies. He was equal to any task, for he had a constitution that knew no fatigue, and a spirit of perseverance that nothing could break down. His tongue was never silent from

any dread of dignity or power, and his heart never palpitated at the presence of man. Open, bold, and daring, he sought political distinction, and was determined to have it. If such a man, in the prime of manhood, for he had only reached his forty-fifth year, could have come to the Presidency when the world was in such confusion, he would have appealed to their pride, and millions would have responded to his voice ; he would have pointed out a new path to glory, and myriads would have rushed to take it. The timid and philosophical even now, shudder to think what he might have done, and the adventurous and ambitious on the wane of life rave at what was lost in so great a man. The judicious however feel assured that the destinies of nations are in the hands of God, and without deciding any thing upon this subject, pursuade themselves that all has been for the best.

Mr. Madison followed Mr. Jefferson. The country was then so exhausted and worn out by embargoes and non-intercourses, that Mr. Madison found the people in a very restless state. To pursue the system that had been tried and found totally inefficacious, would have been idle, and worse than idle ; it would have proved mischievous. Mr. Madison delayed, and reasoned, and forbore, until he found the west would not forbear any longer, when in 1812 he recom-

mended a declaration of war, which was instantly declared by an act of Congress, and which, on the same day, received his signature. The President was placed in a perilous situation; for the country was unprepared for war. The supply of the munitions of war was scanty, the treasury nearly empty, but few soldiers in the army, and no experienced commander at call. Those brave men of the revolution had not kept up with the rapid advancement of military tactics, and there were few young men who had made military science a study. The navy was small and not fully manned, and the enemy were on our coast. This was a trying situation for the President. The war went on, Mr. Madison did every thing he could, but the war machinery was in bad order. Sometimes the nation was grieved by the loss of an army, and now cheered by a splendid victory. No small portion of the wealth and talent of the country were opposed to the war, and were reluctant to support it. To brace up under all the evils Mr. Madison had to contend with, required the philosophy of a great mind. He struggled through all; met all the dishonour with composure; received all the news of success without any of the unnerving effects of joy; in fact, he made the best of his situation; and found himself, at the close of the conflict, as popular as he was at the commencement of it. Mr.

Madison was one of the framers of the constitution of the United States, and had more to do in its formation in convention, and of the support of it in his native state, than any other man. His views of this great instrument have been profound and consistent in every stage of the attack and defence upon it, in, and out of Congress. He has never flinched from defending his first views of its powers, and of the intentions which were incorporated with it, at its birth. He is now old, and on the confines of eternity; but his last effort, in the Virginia Convention, for constitutional liberty, proved that the faculties of a well regulated mind will last long. Honesty of intention preserves an accuracy of memory and a consistency of conduct.

Mr. Munroe succeeded Mr. Madison. He came into power in quiet times; the first term with little opposition; the second term with none. The country recovered rapidly from the exhaustion of war; party spirit had, in a good degree, lost its rancour; the whole community were busy in retrieving lost time; and the President had no great difficulties to contend with. To appease those hungry for office was the most trying evil he had to encounter. To his honour be it said, that in his administration, and by his recommendation, the pension

law was passed, giving a crust of bread and a pitcher of water to the war-worn soldier, who should have been *stayed with flaggons and comforted with apples*, from the hands of a grateful people, but who had been left to hunger and thirst by the way-side.

John Quincy Adams was successor to Mr. Munroe; he had been Secretary of State during Mr. Munroe's administration. There was no choice by the electoral colleges, and the states in the House of Representatives decided the question between him and General Jackson, who were the two highest candidates. Jackson had the highest number of electoral votes, and his disappointed supporters were determined to run him for the next term, and instantly took measures for this purpose. The electioneering campaign began earlier than it was ever known to have commenced before, and was conducted with great bitterness. Mr. Adams administered the government with the most scrupulous integrity. His policy was to keep things as they were. He made no changes by removing one and bringing in another; and when vacancies occurred, he was quite as likely to fill them up with opponents as friends. Every one granted to Mr. Adams first rate talents; and all, who were capable of judging, acknowledged him to be the most thorough-bred scholar and diplomat-

ist of the country. He was patient of labour, indefatigable in his researches, apt in acquiring and ready in using all useful knowledge. He had the experience of a lawyer, a legislator, and of a minister at different courts; and last of all as a secretary and cabinet councillor of the President of the United States. Ancient and modern languages were familiar to him, and he required no interpreter in his intercourse with foreign embassadors. No man, however great his patriotism or his talents, had ever filled the presidential chair with such rich and varied acquirements as Mr. Adams; and one at a distance would have supposed that he would have been the most popular President this country ever had. It was not so. He had broke friendship with his old federal friends by voting for the embargo, and by taking a course for himself; and had been, in a manner, estranged from them for the space of eighteen years. They came to his support because they knew his ability to serve the nation, and they saw his scrupulous honesty in office. They had, however, deep and terrible ranklings in their bosoms at the same instant they dropt their votes into the ballot box for his election; for he had openly, as they said, made the insanity of a few pass for a disease among the many. He received his information of what they were saying and doing from prejudiced sources; and he was not

sufficiently acquainted with his own people and kindred to judge of them correctly; for he had not lived with them much. He forgot, that, if, in the plenitude of freedom, now and then, one talked daggers, there was a redeeming spirit in the great mass of the people that would not suffer them to be used. This was not all; the party he had served so heartily were not satisfied with one who would administer the government without being influenced by party; avowing openly that a party administration was the true genius of a republican government; and whether the axiom be right or wrong, it is one that will be acted upon hereafter; and all politicians will agree that it is a better course than to purchase enemies to make them friends.

Mr. Adams was surrounded by men who had no sympathy for one another; *they were paired, not matched:* fortuitous circumstances brought them together, but there was no real congeniality among them. Although a republican of primitive simplicity, Mr. Adams had no qualification for meeting every-day men with those little courtesies which secures their affections. Jerusalem might have been burnt a thousand times before he would have sat at the gate to steal away the hearts of the people. But when he was met directly, and enquired of directly, no man ever spoke more freely, or more honestly. He had no disguise about him; he discovered

more singleness of heart, and disinterestedness of purpose, than any man I ever knew in a political station. He has retired from office in the fulness of intellectual vigour, with sufficient means for an elegant independence for life. He will bring forward no claims for unrequited services, nor proffer any appeal to his country's generosity for assistance and support. For the city of Washington he has done more than any of his predecessors ever did; for general liberality he is behind no one. The true *otium cum dignitate* is his, and the belief is, that his country's history is to be the object of his future labours. His descendants will have a rich inheritance in his fame; for his little errors will be buried with him, and his great merits perpetuated.

The present incumbent of the presidential chair, General Jackson, is indeed a remarkable man. He began life in the humblest walks, and had no advantages of early education; but such was his energy of character, that he soon attracted notice. The West was new, and he grew up with the society around him, and early took a leading part. He had been engaged in political life, acted for a while in a judicial character, and afterward become a politician again. He was a soldier from a child, and attracted attention from his high and heroic qualities in the

discharge of his duties. The fighting on the frontiers has been more calculated to make daring, prompt, and chivalrous men, than regular fighting in large armies; for in these Indian hunts every individual has an opportunity of displaying his prowess, while in a large and regular army, individuals must be restrained by the great mass, and each has, in a good measure, to share with them in good or evil report. Men grow hardy and adventurous who have to keep arms in their hands for defence. General Jackson was a terror to the Indians from the Ohio to New-Orleans, and westward to the rocky mountains. He annihilated the Seminoles, and terrified all those friendly to them. When the war broke out, in 1812, General Jackson was a Major General in the militia of Tennessee; and as soon as it was found that Great Britain would probably attack New-Orleans, he was sent to the relief of that place.

He had many difficulties to encounter in organizing his forces. They came, many of them, from more than a thousand miles up the river, without arms, and depended on finding them at New-Orleans; but government had been remiss in sending them. When General Jackson heard that the British forces had made good their landing, he marched out and met them, that same night, as they were at supper. The conflict was a very sharp one, and succeeded in putting

the British General on his guard; and in fact, checked the march of his army from the twenty-third of December to the eighth of January. By this time the American army was prepared for them. On that day General Jackson fought them, and obtained a signal victory. Call it what you please, chance or a miracle, it was a wondrous fight, and the gratitude of the American nation was unbounded. It was of incalculable service to his country in general, and to that part of it more especially. It will not be denied that he is a lover of military discipline, and probably has sometimes carried his love of martial law too far. It was too critical a moment to carry a statute book in one's pocket, or to square every march by the doctrines of *trespass quare clausum fregit*. He had a people to save, and it was not in his nature to do it gently. There was something in the boldness of the veteran soldier that was attractive to most men, and particularly to the young. The suggestions of those who preferred a civilian to a soldier were lost in the huzzas of those who panted for military distinction; and at every pause and return of the shout he gained popularity. In most states the change was rapid, and he came into office by a large majority. If he was not as perfect and capable a man as his friends represented him to be, he was a much better man than his enemies described him to

be. The fire of his temper had become a flame less wild than when he was earning his military laurels. The hatchet had been buried and the wampum exchanged, and most of his enmities were gone. He has now administered the government for nearly a year, and has shown nothing of a disposition to act the military chieftain. No gens d' arms guard his door, no halberdiers his person. He has never as yet amused the good citizens of Washington with a military execution, himself preceded by laureled lictors with their fasces and axes, and with the MASTER of the HORSE at his heels. If the apprehensions of those who foretold such things were honest, they are happily disappointed. If they mistook not the man, as I believe they did, they certainly misunderstood the genius of the people. They forgot the omnipotence of public opinion in a great and a free country. Every thing political must be shaped by it, every thing exist by it. Public opinion may be as volatile as the air around us, but nevertheless as vital to republican institutions as that is to animal life. Mind in this country is operating upon mind, and opinion struggling with opinion for light and knowledge. Every faculty of man is in a state of improvement. Intelligence meets with, and combats ignorance, and ignorance becomes illumined by the conflict, infidelity is overcome by faith, and truth elicited by error. In such a

state, while every man is testing his own powers, and examining the rights and capacities of others, and attempting to place all things on the basis of philanthropy and justice, although there may be a good share of evil abroad, yet the dread of the talents, fame or influence of any one man, is not one of these evils.

If military ambition once burned in the breast of General Jackson, it should be recollected that he has reached that period of life, when the flame would begin to diminish. He is more than double the age of Alexander when he died, and much older than Cæsar when he fell. Age always holds on what it has gained, but seldom desires to make exertions for new honours, particularly military ones. I have entered into this subject more particularly, not that I ever thought he would give the nation a military cast of character, any more than a civilian, but because the politicians in England, and in fact in all Europe, affected to believe that this nation was rapidly passing to a military despotism, because they selected General Jackson for their President, and argued from it the downfal of the liberties of the country, citing ancient instances of the insatiable appetite of military chieftains. There is no parallel between the cases—there is no force in the argument.

LETTER X.

Washington, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

We will now turn, for a moment, from the subject of man, to contemplate the growth of a city. Each subject has its singularities, and each affords instruction.

The Potomac had been considered the centre of the British Provinces in North America long before the organization of a Federal government was ever thought of by the North or the South. A few of the wise men of Virginia had, in their political forecasts, drawn upon their imaginations so far as to think it within the limits of conjecture, that through the Potomac the great western lakes would find a highway to the ocean, and the immense interior bordering on them would be opened to the advantages of commerce with foreign nations. When, or how, this was to be brought about, was not distinctly understood. The subject was one of those great matters of feeling and reasoning commingled, that are often the precursors of investigation and effort, and for many years remain as impres-

sions and presentiments, before the event gives to vague conjecture the character of prophecy or foreknowledge. These opinions were gaining ground in Virginia from age to age, and fastened themselves on the mind of Washington, from his earliest years ; and so deep, that when his reputation had reached the acme of human glory, he was willing to risk some portion of his fame in making every exertion to direct his countrymen to this great national object, connected with the government of the United States and the future welfare of his country ; but no place was now precisely designated.

In March, 1791, the President of the United States was authorised to appoint commissioners to lay out this city, and prepare suitable buildings for the government before the year 1800. By an act of May, 1796, the commissioners were authorised to borrow money for the advancement of the buildings, and to pledge the lots that had been given to the United States, as well as the faith of the government, to refund the loan. In 1798 there was an act passed, supplementary to the aforesaid, to hasten the progress of the public improvements. So far were the public buildings finished, that, in April, 1800, an act was passed authorising the President to remove, with all the departments, from Philadelphia to the Federal City, which had been previously named the City of Washington, in

honour of the President; and in pursuance of this act the government was removed and commenced operations in the city of Washington the first day of December, 1800. It cannot be denied but that the character, wishes and influence of Washington, had no small share in fixing the seat of government. Like all other of his acts it has proved to have been dictated by wisdom, justice, and forecast; for the site is one of the finest in the world for a city. From the hill on which stands the capitol, the most noble view presents itself to the eye of the beholder that the imagination could paint. From the north, round to the south, a circular line of high grounds is seen, making within them the interior of an immense amphitheatre; which, it is said, resembles the appearance of Rome from some of the elevations in or near the *Eternal City*. The east view is extensive, but not bounded by high lands; The horizon sinks with the power of vision. On the south, the broad and peaceful Potomac is seen for many miles, extending to Alexandria, and even to Mount Vernon. The whole panorama is bold, magnificent, picturesque, and yet soft and beautiful; it only requires the moral consecration of long past events, the massy piles of ancient grandeur, the deep and solemn recollections of the mighty dead, to make the impression, at this view from the capitol, such as crowds on the mind when

one views the Vatican or domes of St. Peter. It was laid out on a noble plan, but it will require the lapse of half a century to fully develope all its beauties. The eye of practical utility is long in discovering the harmonious proportions that philosphical forecast designs for the completion of distant ages. The colossal figures of Praxitelles were the subject of derision among minor artists, who did not foresee the elevation for which they were made; but when placed in the lofty niches of the temple, his master designs found their exact situations, and breathed harmony and sweetness on every beholder. The city of Washington struggled with every difficulty in its commencement. The great founder did not live to see it the seat of government; he died a year before the consummation of his wishes.

We had at the time of the beginning but few native artists to assist him, and the foreigners he employed had many preconceived opinions at war with his great plans. Economy was the order of the day, and it was hard to make frugal statesmen understand, that judicious expenditure, on a broad scale, would, in the end, be the most prudent course. *They* considered the necessities of a session; *he*, the requisitions of ages. The country was straitened in her finances, and the great mass of the legislature mistook the expansion of republican simplicity and grandeur in building a city, for regal munifi-

cence and aristocratic calculations; and of course every broad plan was narrowed down, and every detail cramped by the wants of the treasury. Other causes transpired to increase these difficulties. When the site of the Federal City was fixed upon, speculators from every quarter of this country, and also from abroad, flocked in, to share in the chances of gain. Instead of forwarding the enterprise, they did much to retard it, by giving the lands a fictitious value, and by keeping up nominal prices until there were no real ones. It was a fair subject of speculation, but it was managed badly. The agriculture of the surrounding country was not prepared to give a ready and an abundant supply to the calls of the newly congregated population, and the whole concern went sadly on, year after year: at this period the market for provisions was scanty, fluctuating, and often exorbitant; and sometimes it was hardly possible to procure wholesome provisions, at any rate. The dwelling houses in general were small, and inconvenient; and not only the citizens, but public functionaries, and political dignitaries, were crowded into narrow lodgings; and amidst the most anxious struggles for appearances among the leaders of fashion, the nakedness of the land was often seen by the sojourners as well as felt by the inhabitants. The great mass of the population suffered in some way or other,

and but few of the comforts of life, then, as well as at present, so fully enjoyed in the cities of the United States generally, were known in Washington.

In summer the streets were in a good measure deserted, and in winter all was bustle and confusion. The streets were without sidewalks or pavements, and in this naturally humid climate and soft loomy soil, the mud was frequently deep and troublesome. The greater part of the visiters, and many of the members of Congress boarded in Georgetown. The English goods shops were there also, and many of the best wine and grocery stores. These daily inconveniences were annoying to the members of Congress, and they were in ill-humour when any call for money was made for the city; and it was evident that the dislike to Washington, as a permanent seat of government, was fast advancing to a determination to remove it. The goodly streets and comfortable rooms in the dwelling houses in Philadelphia were remembered, and nothing but reverence for the name of Washington kept those feelings from breaking out into acts of legislation.

This was the state of things up to 1814, when the calamity which at first was supposed to have given a finishing stroke to all the hopes of the city fell upon it; In August, of that year, it was taken by the British without much bloodshed.

The troops brought to defend it were well enough, and might have been made good soldiers, if there had been union, concert, and energy among the leaders. Civil and military authority and influence were jumbled together, and confusion, defeat, and disgrace followed. The blame was shifted from one to the other, and has not as yet settled precisely any where; but error, and gross error, must rest somewhere.

The whole country was mortified at such an event, although it reflected no great honour on the enemy. The capitol, as far as it was finished was burnt; the President's house, the public offices, and the public property of the navy yard. The whole city resembled '*the skin of an immolated victim*;' and every appeal to the sympathies and pride of the country was made. When Congress next assembled, after a few struggles for the removal of the seat of government, the most vigorous steps were taken to restore the city to tranquillity, and to repair the public losses. It being once settled that pride and justice would not suffer the removal of the seat of government, private enterprise followed public spirit. The corporation of the city seemed to be animated with a new soul, and individuals, relieved from the fear of change, risked all they could command in real estate. Landed property arose in value, and hope, energy, and active business, took the place of despair, listlessness,

and, wasting, repining indolence. New streets were opened, dwelling houses and stores were then erected. The trade came to the city, the boarders left Georgetown and came to Washington, and a new face was put on every thing in the city; churches were built, institutions of learning arose, and large, if not ample provision was made for other necessary improvements on the face of nature. This work has been going on ever since the close of the war; but it must be pleasant to the citizens of Washington to reflect, that when all things are taken into consideration, that they are not indebted to the government, in equity, for one dollar for all their grants and favours; but that, in truth, the government is indebted to the city for more than a million of dollars, putting a fair value on the property now owned by the United States within the city, which cost them nothing. Blessings are said to come in clusters; for as soon as the city began to flourish, it became healthy. The low grounds were drained, and the fever and ague, once prevalent, are now rarely known among the evils of Washington; and at present the city is decidedly the most healthy of any in the United States, or perhaps in the world. The water of Washington is of the best quality, and can be brought to every door in the greatest abundance, at a very moderate expense. This

was provided for in the charter given to the city under the administration of Mr. Jefferson.

The schools in Washington are respectable and instructers very well supported. The spirit of religious freedom is as manifest here, as in older cities. Toleration, in general, is a growth of long experience and sound information; here intolerance had neither precedents or law. The restraints on the exercise of liberty are fewer here than in any other city known to civilized man; and yet the morals of the people are good, and every year growing better. The whole population of the city have been misrepresented as to manners, morals, habits and dispositions. No people are more kind, or more hospitable, or have better feelings than the Washingtonians. The bland Marylander, the lofty Virginian, and intelligent, shrewd Eastern inhabitant, coalesce, commingle, and amalgamate, until the virtues of all are seen united in the most. As they become less dependant on Congress, the more elevated is their standard of mind and morals. When they looked to the members of Congress as superior beings, who might annihilate the city by a vote, the very vices of the legislators were copied, and the effect was bad. Taken as a whole, the members of Congress were not of the highest order for imitation. Men are seldom virtuous in bodies, in which, in most cases, but little individual respon-

sibility is felt or acknowledged. The corporation are assuming an energy of character worthy of freemen, and are looking at the true interests of the city, and the citizens are uniting their efforts for the prosperity of themselves and neighbours. The patronage of Congress, the attention of the corporation of the city, and the efforts of individuals are now beginning to be seen and felt. In former years their exertions were not properly appreciated, because they could not be seen in their effects; they were actually laying the corner-stone deep in the mire and water, where it was difficult for the nicest observer to fairly calculate the value of means used to produce ends; now all things are seen most fully; and effects are in proportion to labours; and whatever is done is visible in the improvements of the city. The city is indeed an emblem of our nation in its growth and character, if not at first, certainly in the later periods. It was most assuredly afflicted in its commencement, had no great seasons of prosperity in its early day, and in the end, owed its glory and stability to the outrage done upon it. The streets are now provided with ample sidewalks; new squares are opened, the streets are graduated, and put in a proper state to be ornamented with trees and fountains. The Ohio and Chesapeake canal, which has been begun, and will be put in operation by the enterprise of individuals,

the spirit of the corporation and the liberality of Congress, is one day to be the pride, the convenience, and the source of prosperity to the city. The trade will increase, which will increase the number of inhabitants, and afford them many advantages, by bringing fuel and provisions to the city, and reduce the prices of all the necessaries of life, to as low a scale as that of the most favoured cities of the United States. The Washington market, with a little alteration, might be made as good as any we know of. The glades of Virginia furnish beef, pork, and butter, of the best kinds; and the immediate neighbourhood, with a litlle care and attention, would be sufficient, and more than sufficient, for all the demands of vegetables and poultry. The soil and climate are well suited for all the fruits of the temperate zone. Peaches, plumbs, apples, and almost every other fruit are, or may be raised, of the first order. Washington is the happiest region of flowers. A garden here might be made to yield something for the basket of Flora for nearly three quarters of the year. With a small expense a fountain might be made in every garden, to refresh the vegetation in the warmest seasons of the year. After the most prominent sites for business are filled up in the city, a better taste will prevail in erecting domicils, and those dwellings a little removed from the bustle

will not be complete or satisfactory without a garden of flowers.

To pass from the *dulce* to the *utile*, there are fine building materials in abundance, in or near the city, or can easily be brought to it. The city abounds in the best of clay; and bricks can be furnished to any extent, at a few weeks notice; and fuel can easily be procured to burn the greatest number of kilns that may be set up. Ornamental trees for the high way or malls would be of rapid growth, much more rapid, take the whole number and variety of ornamental trees together, than that of any climate more southerly or northerly in this country. It is seldom that the winter is severe enough to injure them, and droughts in the summer are not common. Showers are frequent; the clouds following along the Shenandoah and the Potomac, in the highlands, spread over the country where the Potomac assumes a broader surface, and gives a freshness to the vegetation along its banks. The soil is porous and quickly imbibes the rain, so that no stagnant waters are found to originate diseases in the hottest weather. There is none of that spungy, humid state of the atmosphere here, so common at the north in August, generally denominated dog-days. The heat of Washington is not greater at any season than at Boston or Montreal; but is more oppressive by its long continuance, and the tri-

fling change in the atmosphere from noon to midnight. This may be, and indeed is exhausting ; but in this season there are but few prevalent diseases ; and the deaths that happen are often among those who have not been the most prudent ; or whose constitutions have been broken and decaying in previous years. Man is subject to the first great denunciation of his Maker every where, *dust thou art and to dust shalt thou return* ; but he is as much privileged here, as any where, to escape it as long as possible. In fact, nature has done enough for the city to make it one of the most delightful abodes in the world ; art now must do her share. Capital, industry and business are now only wanted to give interest, beauty, yea, more, splendour to all in and about Washington ; commerce is wanted to obtain this capital and to secure prosperity to to the city, but it can never be so great and all-absorbing as to endanger the welfare of the city by those fearful fluctuations that large commercial cities are liable to. None of those sudden changes in the markets can effect the great mass of the citizens, when but a small part of them are engaged in commerce, nor is it so near the sea as to fear that its usual supplies can be cut off by a war or blockade. The back country is sufficient for all exigencies, and permanent requisitions for the main articles of life, and and it will have easy communication with the

eastern and southern cities by steam boats and rail roads. If a real and not a fictitious value is given to property in the City of Washington, it cannot fail to advance most rapidly. The general temperature of the climate, the certainty of wholesome supplies of provisions, the chances of good schools, which will be found here if they are not common now; numerous and well organized associations, united to the easy access to genteel society, on those terms which cannot be common in other cities, will induce many respectable families, with but moderate means, to make this a place of residence. It is a question, with many if this golden age will ever come; but who can doubt it. Look at the changes of the last ten years, and say if these have in them no promising augury? If the citizens do not abandon real for imaginary right; if the congress of the United States do their duty, as we trust they will, the prosperity of the City of Washington is certain. Some of the citizens of the district of Columbia are anxious to be represented in congress; but it would be a miserable policy to change the hold they have on the general goverment for legislative protection, for the honour of having a single representative in congress. The government is growing rich and the fostering hand of power will be, hereafter, extended more liberally to the district than it has been.

With industry, enterprize, prudence, and harmony the city of Washington may be made a place of trade, manufactures and learning. The trade will be very considerable when the canal is opened and the surrounding country catches the spirit of the age. Manufactures will of course go pari passu with the demand of those articles that can be made here cheaper than elsewhere. In addition to the water power in the neighbourhood, fuel can be afforded cheap, by way of the river and canal, either in wood or coal for steam engines. A well balanced business extending to all the common branches of industry might be carried on here for the prosperity of the city. Taste, and the arts must grow up where there is no sudden influx of wealth, no deep commercial speculation, whose success gives no settled plans for mental improvement, and whose reverses damp the ardor and dry up the aliments of learning. Those cities whose income have been the most regular, not those which at seasons have been the most wealthy, have given the most encouragement to the arts. It is true the Medici, the great Florentine merchants, were patrons of the arts ; but not from the success of any particular enterprize, but from a settled plan to spend so much of their income as they could spare for this purpose, and they made as regular appropriations for letters and the arts as for household expen-

ses. It is not with the excess of wealth that learning flourishes, but with the judicious use of it. Pericles ornamented his native Athens to the delight of his own, and to the wonder and admiration of succeeding ages, and yet his revenues were not large ; but who ever heard of the artists, or of the men of letters patronized by Crœsus. A national University to be established in this city, was contemplated by that great father of his country, Washington. His views were expanded and noble. The University was not only to be one in name, but in truth a place of letters and sciences, with the arts, both useful and ornamental in their train ; a place where all that is known should be taught. Such a University, besides diffusing pure knowledge, would do much towards breaking down the prejudices that exist between the different sections of our country. Educated together the youths of the north, and the south, the east, and the west would scan each others merits in their early days, and find out each others mental powers. Such an education would give them opportunities of knowing each too, when they came into active life, and assist them to form accurate opinions of each others powers and capacities, and fitness for particular offices. Such a university would be a resort for men of taste and leisure, who with their families would come to attend the lectures of the professors of the uni-

versity ; as none but distinguished men could hold these offices. In truth, whatever way we look into our country's welfare, or however bold and sagacious our reach may be, on close inspection, we shall find that the mind of Washington had been there before us, arranged our anticipations and marshalled all our array of thoughts, and he with equal clearness saw all the difficulties we had to encounter, and the virtues it would require to overcome them. He prayed the nation might possess them ; he believed it did, or would, so that his beloved republic would escape the fate of all former republics, whose histories are satires on the stability of governments and the virtue of the human race.

We are now, in fact, the only republic on earth ; those so called in South America, and hailed with such enthusiasm by the lovers of liberty, are at present only mock-suns on the clouds formed by our rising brightness. The temples of South American liberty have not as yet been purified from the stains of the idols which inhabited them. Superstition and ignorance, and the sounds of strife and blood-shed as yet drown the bustle of the commitia. They have ample means in their hands and they have the wishes of the better part of mankind for their success. We have believed, and still fondly hope, that the American Republic is not to be joined to those of former ages, over which the

plough-share of desolation has been driven and on many of whose brightest deeds the pall of oblivion has fallen. That the fears of the timid may prove idle, that the anticipations of the wise may be realized, and the hopes of the most sanguine be fulfilled, should be every patriot's prayer; but neither prayers, or wishes or hopes will avail, without enterprize, energy, learning, virtue and perseverance; all these are in the people, and if they be true to themselves they will perpetuate their liberties. Their destinies are in their own hands. The responsibility of this age is tremendous, and it will be increased with every succeeding one. The pillars of the temple are *knowledge* and *virtue*, and as long as these remain unbroken the edifice will stand; but faction, like the strong man, may break them down and strew destruction around, but this evil may God avert.

LETTER XI.

Washington, Jan. 1830.

Dear Sir,

The capitol of the Congress of the United States is a very noble building. The order is called Corinthian; but, in truth, it is a medley of all orders. The whole edifice is now completed. It covers an acre and a half and 1820 feet of ground. It has been an expensive building, having cost the United States nearly three millions of dollars. The square on which the capitol stands contains more than twenty acres, and is laid out in a very handsome style, and is filled up with trees and shrubbery in a flourishing state. The dome of this building is the third in point of size in the world; next to St. Paul's, and before St. Sophia's; but this building has been so often described, that I shall not attempt it; but give you a few remarks upon the ornaments of the building, which have not been so particularly mentioned.

Several artists of note have, from time to time, been employed on the capitol, and it bears marks of their taste and talents. They have

ornamented the inside of the dome and other parts of the building with the labours of theirart. Over the western door of the dome is a grop in bass-relief, representing the preservation of Capt. John Smith from the wrath of Powhatan, by the kind interference of his daughter, Pocahontas. This is the work of Capelano, an artist of considerable talent; but he had seen more Italians than Indians, and his savages are Italian banditti, and his intended child of the forest an Italian queen. In this picture, however, notwithstanding all its defects, there is more variety of expression in the countenances of the group, than is generally found in stone. This work attracts much attention, and elicits many criticisms; but it will continue to be admired, in spite of its faults. Smith was a hero whose name is imperishable; his life has more of romance in it than that of any other man in the annals of history. Over the east door is a representation of the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, 1620. The Indians on the rocks, the boat, the shore, the sea, are all well executed; but the artist mistook the character of the comers to the new world; he has given the religious adventurers the hat of the ancient Pilgrim, and the dress also; when nothing would be farther from the truth. They were puritanical adventurers, and not crusading pilgrims. The subject is one much better for the pencil than the

chisel; but it was given to illustrate a portion of American history, and the artist was told the story by those who, probably, did not precisely understand the capacities of his art, and he set about it as it was, a subject dictated to him, and which some body else would have been engaged to execute, if he had remonstrated against it. The Pilgrims of that day never thought of their glory in stone. The pen and the pencil have secured their immortality long since. The sculptor was Causici.

Over the north door is sculptured William Penn, making his treaty with the Indians, in 1680. He is holding the parley, in the fearlessness of innocence, with the savages, who seemed to have caught the same spirit and to be governed by the same peaceful principles. This treaty is worthy of all praise, for it was kept inviolate for seventy years; but the moral sublimity of the subject must be fully understood before you can relish the design. There is neither beauty or attraction in it, taken by itself. The capacities of the art do not reach such a subject. The painter would do better here also. "*Gods, not men, should breathe in stone.*" They are only seen in naked majesty. The modern succinct dress in marble may be made by skill so as to be endured, but never to be admired. Phidias could not have given immortality to a modern martinet, in dress, with all his frogs and

taggery. The sculptor would have preferred the Winnebago, in his war dance, almost in native nakedness, to one so bedizzened.

On the pannels between the doors, looking above them, are several fine heads in bass-relief. One of Columbus is so near a resemblance to some fine pictures of him, that it is probable the sculptor had hit upon something near a true likeness. The head of Sir Walter Raleigh is also a fine one, resembling the best prints of him. They are richly deserving a place here. This talented, but unfortunate Englishman, deserves to be remembered in a country on whose shores he made a vigorous struggle to plant a colony. It was not his fault if it did not succeed. The heads of la Sale, and Sebastian Cabot, are rough statuary, but have considerable expression and life in them. They, too, merit a place in this pantheon, if enterprise and success are subjects of reward in this way. These are strong, and severe pieces of physiognomy, but not without talent and character. They could not be recommended as models, nor are they so recommended; but they are worthy of attention and notice.

Over the great eastern door, outside of the dome, there is a head of Washington, taken from a picture, or bust, of an earlier age in Washington's life, than is seen in Stuart's great picture. The bust has a striking likeness to the

head of the late Judge Washington. It is a laboured production of Capelano's chisel. It is supported, to speak in the language of heraldry, by Fame, with her clarion on one side, and by the genius of immortality, ready to place the wreath on his brow, on the other. It is admired by many, and is certainly a specimen of very good proficiency in the art. But it is beyond the art, and skill, and genius of Canova, to give us a just idea of Washington. The image in our minds was all perfect; the eye could not be satisfied with any effort, however mighty, to give it body and tangibility.

It was reserved for Lugi Persico to produce, by patient labour, and unquestionable skill, united to the soul of genius, a work that will immortalize the sculptor, and do honour to our country. It is an ornament for the tympanum of the east front of the capitol. The figures are colossal; the design is full of meaning, and yet is marked with great simplicity. On the right of the spectator is seen Hope, leaning on her anchor, and extending her right hand to the skies, directing her looks to the Genius of America, a still loftier figure, in partial armour. Hope is describing to the Genius some of these visions of glory which are crowding on her soul; some of those unborn ages of her beloved republic; while the Genius of the Nation, with dignified mien and placid countenance, points over a

third figure, which is Justice, of a size in keeping with the others, and seems to say, we ask nothing that we are not entitled to by the sternest decisions of the goddess. The eyes of Justice are not, as usual, blinded, but are opened on the day, that she may see and judge all that passes under the sun. Between Hope and the Genius of America, there is an American Eagle, a noble piece of statuary; the talons grasp the emblematical weapons of defence, with characteristic power. The breast, the wings, the tail, are full of life and strength, as is the head and beak of majesty. The head of the eagle is turned to the Genius, and "*with eye retortive looks creation through.*" The easy, elegant, and natural flow of the drapery, the fine finish of the hands and arms, and the graceful attitudes of these figures, take away, even when you are close to them, all those impressions of coarseness which susceptibility and taste have felt at a near inspection of colossal figures. It is not in nature to love the person of a giant. It was only through the medium of his deeds of generosity and valour that Hercules won the hearts of those that praised him. Between the overgrown and the diminutive exist the forms of symmetry, grace, and beauty. That art must be exquisite that gives us those huge dimensions, as it were, directly in our eye-shot, and still contrives to take off the general impression of coarseness.

Mr. Persico's work is now to be examined from the ground only ; the proper line of vision being extended more than an hundreed feet from the object. At this distance the figures appear about the size of human beings, full grown. I have no hesitation in saying that they are far superior to any thing of the kind in this country, entirely free from that hoiden air, or that prominence of parts, often made in works of this sort, to catch the gaze of the tasteless spectator. This group appears all life, celestial life ; spirits communing with spirits, in the dignity and calm repose of upper natures, without a single throe of mortal thought-bearing.

After having said so much of the work, it is proper that I should say something of the artist. Mr. Persico is a Neapolitan, of about thirty years of age, or perhaps he is a little older, and full of the inspiration of his art. The clash of parties does not interest him, or the animated debate detain him but for a moment. The gaieties of the saloon, or the festive board, have but few charms for him, notwithstanding he possesses the mercurial temperament of his nation. Distinction in his art is the predominant passion of his soul ; and if he looks at a fair one ever so earnestly, it is only to find some line of beauty, or some grace of form or motion, to transfer to stone ; or, if he listens to an orator in the glow of his genius, and when the light of his mind is

beaming on all around him, it is only that he may catch all this to give it to after ages, when the image of the speaker has faded from the memories of living men.

The ornaments of the Superior Court Room are not numerous. The only one worthy of particular attention is a group opposite the bench of justice. On the left, as seen from the bench, is a figure too lank and lean for a cupid, or an angel; but is probably intended for one or the other of these supernatural beings, or perhaps for the Genius of the constitution. The figure has wings, and holds the constitution of the United States in its hand. On the head of the figure, whatever it may be, is a glory, or a schekina. This is in bad taste. It is attempting too much, and therefore produces a failure. All the other parts of the design are classical. This is from sacred history. The middle figure is Justice sitting in a chair, (Phidias or Praxitelles knew nothing of such a seat for the goddess,) with her right arm leaning on her sword, and holding the equal scales in her left. The face of this figure is excellent, and the drapery flowing and easy. Her proportions are rather more delicate than those in which the ancients exhibited the inflexible goddess. Before her sits the bird of wisdom, perched near some volumes of law; but the owl is formed in the mo-

dern school; and the capitol to a groat, Minerva would not know her bird if she should see him so beaked, so feathered, so trim and dove-like, unless she should guess it out by recognizing her sister Justice in the form of this belle, or resort to her divinity to discover the whole group in their transformation. This room is one of deep interest to every lover of his country. To see seven quiet, good looking men, covered with a slight robe of black, without enough of the insignia of office to tell them from so many pall bearers, sitting together, listening to the arguments of men from every state in the Union, on great and important questions, of municipal, civil, and international law; and thus without any emotion or excitement, settling all the numerous conflicting opinions that have grown up in this republic since its formation, is a specimen of the moral sublime, unequalled in the annals of civil or ecclesiastical history. These oracles of the Delphic cave have as yet been free from the corruption or fear of executive power, and uninfluenced by party strife in the halls of legislation. As long as this sanctuary is unassailed, and talents and integrity are selected and maintained in this branch of government, so long will it be the palladium of American liberties; but wo-betide the hour when political rancour shall come within these walls,

to poison the fountains of justice, or to weaken her arm. The bickerings above them, in the senate chamber, may pass away, and the many boisterous and idle speeches be forgotten, while the country is safe; but once pollute this hall, and the guardian Genius of the liberties of this country will leave it for ever.

LETTER XII.

Washington, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

The President's House.—I shall be particular in my description of this building, as so much has been said of it which was erroneous. It is a magnificent mansion, or rather will be when finished. It stands near the centre of one of the largest squares of the city, on an eminence, nearly a mile and an half west from the Capitol. The building is of the Ionic order, with a southern and a northern front. It is one hundred and seventy five feet long, and eighty-five in width; it has two lofty stories above the basement. There are thirty-one rooms of considerable size within the walls. As you enter the north door there is a fine large hall, called the entrance hall. At the left of this is the eastern room, whose length is the width of the house, making a room in the clear eighty feet in length, forty feet in width, and twenty-eight feet in height, with four fire places, two of them of elegant marble jams, mantle-pieces, &c. From the

south of the Hall you enter the elyptical room, which is the general audience room on Levee nights. The east room was intended for a general audience room ; and the elyptical room to receive foreign ambassadors, and public functionaries, on occasions of ceremony ; but the east room not having been furnished, until lately, the elyptical room has been used for all public ceremonies. East of the elyptical room is the *Green* Drawing Room ; this is of a medium size for such an edifice. On the west of the elyptical room is the *Yellow* Drawing Room ; on the west from this is the *large* Dining Room, of a fine size, and farther west still is the *small* Dining Room, and beyond this is the Porter's room.

The north front of the upper story contains six rooms for various purposes. The south front has seven rooms ; the anti-chambers, the audience chamber, and Lady's Parlour ; this is directly over the elyptical room, and of the same size of that. The basement story contains eleven rooms, kitchen, pantry, butler's room, &c. These are cool and convenient in the summer, and warm in the winter from the massy walls of the edifice.

Some of the furniture of the house is elegant, but in general it looks much abused from the crowds of careless visiters. The Lady's parlour may be said to be superbly furnished, but this remark does not extend to many other

rooms. Within twelve years past congress have expended eighty thousand dollars in furnishing this mansion, and there was some old furniture of the former stocks. Some portion of the plate is elegant and is now worth twenty thousand dollars, or more.

The ornaments are sparse and not of high order. In the second south-east room there is a map of Virginia ; a portrait of Bolivar ; a bust of Washington, and one of Americus Vespacius. These latter ornaments are very good specimens of the arts. In the third room, the anti-chamber, there is an engraving of the declaration of independence in a gilt frame. In the yellow drawing room there is a portrait of Washington from the pencil of Stuart. In this room there is a French piano, which it is said cannot be kept in tune. In the days of omens, when Memnon's harp responded to the ray of the sun, or Æolus first breathed among the reeds, this might be thought to have a mysterious bearing on the jars of the Cabinet councils or at least, a Greek Poet would have said that the Genius of the place was not always happy, and tuneful. This palace belongs to the people, and should be adorned with the best specimens of the fine arts the country can produce. The works of the great painters should hang upon the walls, and those of their sculptors fill every niche. To the tenants of this house it cannot be of much importance, for to

them it is only a caravansy, where they throw down their wallets to cast a horoscope to lay spirits, and raise spells, and their hour comes, and they take up their march without restoration to health, or a forgiveness of their sins. Such is the omnipotence of the public mind in a free government. The whole square, except a few spaces for iron gates is surrounded by a substantial stone wall of excellent masonry. The four public offices of the secretaries are within these walls. The view from the north front is extensive and beautiful, but from the south front it is more extensive and still more resplendent, embracing in its range a lovely prospect of the Potomac.

The site of the house is elevated about sixty feet above the river, and the descent is quite gradual to it. On the south-eastern side of the wall there is a stone arch for a gateway, it looks from the antiquity of the style and the colour of the material of which it is made, as if it had stood centuries defying the climate. Two large ancient weeping willows, one on each side of the arch, add much to its venerable appearance. These trees have not grown up since the date of the federal constitution. They are older than *the city's charter*. They were provincial seedlings, now national monuments. It is said that an accomplished lady of the *Great House* in former days when congratulated upon her eleva-

tion remarked with a smile, "I don't know that there is much cause for congratulation; the President of the United States generally comes in at the iron gate, and goes out at the *weeping willows*."

Meridian Hill as seen from the president's house is situated about three quarters of a mile west of Columbia college, is a handsome seat, built by commodore Porter at great expense, which has been the temporary residence of Mr. Adams the late president of the United States. It probably derives its name from the expectation that an observatory would be erected there by the government of the United States. Toward such an object there were some steps taken. In the year 1821 the president of the United States authorized, under a resolve of congress, William Lambert, Esq. a distinguished mathematician to take proper measures for ascertaining with precision and accuracy the longitude of the Capitol from Greenwich or Paris. He was assisted in taking his observations by William Elliot Esq. who had an extensive astronomical knowledge and experience in the use of instruments. This commission was executed to the satisfaction of the president. The government also sent an experienced mathematician, Mr. Hasler to Europe to purchase or cause to be made, all such instruments as might in his

opinion be necessary for an observatory. A most costly and admirable set of instruments was procured probably, equal, or superior to any set in Europe ; but the observatory was not erected, and when it was recommended by the next president, the whole was ridiculed and lost. The costly materials are nearly ruined by rust, and neglect. It is not made the duty of any department to take care of them. If this plan of erecting an observatory had been carried into effect we should now make all our calculations of longitude from Washington, instead of Greenwich, which might have been called an era of scientific independence, which it behooves this country to declare as soon as possible. They have scarcely a map or chart of their own, out of their own territories. They have in the midst of every boast been guided more by the light of other minds than their own, a mortifying fact to those of their countrymen who are willing to make every exertion to wipe away this stain from their "*proudly emblazoned escutcheon*," and to make this equal with other nations in contributions to the common stock of knowledge. Individuals have done much, government but little, in the cause of science. The government have done nothing of a public nature in the city to assist in measuring space or time. There is not even a public clock to regulate the hours of business or pleasure, or to

tell the weary and restless applicant for office how pass his long, and tedious days of heats and chills, in waiting for a definite answer from a department of the government. Indeed, I had almost forgotten to state that there is a sun-dial on the front of the department of State. This was probably, put there as the devise of some philosopher to teach the passing generations of politicians a solemn moral; the design was a happy one, for it has often marked the hours of a great man's fame, and seen them pass away as a shadow on its face.

LETTER XIII.

Washington, Jan. ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

The Library of Congress.—Congress had provided but few books for the general reader, until Mr. Jefferson offered his library to them as nucleus for a future national library; the journals, laws, and state papers were about all the representatives of the United States could have access to in their public reading room, until the Jefferson library was purchased. It was a cheap one for the United States considering how many excellent papers in the form of speeches, tracts, pamphlets, and books it contains upon revolutionary history. The arguments urged to bring on the contest, the reasoning required to keep the spirit of patriotism alive, to induce the people to form and accept a form of goverment, to secure the liberty they had achieved, are found in this library in greater abundance, than perhaps in any library belonging to an individual in this country. In forming this library Mr. Jefferson had exercised

his judgment, no doubt; but much of the most valuable part of it was the growth of the times of struggle and determination, and if they had not been gathered then, would have been lost by neglect, and they could not now be called back by any conjuration. The collections in this library of history, general politics, statistics, and scientific works and classical literature is considerable; the deficiencies of Mr. Jefferson's library, have been supplied by the appropriations of congress for the library department; the library committee are members of congress of a high literary and scientific reputation, and what they recommend seldom meets with any obstacle. They have with great taste and judgment purchased many rare works of great value to scholars, as also many of high taste and fashion for those who have only time to indulge the eye upon wire-wove or vellum paper, or imperial bindings, or exquisite engravings. The expenditure of about five or six thousand dollars a year is a trifle for the government, and yet, by this appropriation, in twenty years this will be one of the first libraries in the world; as it now is, it probably stands the fourth in this country; but there are several of the minor class that are at present nearly equal to it, in point of numbers.

There is a very respectable library belonging to a company in the city. It contains between five and six thousand volumes, and these are

very well selected. It is as rich in American literature as any miscellaneous library of its size in the United States.

This library is increasing under judicious management, and promises to be in a few years an extensive concern.

Each branch of the government has an accumulating library. That of the state department is of considerable magnitude; but is of very little value at present to any one, but those in its immediate neighbourhood. This is not as it should be; the library of the state department ought to be kept in a spacious room, fitted with every convenience for taking notes and making extracts, &c. It should contain all the American works to be found in the book market, in proper order for the inspection of every visiter properly introduced. The sums now expended on European works are next to useless here; which under proper direction would, in the course of a few years, make up a very fine collection of American books. Of the current publications there are a considerable number of volumes deposited in that office by the laws of copy-right. and in addition to this supply, a few thousand of dollars annually would tell well in increasing the stock. The secretaries of state have generally been scholars, and it is therefore surprising that this library should not be found in a better state, one we mean more conducive to

general convenience and the diffusion of information relating to our own country. It is but justice to say that these remarks apply to the library as it was before Mr. Van Beuren came into office. It is to be hoped that he has made some reform in the premises.

The Columbian Institute was incorporated in 1819; it had existed for some time before this period as a literary and scientific society. It was founded upon a noble basis, to promote learning in all the various branches of arts, sciences, and letters. Its members are resident, corresponding, or honourary. Contributions are exacted of the resident members, of papers upon such subjects as each member choses to write upon; and there has, from time to time, been a good deal of talent exhibited. These papers are kept on file, and will be useful to the society hereafter. Congress has granted to this institution the use of several acres of land for a botanic gorden and other purposes. By the liberality and exertions of some of its members this garden has been well laid out, and many of the trees and shrubs of other countries have been transplanted and nurtured there. This, with a little of that liberality that congress has shown to some other institutions or other projects, would flourish; for there are several literary and scientific men who would spend many of

their leisure hours in the botanic department of the society if they could do it to advantage.

Congress has furnished the society with a convenient room under the library of congress where the collections of books, minerals and curiosities are deposited. Resident members are, it is said receiving encouragement from corresponding members, by way of donations, books, and minerals, and works from their own pens; and after the bustle of politics is over, it is to be hoped that the watchful eye of the scientific and literary part of congress will see the wants of the society, and that the liberal part will be disposed to aid in giving it something annually to carry on their useful labours. The members are most certainly labouring for the good of the community at large, not for themselves, and therefore deserve encouragement. It has talent sufficient among its members to do honour to the reputation of the country in the literary and scientific world, as yet, their publications have been but few, but those are of a high order and have been well received every where. The first was a Eulogy on Mr. Jefferson, by Mr. Harrison Smith. This is not only valuable as a composition, but it is more so as arising from a particular acquaintance of Mr. Jefferson who knew him in the ease and freedom of domestic life. The second was an ample memoir of John Adams by a relation, friend, and familiar ac-

quaintance, Judge Cranch. This is a chaste, plain, sensible discourse upon the merits of the great patriot of the east. It abounds in facts and judicious reflections, and will be a valuable document for the future historian. The next was of a more general character, from Mr. Southard, the secretary of the navy. The general strain of the orator was to show that it was the duty of government to patronise the arts, and sciences in this country. His doctrines were sound and most manfully enforced, and should have made a deeper impression on the national legislature than we fear they have. The last was from Mr. Everett, and as might have been expected was a splendid performance. *Line upon line and precept upon precept*, are still wanted to rouse our government to become the patron of letters, the arts and sciences and the friends to the learned men of the country.

The society in the summer of 1827 met with a great loss in the death of Robert Little, who had been a most active member. He was a thorough scholar, a zealous promoter of letters and sciences and deeply engaged in the welfare of the Columbian Institute. The death of a man of virtue and good sense is a calamity at all times, but the loss of an active, intellectual member of an infant society is incalculable. Mr. Little was an ardent, but practical man and had the faculty of infusing his enthusiasm into

others less apt to kindle than himself. He was devising liberal things for the Institute, which, would soon have been carried into effect if he had been spared a short time, only, to have matured his plans and made a communication of them. Foreigners have as yet a right to smile at this government for their neglect of learning but we trust that the groves of the academy are growing up; that the Pierian springs are gushing from the hills, and that the muses will not forever be frightened away by the spasms of party, or neglected for petty electioneering debates.

Men in office, in Washington, have been, and are, too busy to make books; they hardly read them. Some of the different documents from the several Presidents, and members of the successive cabinets, are works of great merit, of their kind. Among the most conspicuous of these is the Report of Mr. Adams, when he was Secretary of State, on weights and measures. This is a most learned Report, and is creditable to the nation, as well as to the author. The first book, giving any account of the District of Columbia, was written by Col. Lear, who was an aid to Washington, and afterward Consul to Algiers, &c. This book is now out of print. Since that time, several descriptions of the District, and city, have been given by residents, travellers,

and all sorts of people—some of them full of errors and absurdities. The best accounts were from the pen of the librarian of Congress, G. Watterson, Esq. and much careful detail may be found in Elliot's *Washington Guide*. Samuel Harrison Smith, Esq. formerly editor and proprietor of the National Intelligencer, published a history of a session of Congress. It was the session of 1801. The volume contained 190 pages, and gives a condensed view of the proceedings of that year.

S. Blodget, finding how scanty the statistical information was in the country, wrote a work upon that subject, and brought his calculations, conjectures, data and results, down to 1806. Although not a perfectly accurate book, it was a good one, and gave a good deal of information to the people of the United States, on subjects they did not know much about, or had reasoned too little upon. Mr. Blodget was among the first settlers in Washington, and like many other sensible men, was romantic in his calculations on the probable yearly increase of the population of the city.

B. Woodward published a work in Washington, on the substance of the sun, which made some noise in its day.

Mr. Watterson, we have before mentioned, has written several popular and useful books—"Letters from Washington;" "Course of Stu-

dy ;" " L. Family ;" " Tabular Statistics of the United States," &c. The public are much indebted to him for much useful information, conveyed in a good style. Some of the sketches of the great men, in and about Washington, which are to be found in his works, are splendid and original, and give a very fair view of their character.

The public are much indebted to a lady of Washington, Mrs. Harrison Smith, for two very clever novels, one called " A Winter in Washington," the other, " What is Gentility ?" The peculiar habits and manners of the fashionables, and of those who would be fashionables, are hit off with admirable tact, and the prevailing follies of the society of the District exposed and satirized with no little neatness. The latter of these books, particularly, should be read by those who are in the *chrysalis state*, and whose wings and colours are growing.

Dr. Thomas Ewell, of Georgetown, published a volume of Chemical Discourses, which were well received ; and Dr. J. Ewell has published, in Washington, an improved edition of his work, the MEDICAL COMPANION. This is a most valuable family book. It contains, in an attractive form, many useful precepts, directions, and recipes for the use of families in sickness ; and where physicians are not to be had readily, is invaluable.

Thomas Law, Esq., has, although now nearly an octagenarian, lately published a book upon currency. He is a man of no ordinary powers of mind. His life has been an eventful one. In England, his native country, he was considered a man of mind. In India he was distinguished for his financial talents, and was a great benefactor to the natives, by his judicious plans for their relief. He was the companion of Teignmouth, and the friend of Sir William Jones. Active and enterprising, he saw the accounts of the establishment of our Federal City, and he hastened to this country to identify himself with its growth, *from the corner stone to the setting up the gates thereof*. He purchased largely of the soil, built on an extensive scale, suggested ten thousand plans for the improvement of the city, and for the prosperity of the nation; but the slow, doubtful, and often strange course of Congress, came not only in his way, but in the way of all those deeply interested in the welfare of the city; and he has spent the days of his maturity and wisdom in unavailing efforts for the improvement of it. It is happy for him, however, that he has lived to see the dawn of a better day for Washington; and if he cannot stay here long to enjoy it, as a good man he will rejoice in the hopes of his friends and descendants. If his diappointments have been numerous, yet it can not be said that they have soured his temper or

hardened his heart, or that his tenants have felt his resentment, because he was deceived by those who could have favoured his plans. In this world, the insults received from those above us, are often repeated by those below us, in pitiful and aggravated forms.

One of the most useful books printed in Washington, is the NATIONAL CALENDAR, by Peter Force. It contains, among other things, much useful information. The first number of this work contains some excellent historical remarks upon the District of Columbia and of the city of Washington, which have furnished authentic matter for most of those who have written any thing upon the subject since.

Gales and Seaton have, at great expense and trouble, printed three ponder[redacted] of congressional Debates. T[redacted] yet, been paid for their t[redacted] a national work; and [redacted] present race of politicians, and the benefit of those who come after them, should be continued. Individuals, however enterprising, cannot afford such expenditures on works that are in fact rather printed for other ages than our own. Gales and Seaton are well qualified, in all respects, to give these debates to the public, freed from party biasses, and properly pruned, and brought down to a reasonable length; and also capable of separating the chaff from the wheat, and freeing

the reader from the labour of getting rid, by his own mental process, of all the crudities of legislation.

There are several bookstores in Washington, in the hands of business men, who publish many current works, and are usefully engaged; but the most important establishment in the city is P. Thompson's. His store is not so large, perhaps, as some in New-York, Boston, or Philadelphia; but, for rare editions of valuable works, in many languages, is not surpassed in the United States. It contains most of the best editions of classical works to be found in Europe, and also many works of great taste in the printing and binding, &c. To the visiter, this bookstore is what bookstores were in the days of Johnson, and B[redacted]ers, a reading room for classica[redacted]ere desirous of seeing more [redacted] buy. The proprietor is [redacted] education, and is often an index, and learn[redacted] commentator on his most profound volumes, when the examiner wishes for, and needs a guide, which is often the case in this country, where scholarship is not a profession, except with a few. The writer for one, among many, has to acknowledge his polite attention and valuable assistance in frequent examinations of matters out of the common path of literary intelligence.

The city has not been wanting in newspapers since its first establishment. The National Intelligencer was commenced in 1800, when the city was actually made the seat of government. for thirteen years it was published three times a week, and since that time it has been a daily paper. During the first of its years, there was a weekly paper connected with it, and growing out of it, called the United States Gazette. Since it has been published daily there has been a tri-weekly paper for the country, bearing the same name, and containing all the best matter of the daily, without the advertisements or other mere city concerns. It has a most extensive circulation through every part of the Union.

The *Weekly Register* was first published in 1807, and in 1808 changed its name to the *Washington Monitor*. It was edited by Mr. John Colvin, whose life was passed mostly in literary labours in Washington. He was a man of abilities, and some of his writings show superior acquirements.

In 1809, Dinmore and Cooper published the *Washington Expositor*.

At the commencement of the war, in 1812, the *Washington City Gazette* was published by William Elliot.

The *Hive* by Mr. Lewis.

The *Senator* by Mr. Cummings.

In 1823 the *National Journal* was got up and

published twice a week. The next it was a tri-weekly paper; but in a short time become a daily, and has continued so ever since.

From 1822 to 1824 the *Washington Republican* was in existence. This was ably conducted, but it was at length absorbed in the Journal.

In 1824 The *Telegraph* was established, and within a few years was purchased by Duff Green, who conducts it now. This is an extensively circulated paper.

A short time since there was a religious paper coming out once a week, called the *Columbian Star*, which has since been transferred to Philadelphia. It was rather a religious than a political paper, and was edited with a brisk religious spirit, but had no offensive sectarian cast.

John Colvin, in the latter part of his life, commenced his *Weekly Messenger* which publication his wife conducted for several years after his death.

A periodical called the *Theological Repository* was kept up a while by the contributions of the clergy.

The *Columbian Register* is a religious paper, has been published in this city for nearly two years and is still continued. It is a religious paper of a very tolerant spirit.

A literary paper has lately been got up here, called the *Washington City Chronicle* which

promises fair to be a valuable repository of useful knowledge.

It would be pleasant to make some remarks upon the talents displayed in the several works we have mentioned, but in most cases it is too late to censure, and it would do no good to commend; for most of the writers in them have passed away where praise and blame are equal, and it is never safe to cause the ghost of a politician to come up; for their graves, like the wizzard, Michael Scott's, are full of strange things. No one, who wishes to amuse, or arouse the people, must look back on matters not easily explained, and perhaps not worth knowing, if they could be known. Most things bear the stamp of the hour, and all that belongs to that hour, is not easily recalled. Every passing day has its signet, but the impression is often too faint to be retained on the memory. The life of a politician resembles that of a feeder at an ordinary of a hotel; he sees one after another go away, until his turn comes to depart also; such is the career, and the impression of one who takes an active part in the affairs of men.

LETTER XIV.

Washington, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

The American Colonization Society was established in this city about thirteen years since, and at once engaged the attention of some of the first men in the country, in the slave-holding states, as well as in the non-slave-holding states. The great objects of this society were to found a colony in Africa of the free people of colour of the United States; that in process of time a place might be prepared for the surplus population of the blacks, and to extend the blessing of civilization and religion into the interior of Africa. If the maxim "*Finis origine pendit*," is to hold as in any measure true, this society cannot fail of success. They were fortunate in their late agent Mr. Ashman; he was a soldier, a politician, a judge, and a divine; he pursued his own plan, with that which was marked for him, with the romantic spirit of a crusader and the zeal of a martyr, to which glory he at length ar-

rived. They have been fortunate too in their secretary and principal agent in Washington, the Rev. Mr. Gourley ; who, with those acquirements, talents, and attractive virtues that would make him eminent in his profession, has left his high calling, and given up the pulpit, to labour in this cause, which neither promises worldly interests or glory. Thirteen annual reports are already before the public, and abound in interest both in manner and fact. The colony planted in Africa has had much to struggle with, but has succeeded beyond the expectation of many of its wisest founders, who were well aware of the difficulties of the undertaking. No event since the adoption of the Federal constitution and the establishment of the Bible Societies, has called forth more mind or eloquence than the welfare of this society. There are already twelve state Colonization Societies in the Union, and others are forming. These are under the direction of the men most distinguished for talents and virtues in their several states. In addition to these there are already established, and most of them in a flourishing condition, about one hundred auxiliary societies scattered throughout the country. The whole will constitute a moral engine whose power must be felt at home and abroad. *God speed them.* If he does not prosper this plan, or some other, I know not what evils a century may produce.

The subject of slavery with this nation is, *the dead fly in the ointment.* The non-slave holding states approach the subject with great reluctance, for the Harry Percys of the south start up with rage at the slightest allusion to it; but it is necessary that the subject should be fairly and openly discussed, and the extent of the evil understood, not only for the satisfaction of the present generation, but that this age may devise some means to protect future ages from the overwhelming growth of this evil. The non-slave-holding states had many errors of opinion to correct. Their impressions of cruelty of the masters of slaves are quite imaginary. From no slight acquaintance with the subject, I have no hesitation in saying that in general, the slaves are well treated. The subject of slavery was incidentally discussed in the nineteenth congress, occasioned by a member of the House from the state of New-York, having offered a resolution to inquire into the case of a free black, who had been confined in the jail of the District of Columbia, as a runaway negro, and who was at length sold as a slave for cost and charges. The state of New-York was in a ferment on this subject, and the honourable member offering the resolution had partaken deeply of the excitement. The speech made by Col. Ward in support of this resolution was spirited and eloquent. He recounted, in most animated

language, the circumstances of the case and insisted upon some security for the Africans of his state, who should chance to pass into another that might be a slave-holding one. The South Carolinians, and Georgians were most furious in the debate, but the ferment lasted only for a short time. The next congress the same gentleman presented some petition from his constituents touching upon the same subject, the storm was up again, and he defended the petition with his usual zeal and ability, but there the matter rested. Col. Ward did all an able member should or could have done. If these colonization societies are kept alive with the spirit that has been shown in them, in times past, I firmly believe that, by the smiles of Providence, the blessing of liberty will, in no distant day, cheer even the sun-stricken African on his native shores. That the race will not only be free, but enjoy their freedom accompanied by all the arts of civil life, and those institutions which will secure them to the christian family for ever. The thought is an animating one and should arouse the liberal and the philanthropic throughout this great country to come to the work most heartily, with purse, pen, and tongue, which when united seldom fail of success. The most enlightened portion of the blacks have a just view of their own situation, and are anxious to prevent any spasmodic exertions for their

emancipation. At the time every African heart was overflowing with gratitude to Col. Ward for his bold and philanthropic exertions in their cause, I heard one of their preachers in the pulpit, at Washington, make a most judicious speech upon the subject. It was full of political wisdom and christian feelings; it inculcated thankfulness to friends and forgiveness to enemies, and it was accompanied by a prophecy that the time was approaching for their liberation. He saw in the spirit of the thousand institutions of charity and benevolence which abounded in the world, the political redemption of his race. The speech of the good, and intelligent member of congress, he said, was only a part of that, which in a few ages should be on every patriot's tongue; and freely remarked to his hearers, that, if they were religious, and prayerful, God would hasten the day of this deliverance.

Clergy.—The religious denominations are as numerous in Washington, according to the number of inhabitants, as in any other place in our country; but if there is no great harmony among them, there is no discord. Each pursues his own course, and preaches his own doctrines, unmolested by controversy or opponents. Congress protects all, and cherishes none. They have a fair field for the display of their talents,

in any form of Christian doctrine. There is, or rather has been, some opposition to the Unitarians; but that is nearly over; and the other denominations are learning a lesson from the Rev. Dr. Mathews, of the Catholic faith, *to do good, walk humbly, and love mercy, and live in unity with all mankind.* The clergymen of Washington, as a body, have as good a share of talents as those of other cities, and the religious character of the people stands as high. Considering that the city is a thoroughfare, it is astonishing that there is no more fanaticism prevalent here. A learned, pious, evangelical body of divines, is the greatest blessing to any place, in a free country, that can be imagined. The pulpit with them is a High School, in which, in addition to a common code of ethics, the great doctrines of divinity are taught, the precepts of salvation are explained, and heaven brought down to earth. Whatever there is deep in philosophy, beautiful in morals, charming in literature, or sweet in affection, are made familiar to man by the zeal and learning of the pulpit. It brings man to a familiarity with his Maker, and takes away his enmities to his fellow men; it gives a high zest to life in the hopes of futurity, and takes away the darkness and horror from the grave, and the sting from death, by the light it gathers and sheds from the Gospel. This country has been advanced half a century in its

intelligence by the pulpit, notwithstanding that much time and breath has been wasted in idle disputes, and frivolous distinctions, in points that were nugatory, or in commentaries that were absurd.

The Bar of the District of Columbia is numerous, for the population and business; but it is certainly respectable in point of talents and learning: but there does not appear to be that *esprit du corps* among them, as exists in some parts of our country, among the gentlemen of the bar; but they are gentlemanly and courteous towards each other. Men, similarly educated, are alike in every part of the world. If law be a science, it is only the science of bringing particular cases under fixed and settled rules. Morals change with every age, and opinions fluctuate with every hour, and old enactments give place to new; but that sagacity which brings all the powers of the mind to the standard set up, whatever it may be, makes the good lawyer, whether the possessor be in Turkey or in the United States.

Congress has made a very good judiciary system for the District of Columbia. A District Court has been established here, upon the same principles as those of other districts in the United States. This bench is filled by Judge

Cranch ; whose talents, learning, patience, and integrity, are well known to all who have the honour to know him.

There is also a Circuit Court for the District of Columbia, which is held four times a year. Judge Cranch is Chief Justice of this Court ; Judges Thurston and Morsell, are assistant Justices. This court find some little inconvenience, at times, from the singular fact, that what is law in one part of their jurisdiction, is not law in another ; the statutes of Virginia, and in like manner those of Maryland, being still in force in those parts of the District which formerly belonged to those states ; and in the growth of these states, there is no proof that they were ever so kind as to copy much from each other.

The professors of the healing art are numerous and highly respectable in Washington. Most of them are men of good education, and not a few of them have seen considerable practice before they came to this city. Some of them have served in the army or navy, and others were educated abroad, or in the first schools in this country. They deserve much credit for getting up a medical school, which has been in operation but a few years only ; but the lectures delivered here, in the different departments, are of a high order, and have been delivered without any of that quackery, that struggles for ef-

fect; and that produced, thinks of nothing else. The graduates are well instructed; and if, as yet, are not numerous, have been respectable for acquirements. It is connected with Columbia College, and is composed of a Dean and Faculty, made up of professors in such branches as are generally taught in such an institution.

The Washington City Orphan Assylum was got up by certain charitable ladies of distinction and worth in this city. With indefatigable labour and persevering exertion, they have laid the foundation of an excellent seminary, as well as an asylum for those helpless infants that have been deprived of their parents. It is not confined to one sex, but is intended to exercise charity on a broad scale. A lady of property, Mrs. Van Ness, gave the corporation a lot of ground, in a pleasant and central situation, in Tenth Street; and on it the association have erected a suitable building for their kind purposes. The corner stone of this edifice was laid in the summer of 1828, with solemn and impressive ceremonies, accompanied with the orphan's prayer, and the good man's benison. These asylums have, after the fashion of this hospitable and industrious age, taxed the ladies of this city with making articles of taste and fancy, which when mingled with other articles purchased for the occasion, are exposed at a *Fair*, and the sums

realized from the sales are directed to the benefit of the institution. The Sisters Of Charity have their fairs also.

Every age has something or other, for good or evil, to mark its existence. The brightest constellation of this age of improvement is its charities. They grow up in every society, they extend to every climate, and thus reach all mankind.

There has been established, by the Catholics in this city, for several years past, an institution of *charity* for orphan females; and connected with it a *primary school* for day scholars. This is a most excellent institution, under the care of intelligent Sisters, whose vows extend to a devotion of their time, that can be spared from their religious exercises, to the educating of the infant, female mind in religious duties and useful knowledge. This delightful, but onerous task, is performed with true zeal, and untiring constancy, by those Sisters whose sole business is to do good, and wish well to mankind. The school is an admirable one; each Sister has her branch of studies to attend to in these schools, and is not directed to others, but pursues that until teaching in it is easy and familiar. Their buildings are convenient, their grounds are laid out with taste, and every arrangement unites judgment, economy, cleanliness and industry; and, in fact, all the household virtues are con-

stant handmaids of religion with the Sisters of CHARITY. These schools are every day becoming more justly appreciated, and the knowledge of their merits more fully developed. It would be agreeable to the writer to enter into some of the minute facts relating to this institution, in which there are no pecuniary views, no particle of worldly ambition, none of the pride that seeks for praise only. They are ambitious only as far as their fame may benefit the houseless child of want, whose yearnings have elicited their pity, and whose cries have gone up to heaven for succour. The charities of this age are not confined to males or females; they belong to the warrior in the day of his glory, and to the female in the hour of her beauty and dominion; they preserve the peaceful walks in the feuds of party strife, and in the change of political power. Sectarians and oppositionists are all active in extending the influences of charity; and if she is made, by those of limited knowlege, and of narrow views of man, accessary to bigoted notions, and persecuting zeal, this is only accidental and short-lived, or occasional, while the great acts she is called to perform, in every country, are, as a whole, pure, lofty, and noble.

I cannot pass over the Tyber without saying one word of that pleasant little stream.

"And what was Goose Creek once, is Tyber now," was wittily said, and ought not to to excite the indignation of our countrymen as much as it has done against the English Anacreon; for our part we will forgive him this splenetic remark and all the other vitupurations he was guilty of, save and except his attack on Washington himself, for the pleasure he has afforded us in his exquisite poetry since; and we can easily believe that he who wrote Sacred Melodies to atone for writing amorous ditties, has, in his heart, repented for his sins in attacking the greatest patriot of all times. It falls out that if there is satire in the line, there was not much truth in it. The name of the stream was not changed by way of making great things out of little, from Goose Creek to Tyber; Goose Creek belongs to the vulgate of the boys, who sailed boats, and shot ducks in the stream; but the old deeds of more than a century ago call it by the name of Tyber Creek. It is said that a landholder who lived on what is now called Capitol Hill, finding the strong resemblance in the natural panorama of the surrounding country, named his little territory Rome, and the brook at the foot of the hill Tyber; but this little brook may be of more importance to mankind than that Tyber which "*flows fast by the Eternal City.*" For this pure little stream, when other streams shall "*mourn their fountains dry,*" may be con-

veyed in abundance to every part of the city, to refresh and adorn it, when the malaria has made Rome a desert.

The manners and customs of Washington demand a moments attention :

I have already in the historial sketch of the city, glanced at the general character of the inhabitants, but it may be well to speak of them more distinctly, as they are often either ignorantly or wilfully misrepresented ; sometimes, indeed, caricatured by those who imagine they are praising them. And it must also be remembered that their general character must be every day changing, from the increase of population, and the great influx of strangers ; who, finding now what could not have been offered them in the earlier years of the history of the city, comfortable quarters, and good fare, are willing to make longer visits, and become more more acquainted with the manners and habits of the citizens of Washington. The amiable and scholar-like Warden, now resident in Paris, who has written in a distant land a good history of this country, gave, about thirteen years ago, a lively description of all he saw worthy of record in the District of Columbia, having spent the summer here ; but many things have altered since that time, and what was then as much as could honestly be said of them, must

fall short of the truth now. He seemed to feel alarmed for the society of the city, in contemplating the number of beauties married from the circles of fashion, by the members of congress, from time to time. This laudable custom still continues ; but there are no complaints of it as an evil, at present ; in fact, the dread of it as such, could only have existed in a bachelor's brain ; and if he had thought as much of the doctrine of political economy, as of his affectionate gallantry, he would soon have discovered that *the supply is increased by the briskness of the demand.*" The manners of a people are at all times affected by the greater or lesser importance they attach to themselves ; particularly when this self esteem is made up in a considerable degree of the space they may fill in the public consideration. The people of Washington know that whatever transpires in the city, of a public nature, is a matter of deep interest to the rest of the nation. In such a place, the affairs of government are constantly discussed. The movements of the executive and the doings of the legislature are instantly known to all, and commented upon by all classes. The interest, however, which may be felt is not precisely in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ; but oftener according to the bearing it may have on themselves. The appointment of a minister, or the recall of one, or of a judge of

the Supreme Court, or the rapid advancement of a naval or military officer, great things in themselves, because they are important to the country, make up only an item in the mass of daily information; but the removal, or appointment of a clerk, or auditor, or any head of a Bureau, is an affair directly within their vision, and comes home to their business, and bosoms. But all these things, however pleasant or painful they may be for the moment, are hardly remembered a day, and certainly are forgotten in a few weeks, in the *quid nunc* appetite of a free people. These changes produce a sort of mercurial disposition in a population; which may, and in fact does, tend more to their happiness than that apathetical character which despotic governments give to a people. Politics are all-absorbing topics of this republic. More time is certainly taken up than necessary; but still a goodly share of our time, and many exertions are necessary to keep the lamp of knowledge and the torch of liberty in pure and regular burning, and to save it from being deadened by the chills of indifference, or blown out by the fierce storms of faction. Restlessness, anxiety, and the sickness and fever of party feuds, is the tax that intelligence has had, in every age, to pay for freedom; it was never sustained without it. The men of Athens, it is said, spent more than a fourth part of their time in politics. In Rome,

the busy tribunes kept the people awake to their interests, and jealous of patrician power. The struggles between the nobles of Venice and the merchants, kept the whole population involved in endless disputes. In England, for centuries, public attention has been exerted, and great struggles made for public and private rights.

The history of this country is a history of political discussions, and perpetual struggles for liberty. The people have, from the first settlement of the country, devoted more than a quarter part of their time in learning their rights and in defending them, and in building up their institutions. All, from twenty years of age to the grave, in any change of years or situation in life, are daily engaged, among other things, in politics. Washington is the centre of all this bustle, the very ear of Dionysius, in which every remote whisper is reverberated. The complaints of the great and the little are all heard here ; the feeble, who mutter, but dare not speak aloud ; the bold, who rave in their disappointments, and invoke the curses of the upper and the nether world, are also heard. The people of this city have the finest opportunity of becoming acquainted with the talents and characters of the prominent men in the country. They see at every touch and turn the obsequious minion, with his simperings and flatteries, and the consequential patron, bloated with "a little

brief authority." They not only see, but read, and read pretty thoroughly too, the true character of men in power. It falls to their lot often to see men one day surrounded by secretaries, foreign ministers, and a bowing crowd; who, on the next, pass off to private life, without a farewell salutation; and another set arrive, who bustle through their reign, and then sleep, either living or dead, with their predecessors. This proves the force and majesty there is in the people; but it lessens the importance of the individuals. To the great politicians of former ages, such a government, had it been truly sketched, would have justly been classed among the wildest fictions ever created; but its perpetuity is a problem, the most timid need not fear a solution of. The intelligence of the community may safely be trusted in modelling a new, or repairing the defects of any form of government. There is no virtue or spell in any form of a constitution. The whole political safety, in a republic, consists in the purity and in the soundness of the great body politic.

The literary taste of the inhabitants now does them credit, and it is every day growing better. The visiters find but little time to devote to reading, and their previous acquirements are sufficient for all the demands of the occasion; and to the honour of the country, I speak of the ladies more particularly, these are are sufficient

for their purpose. In some of the prettiest, a close observer will see the lisp or drawl of the drawing room conversation, which is only a manner put on for the time. In the moments of intoxicated vanity from admiration and flattery, even the political philosopher looks wise and straightens up; and can youth and beauty be expected to be more firm or insensible? The diplomatic corps at Washington have not, in former years, done much either to enrich, embellish, or enlighten the city. Those who have been sent here in former times, have, with some honourable exceptions, been of a secondary order of diplomatists, with their equipage and parties, and after making a dash, have hardly been heard of again. Many of them, no doubt, were men of talents; but there was no opportunity of displaying their intellectual powers here. The corps are now, however, very respectable. The English minister is a scholar and a gentleman. The French minister, I make no distinction in their different ranks, is said to be a man of courtesy and learning; and those from Netherlands, Holland, and Russia, are thought to be men of fine manners and high intelligence. South America, in her infancy, has sent us a good share of talents; men of the most inquisitive minds, who are indefatigable in studying the political institutions of this country, and in making themselves acquainted with the manners and

customs of it. This remark is not confined to the representatives of the new republics alone; for no man in Washington was more respected and loved for his amenity, frankness, integrity, talents, and patriotism, than the late Brazilian minister, Mr. Rebello. His name is in every literary and scientific institution, and the poor have blessed him for his kindness. In former times a man was thought to have every claim to society, who was known to be familiar with a baron, count, or minister; but the people are growing more republican every day, and the smiles of a diplomatist is not now the standard for the admeasurement of claims to society. Now and then a romantic girl is found flirting to catch an attache; but she is, fortunately, ninety-nine times out of the hundred, unsuccessful.

During the session of Congress, the amusements of Washington absorb no small portion of the attention of the visiters, as well as members. Political struggles produce a sort of dramatic influence on society; not that the theatre is very well attended; but for the short time it is kept open, it finds a very tolerable support when the press of visiters is great. The President's levees, and the parties of the secretaries, foreign ministers, heads of Bureaus, and those citizens who can afford to make parties, are frequent, and well attended. At these parties are collected the most distinguished men, not only of the

nation, but many foreigners of note. The visiters, who do not think of distinction, like well enough to see what is passing, and they find easy access to the social circles, and mingle in the throng, to see and examine for themselves. It is not difficult to get an introduction to men of importance, and to pass a social half hour with them. These routs are rather to be remembered, than enjoyed at the moment. These parties are so crowded as to level all distinctions. Governors, generals, judges, and political managers, whose influence is something in a little district, are all lost in this congregation. Orators, whose speeches were fine at home, and doubtless raised a most noble flame among their political partisans, are astonished at being overlooked; and poets, whose works have been printed on wire-wove and hot-press paper, and sent to the ladies' toilets in silk or morocco binding, are mortified that not even a belle lisps a line of their works, or ever whispers their names. The traveller, who has seen every kingdom on which the sun looks down, is put precisely on a par with him who has just come down from the mountains, or out of the West, or from the East. Fashion is the bed of Procrustes, and all are suited to its dimensions. A whiskered dandy, a black-stocked, officer-like looking man, and a quizzing-glass attache, are all moving about, regardless of those they jostle or crowd. If you

inquire who it is that pushes you out of the way to get at a partner for the waltz, no body can tell you, and perhaps he hardly could himself, if you were to ask him, who he was; no matter, he seems genteel, and that is sufficient for the hour. The waltz goes on, much to the gratification of the exquisites; for belles—aye, grave matrons, are swimming round in the dance, if Dervise-like whirling can be called dancing, and you see blowsy impudence and simpering familiarity gazing with Asiatic voluptuousness upon seemingly unsuspecting innocence, made giddy by unnatural motion, or unmeaning flattery. There is not much harm in all this; for each one is taught to play a part, and it is all acting. There is an apparently sober, quiet part of the joyous whole, who are insinuating the little rumours of the day; of this lady's partialities, and of that gentleman's indiscretions, and without any decided ill nature, but just by the way of amusement,

> "Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
> And pile the pyramid of calumny."

This is a picture of all societies, where persons unknown to each other, except from the introduction of the moment, assemble.

There can come no harm from our looking out of the limits of the city for a moment. The

College of Georgetown is delightfully situated on an eminence, that commands a fair prospect of all around. This institution was established about forty years since. It is a Catholic seminary, and was made a University by Congress in 1815, with the power of granting degrees. The college buildings are commodious and sufficiently elegant for all the purposes of a school. The library is respectable, and the system of education is liberal; the modern languages are taught there, with the classical, and youths of all denominations are received as students. The faculties are composed of pious and learned men, and the young gentlemen I have known, who were educated there, have been well instructed. The Catholic clergy of Maryland are in possession of handsome revenues, arising from large tracts of glebe lands, throughout the state. These revenues have been kept for the true purposes of religion and learning, and the ecclesiastical orders have never been charged with ambition, as they have in other countries, nor have they aspired to high offices in the state or general government. The Protestant denominations of every shade of doctrine have, unquestionably from principle, in some period or other of the history of Maryland, been openly and secretly hostile to the Catholic church; but it has gone on with such a tolerant spirit as to disarm all sects of their enmity, and nearly all of their

opposition. The clergy of Maryland protected those persecuted by the Church of England on one side of them, and those exiled by the Puritans of the East on the other. In a free country all men should, in the article of religious belief, be persuaded in their own minds, and the constitution of every state should give equal protection to all creeds;

"Tros, Rutulus ve, nullo discrimine habebo,"

should be the language of the lawgiver in every age and nation. In the District of Columbia, this principle is fairly acted upon, and the community feel its beneficial effects.

The Convent of Visitation is an object of deep interest to all who take a part in what may be emphatically called the glory of this country—*its education*. Seminaries for boys are sufficiently numerous in most parts of the country; the people have now to refine and exalt their character, not add to their numbers; but well regulated female schools are yet much wanted. This Convent was established more than thirty years ago, by Archbishop Neale, a most worthy Prelate, and upon a most improved plan, with the piety and zeal of the order of which it is a part. There is infused into the constitution of it some of the most liberal principles of the age. The superior is elected by the sisterhood every three years, and is ineligible for more than

two terms in succession. Thus the elective franchise in this country, in its most republican form, has found its way into "The Convent's Shade."

The number of Sisters, or nuns, is about fifty; and they are all devoted to religious duties and to the education of females. The younger Sisters are set to keep an eleemosynary school, and do much good by diffusing correct principles and information among the poor; but the most valuable part of the establishment is the boarding school for young ladies. This is in a most flourishing condition. The Sisters themselves are highly educated, in every branch of science, and in all the current and fashionable literature of the age, as well as in the profound ethics and the sublime doctrines of the Christian religion. In this institution the great evil of most schools is avoided; this evil is to make one person teach many branches, and of course no one can be profound in all. Here, each sister selects her department, and never walks out of it; six or seven, therefore, are united as instructers in the same branch, and the indisposition of one or two does not interfere with the course of instruction in any branch.

The languages are taught here with great accuracy, and with a pure, lady-like, and natural accent, the charm of polished society. The system of education here, extends to the minute

duties of housewifery, and the pupils graduate with a thorough acquaintance with the science of the kitchen and mysteries of the culinary art, without which no woman can be said to be all-accomplished.

The system of government in this school is admirably strict, not severe; decided, not imperative. There is no espoinage; no making use of one to find out the faults of another; but their care and watchfulness are so sisterly and maternal, that the pupil is naturally moulded, not drilled, to good manners. Discipline is constantly going on even in those hours of relaxation in which girls left to themselves often acquire an awkwardness of manners that cleave to them for the whole course of their lives. Such schools are rare. The Ursulines have just opened one on the same plan, near Boston, which is flourishing under a most accomplished superior.

If this age has any thing to boast of over those that are gone by, it is in the difference of education, and the facilities it has invented to give a genteel education to female youths, without endangering the health, or diminishing the grace and beauty of their persons.

LETTER XV.

New-York, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

This city is called the London of America. Its growth since the close of the revolutionary war has been most wonderfully rapid. When the British evacuated it, in 1783 there were not twenty five thousand inhabitants in it, and the population is now over two hundred thousand. There is no city on the habitable globe so well situated for commerce as New-York. The deep and surrounding waters affording docks at the most trifling expense; its central situation in regard to the south and east, make it the mart for both. The influx of foreigners is greater here, than in all the other cities in the United States. All tongues and languages are heard in Broadway, from the dawn to midnight. The activity of the people is, or seems to be greater here than in other places. The houses of public worship, as most of them are called to distinguish them from churches,

when they are nearly the same, are numerous and many of them splendid. The hotels are spacious, and some of them kept in a great style. Many of the private houses are also elegant. There is as far as I can see a great deal of wealth, no small share of bustle in this city, and a pretty large share of want and suffering. The people are forever finding fault with the corporation, as the mayor alderman and recorder are called, but this body spend a large sum of money yearly and probably much more judiciously than they have credit for. There is a respectable college in the city which has sent forth many fine classical scholars ; but the people as a body are just beginning to be literary and scientific, but have made no small advances in knowledge. The interior of the state has grown beyond all parallel ; from a secondary state, it has become the first in the union in population, and second to none in enterprize. This state alone has more than two thirds as large a population as the whole of the United States had when the revolutionary war broke out. The soil is rich, take the whole territory together, and seems capable of, as yet, unlimited cultivation. The great canals bring the remote interior to the seaboard ; an intercourse hardly dreamt of by the people of a former age. The foundations are laid for literary and scientific instructions in every part of the state which,

when its resources are more fully developed will place her as forward in the blessings of instruction, as she now is in activity, population and enterprize. The race of men, which has gone off the stage, laid the foundation for her present and future greatness. The Clintons, the Livingstons, the Van Courtlands, with Hamilton and an hundred others, were shrewd men who foresaw the rising greatness of the state and laboured to place many things in the right way for improvement. Their memories are respected, at the present time, and will be venerated hereafter. The politics of the state are vacilating and uncertain, but no matter, the true leaven is in the people and the people's institutions. The professions are as bodies, learned, and prosperous, and the yeomanry increasing in wealth and knowledge ; and these things are the brightest promise and the surest hopes of a people. Individual reputation has not, it is true, so great a security in the shifting winds of political doctrines, as in some other states, but in the end, this is no great evil, for many assume and support, in other places, a fictitious reputation, which perhaps may do more injury than the premature decay of the political importance of a few ambitious statesmen. It is however to be regretted that her influence in the national government is not greater than it is, having for several years past been nearly neutralized, by

the strength of parties. She has many lessons to learn, but she is aware of her situation, and that is nearly half the battle, for a change of circumstances.

In New-York there are several writers of distinction who have assisted to enlighten the community in various ways, and whose productions are well known to all the reading people. Paulding, for wit, and satire, is second to no one. His satire upon those pompous, inane travellers who swarm in this country, is so keen, and yet so playful, that those ridiculed must be quite tempted to laugh at their own picture, from his pen. Paulding can be grave as well as gay. Genuine humour however, is a scarce article; there are an hundred good orators to one Juvenal or Junius. The people of this country are beginning to value the refinements of wit, and to show some tolerable taste in judging of it.

You are acquainted with the works of chancellor Kent. He is the Blackstone of the United States for he has written four volumes of commentaries of nearly or quite the size of his great prototype.

The work is found in almost every law-library from New Orleans to Maine and highly esteemed in every part of the United States. The style is easy, the language neat and pure, and the law unquestionable. It is a standard book, used in the courts. It was fortunate for the whole

country that one state had so absurd a law in its code as to deprive themselves of the wisdom of a good judge, when he had reached the age of sixty. The Chancellor having reached that age, was out of office while all his corporal and mental powers were in full vigour. To have returned to the bar, would have been irksome, and he wisely commenced his legal labours as author, and satisfied the whole country, that profound lawyers and judges who wield a pen, as well as advocate or decide a cause, were to be found in the United States, as well as in England. The Chancellor is now about sixty six years of age, but as fresh and young as the bard of Teos describes himself to have been, when he had numbered as many years. Neither in movements, nor limbs, or mind, or imagination, can you see a particle of *coming age* in the Chancellor ; one might say of Kent, what a grave, orthodox divine, of the true puritanical stamp, once said of Hamilton. He came from the east to see the man of mighty mind, whose reports, speeches, and whole course of political life, had pleased him so much. The desired interview was had, and the conversation lasted long, and was discursive and animated. When the holy man came home, all were inquisitive to know his opinion of Hamilton ; " was he as great as you expected ?" asks one ; " yes, greater," was the reply ; " what did he talk about !" said another ;

" every thing,' said the divine ; " describe him,' says a third ; the old man began, hesitated, went on, run a parallel with one, as to his eloquence, with another as to his depth of thought and reasoning ; and so on to a dozen, but all did not suit him, or convey, in his mind, any portion of his meaning ; at last in despair of doing justice to his subject he broke out and said, " *why, he is as playful as a kitten.*"

The Edinburgh Review has in the last number stated that the people of the United States are wanting in Imagination. This assertion is the offspring of a profound ignorance of the subject of which the writer was treating. They are full of imagination ; a more mercurial people does not exist this side of Arabia. If the writer had said that their imaginations were not cultivated, and that taste was not yet sufficiently refined to place them among the first grade of poetical nations, there might have been some truth in the remark ; but it only argues an ignorance of this people from Maine to New-Orleans, to say that they are wanting in imagination. I will now name a few of the poets of this country to you. They are of the growth of different parts of the country, most of them however northern and eastern born.

In this country there are no authors by profession ; a few, perhaps, might be named, who have devoted a great portion of their lives to

literature. Noah Webster, Hannah Adams, and perhaps one or two more; but generally, all the poets of the present day, and all other writers in our country, are engaged in professional pursuits, and take up the pen occasionally, as circumstances require or opportunity offers.

Doctor GEORGE J. PERCIVAL has devoted more of his time to poetry, than most of his brothers of the tuneful choir. He has written enough to make a very considerable volume. His Prometheus, although not so much read as many of his other works, is full of deep philosophy and fine poetry. His smaller pieces are in every magazine and newspaper in the country. His language is copious, smooth, and well chosen. He unites much of the strength of Akenside with the sweetness of Kirk White. His elements are all poetical; and if his whole time was devoted to writing, his country would be greatly the gainer by it; but the stern necessity which binds, and often controls the destiny of the sons of song, makes him the supervisor of the works of others, and editor of many compilations, when he should be devoted to the offspring of his own genius. He is yet young for one of so ripe a fame; and much is to be hoped for him in time to come. He is so mild, so gentle, and has so little of envy in his nature, that those who know him, love him; and he has seldom, (a rare oc-

currence,) found even an enemy to his muse. I do not recollect a single criticism on his works that contained any acrimony.

Bryant was educated a lawyer, and has been seduced from the hard labours of the profession, by his love of letters, to become an editor of a paper, and a general writer. His poetry has been greatly praised by those who were the best judges of literary merit. He has been more popular with scholars than with the great mass of the reading community; yet with them he holds a high rank. He is natural, easy, and tasteful, and condenses his thoughts with great power over language, by having clear views of his subject. He is descriptive when his subject admits of it, but is always master of the philosophy of the heart, without which verse is nothing but a dress for moral sentiment and metaphysical reasoning.

The Muse of Charles Sprague was, like Hoole's nurtured in a banking house. He has long been engaged in the duties of a bank officer, and discharged them with the most unwearied industry and care; but these arduous labours have not repressed his warmth of zeal, or clipt the wings of his imagination. Some of his poetry is as solid and pure as the precious metals of his vaults.

The Rev. Samuel Gilman, of Charleston, South-Carolina, is a poet of highly refined taste, and has given the public several morceaus of poetry, that show the vigour and delicacy of his muse. He has sometimes attempted subjects that were not poetical, being too high for the descriptive, such as the burning of the Richmond Theatre. Poetry may darken the gloomy, aggravate the awful, and extend the vast; but when a scene is so overwhelming, so recent, and so settled in agony upon every nerve of the whole people, there is nothing left for the muse to do. At such a moment, grief is tearless and wo is dumb. To attempt, then, a requiem for the dead, is labour lost; the eye cannot see an epitaph, traced with ever so bold a hand; nor the ear hear a lamentation, however deep and loud it may be. This poem has, however, many fine touches of sentiment in it, and proves that the author, on a subject softened by distance, or time, could be both descriptive and pathetic.

N. Carter, whose classical travels have been extensively read in this country, was also a poet. He has given the public many pieces on occasional subjects; but the most considerable of his productions is his Phi Beta Kappa poem on the Pains of the Imagination. The verse of this poem is smooth, harmonious, and sweet;

the philosophy true, and the sentiment touching. Indisposition gave a melancholy shade to his drapery; but it is disposed of with exactness and taste. The news of his death has just reached us. He was too delicate for his profession, the editor of a newspaper. Men are seldom found in the place best suited to their talents.

Dawes is quite a young man; but has written enough, that is beautiful and attractive, to place him in the constellation of poets that has lately risen to the view of the American people; a constellation that emits a mild and lovely light; but one that has not shone long enough, as yet, for the observer to calculate its precise range in the heavens, or to mark the exact magnitude of the different stars that form it. Justice, in time, will be done to each and all; for the night of ignorance and superstition, in which the streaming meteor excited the wonder and fastened the gaze of nations, while the harmonious movements of the planets were but little noticed, has passed away for ever, and every eye is now fixed upon the regular, the beautiful, the shining heavenly body, whether it

"Adorns the eve, or ushers in the morn."

But to come down from the Empyrean to which,

in contemplating the subject of poetry and its authors, I am often carried; and to speak plainly of these writers, I think that they will not have occasion, in the end, to complain of the discussions of the public on their respective merits; for there is no one person, in this community, as there has been in England, at some periods in her history, who was the *arbiter elegantiarum* of the public, and from whose judgments it were in vain to appeal.

The Rev. Mr. Upham, of New-Hampshire, has written enough to show that the fire of true poetry is within him, and it would not, we conconceive, take either from the sanctity of his calling, or from the time that could be better occupied, if he were to indulge himself in a little devotion to poetry; perhaps more true piety has been conveyed in verse than in almost every other way. In the first place it is attractive, and will be read when graver discourses will not, and is remembered much longer than the same sentiment in prose.

Halleck has been often before the public, in pieces of infinite wit and playfulness. There is a flow and ease of composition, probably in this, as in most other cases, the effect of great labour; for I cannot conceive of ease being acquired in verse without it, which has distinguish-

ed him among his brethren. He has gathered up, or suffered somebody else, to collect a volume or two of his poems, and has not a few still floating in the journals of the day. His playful scraps are not inferior to Moore's, which have lately been collected by his poetical friends. I name this to show how difficult it is to succeed in wit and satire, especially if it assumes a playful manner. The grave rebuke is easy, but the ironical smile is of difficult attainment. It is a powerful and a dangerous weapon, and is apt to be freely used when the possessor is unconscious of its effects; but I do not know that Mr. Halleck has used it on any but lawful subjects, and in a gentlemanly manner. His hit at the Percys was a fair one.

Mr. Wells, of Boston, has been the successful writer for several prize odes and has numerous cups and pieces of plate as trophies of his muse. He is well read in English poetry and has a fine taste in it. His imagination is prolific, but he chastises his productions with the greatest scrupulosity. He comes from active business to his books, as an elegant amusement, and not as the labour of life: this is the charm of letters, when they can be used as the ornaments of social intercourse and polished society, and the mind is improved and the disposition sweetened by them in these hours which

might otherwise be spent in trifling amusements, or idleness, which is still worse. It is one of the best proofs of the progress of refinement in this country that neither wealth, nor martial achievements are held in much estimation unaccompanied by respectable literary attainments, and a lady of ever so fine teeth, or beaming eyes, could hold her place as a belle not a moment after it was known that her pronunciation was vulgar, or her grammar bad.

Mr. Sands is a poet of most exquisite taste. He wrote in connection with his friend Eastburn that beautiful Indian tale Yamoyden. It is a fine specimen of poetry. Mr. Sands is now quite devoted to letters, in some shape or other. His productions often adorn the annuals printed in this country, such as the Talisman, Souvenir, &c. Whatever comes from his pen has the marks of mind and taste about it. He is now engaged in a biographical work of some importance, which will, no doubt, receive the justice it demands from his pen. Yamoyden is a poem which has been admired by the lettered and tasteful, but has not yet floated into that popular current of distinction which it will inevitably, sooner or later find. Mr. Sands is a ripe scholar, familiar with all the best specimens of ancient and modern poetry, and if his muse has a fault, it is that of being too fastidious and severe

in her corrections of her own inspirations; but this is so rare a fault in this country, where it must be confessed, you may find more genius than taste, that it should be forgiven for its singularity.

Among the most remarkable instances of precious talents and acquirements is James Nack the deaf and dumb poet of the city of New-York. He is now not far from twenty years of age, but as young as he is, he has written more voluminously than any poet among all those I have named. But only one volume of his works is as yet printed, though he has many manuscripts on hand which will probably see the light when he has become more known. This young man's growth has been most wonderful. He was born with perfect organs of hearing, and of speech, and retained them until he was nine years old, when by an accident his head was so crushed as to have destroyed his auditory nerves, and by degrees his faculty of speech was lost—a very natural consequence of his misfortune. His father had been unfortunate in business as a merchant in Nack's infancy, and he had no advantages of schooling but what he picked up from his sisters, yet was considered a good reader at four years of age, and he had a passion, a very common one in forward children, of preaching—that is, in a solemn way, muttering over their fancies. A bright and observing

child sees the great attention and reverence that is paid to the services of the clergyman, not only by his parents and his brothers and sisters, but by all in the church. He is taught that the speaker is a good man, and in the first awakenings of his mind he attempts to imitate him. Nack had heard the singers in the church, and had caught something of the chiming of words, and once, being without a hymn book, he framed a couplet, for which he was applauded, and this encouraged him to make a few lines every day, and before he was in his ninth year he had a good knowledge of rhymth and rhyme from a cultivated ear. This he has so completely kept in his memory that I question very much, whether there is any poet living who has a better knowledge of rhyming words in the English language than Nack.

As soon as he recovered from the injury done to his head, as far as he ever recovered; he was sent to the assylum for the deaf and dumb. But it is quite questionable whether the instructors of that excellent institution ever precisely understood the bent and the extent of his genius.

At about twelve years of age Nack wrote a tragedy; this he destroyed; but his mind at that time, was in one constant dramatic effort; it was an expedient he resorted to, to get rid of the deep wretchedness he felt at being, as it were, left alone with himself to contemplate his

misfortune in losing his hearing and speech. In the regions of imagination he was soothed, and warmed with all the dreamy delights to be found in such fairy land; an expedient that riper minds have resorted to, to soften the agonies of the heart.

The productions of his fourteenth year were numerous, but to use his own words "most of these have perished except two or three small pieces inserted in my published volume. Most of the minor pieces in that volume, were written in my fifteenth year, among which, those I am proudest of, are *Blue eyed Maid*, the *Grave of Mary*, and the *Gallant Highland Rover*."

In his fifteenth year he wrote another tragedy. It was written under peculiar circumstances, at the early dawn of the morning in the winter season, in the garret where he lodged, without a spark of fire, and only a stump of a pen, and without a table, he stole the moments to write a long tragedy on his knees. He had no sooner finished than he concealed it, and has never suffered it to be seen.

In his sixteenth year he wrote, with many other poems, that beautiful effort of genius, the *Minstrel Boy*. This came from his heart, and it reaches the heart of every reader. It has a deep tone of feeling, a sweetness of language and ease of versification that will secure its immortality.

Until his sixteenth year he had never found any one who was capable of understanding his character, and of giving him advice and encouragement united to friendship. It was then he began to feel the balmy soothings of kindness that came with advice and patronage. It was not until this period that he had found books, except by accident. He now was in the library of a gentleman of taste who was as kind to him as a father. This situation opened a new world to him. He revelled in fresh delights ; devoured books upon poetry, history, philosophy, fiction, mathematics, politics, ethics, criticism, and theology, formed a thousand theories and tore them up, root and branch, for new creations ; and these again shared the same fate. He wrote, as well as read on all these subjects, and piled manuscript upon manuscript, which he sometimes viewed with all the rapture of genius, and then with freakish untowardness turned from his numerous progeny with loathing. With all the irritation of wounded sensibility he grows feverish over his reminiscences, and then again hurries on to perform some new task. He seems to have no dread of any labour, however severe it may be, if it will please a friend or come to any account for himself or others.

His acquirements, at this early age, in the languages and all the branches of knowledge, ordinary, and extraordinary is superior to that of

any young man's of the same age I have ever met with. There is a strength and maturity about his mind not to be found in one who has had the use of his ears and tongue. His criticisms have a sagacity and shrewdness unequaled by those who were critics long before he was born. He acquires a language with the most astonishing facility. No one I ever knew, could do it with the same readiness, except the late learned orientalist, George Bethune English. Nack unites in a most astonishing degree those two seemingly inconsistent qualities *restlessness* and *perseverance*. He reads, writes and does all things as though he had just breathed the Delphi vapour, and perseveres as though he were chained to the spot by some talismanic power. He is a bunch of delicate fibres, too susceptible for composure, or rather of nerves, jarred to agony, if struck by a rude hand. Poetical beings are often too sensitive when in possession of every natural property and gift, but when deprived of the charms of hearing and speaking, the pulses of the heart seem to beat in our own sight, without even the thinest skin to hide them; open to every blast of a cold and cruel world. But in a few years he will find things changing around him, and these youthful labours now viewed as useless, will become in his opinion, as the foundation stones of a goodly edifice in the fashioning of which he has learnt the skill

of a literary architect and acquired the strength to raise a temple of imperishable fame, for his own and his country's glory.

The ladies of this country may justly put in their claims for distinction, in every path of literature, but particularly in poetry. It is considered among the elegant accomplishments of the age, and the great number who possess the talent prove that this is a land of pure etherial fancy, and correct taste. Mrs. Sigourney who was known as a poet, in her maiden days, then, Miss Huntley, has not with the cares of her family, as is often the case with female musicians, or poets, neglected her devotions to the muse ; but has given the world other effusions since, marked with more strength and beauty than those which charmed all who read them, in her earlier days. There is a sweetness, a depth of feeling, a grasp of thought, united with the most perfect care and elegance in her writings, that shows she was intended to be conspicuous among gifted minds, and an ornament to the virtuous as well as intellectual part of the community. From her residence of elegance and taste on the banks of the lovely Connecticut, she sends forth her minstrelsy, to guide the young and to delight the old, and to improve all ages ; may it be long before others shall supply her place ; may the flowers of her arbours bloom, and her harp be in tune, until nature shall re-

quire that repose that philosophy contemplates with composure and religion with visions of hope and transport.

Mrs. Hale, who is now conducting a literary periodical in Boston, has besides several respectable works in prose, written many pieces of fine poetry. She is now in a circle of intelligence and taste, where her merits will be acknowledged. The muses may owe their birth to a village, and love to reside for a season amid sylvan scenes, but some Athens must be near for them to resort to occasionally, and receive the homage their inspirations deserve, and which it was never known that their modesty refused. Apollo must listen if the best song of the Nine is expected.

It is a long time since the public have heard any thing from Mrs. Gilman, except her fame as the pride of the social circle, and the first in every charitable exertion, but it will be long before the lovers of genuine pathos and poetry will forget '*Jephthah's vow.*' by Miss Howard. We hope the mild air of the south will not incline her to forget her early promise to her country, that such talents should not be hid.

Mrs. Ware is the editor of the *Bower of Taste*, a periodical of reputation, printed in Boston, along side of Mrs. Hale's magazine.

These rival ladies, I use the word in its primitive sense, divide a liberal patronage, in that city. She too, is a poet, and established her reputation by writing occasional hymns and odes, before she took the editor's chair, and came out as one of the literati by profession. There is ease, spirit and mind in her verse, and her prose is tasteful and elegant. The fact of these two editors and that of there being so large a number of females who are writers, speak volumes for the advancement of education here. It is evidence of the polish and intelligence of a nation, that their females assist in directing the minds of the rising generation. The writings of Hannah More, Joanna Baillie, Miss Lucy Aikin and Miss Mitford, with a host of others, are now, and for a long time have been, an honourable portion of English current literature which has found its way among the reading community, in the United States.

Hannah Adams, Miss Sedgewick, Mrs. Childs (formerly Miss Francis,) Mrs. Willard and others have been eminently successful in leading the youths of this country in the paths of knowledge. Acquainted with the infant mind, they early learnt the best methods of instilling virtuous principles, and making pure impressions, with the facts and reasoning that go to make up the mass of information which is pos-

sessed in the maturity of the understanding. A sound principle, taught in the nursery, and afterwards cherished in the domestic circle, seems written on the heart and brain together, and is seldom or never effaced. They may be obscured for a while by false doctrines and loose habits, but they break out and shine again when these delusions have passed away.

Of the male and female poets I have not given a tenth part of the names of those who have gained a considerable share of fame by their productions; and there are many who write well for amusement, who will not avow their productions. This is decidedly a land of poets as well as painters; but it is strange that there should be so much written when authors are so wretchedly paid for their labour. It is not strange that authors in this country are badly paid when the fact is known that about five hundred English works are reprinted here a year. Some of them, are standard works, and of service in diffusing useful knowledge, but with these all the trashy novels, as well as the good ones are found.

LETTER XVI.

New-York, ———, 1830.

DEAR SIR,

I REGRET that you should have given so much credit to capt. Basil Hall's account of the people of the United States. There have been a race of wretched travellers from England whose works have passed among the people as honest chronicles, when they were, in truth, a tissue of falsehoods and absurdities. Ash was a miserable liar, and is not now believed by any one. Kendal had not the spirit of on old woman, and Miss Fanny Wright was a dreaming enthusiast when she gave an account of this country. Hall came to write a book and by his being a post capt. in the navy had access to good society; but he was a wretched specimen of English manners. He attempted to be republican and was most insufferably vulgar. I have never met with a well bred Englisman in this country who was not ashamed of him, nor an American who did not despise him.

Your alarm for the religious character of the United States is altogether unnecessary; the

people, as a mass, are as truly religious, as any people in the world, and do as much for the support of it as any other people; and in most cases, throughout the whole country, the pay of the clergy is from voluntary taxation. The various creeds professed have but little influence on the public morals, because good moral conduct is either the basis, or a prime ingredient, in all the creeds. A good patriot, when he sees any religious sect *doing justly and walking humbly*, does not quarrel with them for shades of difference between them and himself in religious belief. The impression you have of the influence of Mr. Owen and his disciples, is altogether erroneous. You get a wrong statement from the two parties who talk the most about it. The followers of Owen are enthusiastic in all they do and say; and their accounts of their success cannot be depended upon, even to the slightest detail; they see every thing as reformers, and turn it all to their advantage. If you were to listen to them, you would suppose that the reign of reason, after their fashion, had come, and all superstition and priestcraft were falling into the dust at once, and an exalted moral feeling and principle was directly to take the place of ignorance and debasement. If, on the other hand, you should hear the timid and scrupulous portion of the community, you would think the altars of true religion were at once to

be overthrown, and the reign of infidelity and libertinism were to ensue.

Hall thought that he had acquired more information than all his predecessors, and should be enabled to enlighten all his countrymen respecting this country; for he assumed to think deeply on all subjects; but you can hardly find a book containing more charlatanry than his in all the bookstores in England.

I went last evening to the Hall of Science, as it is called, to hear and see Miss Fanny Wright. She was to deliver one of her lectures on *Knowledge*. She is a tall, bony woman, of a good countenance, and not an ungraceful person. Her style of elocution is imposing. She speaks as one conscious of high mental powers, and as one believing that she was born for a reformer. She has nothing, however, of novelty in her theory. She said what Mary Woolstoncraft had said before she was heard of, in a more fascinating, if not in so logical a manner. She inveighed against the established order of things, as if the whole world were deceived and led blindfolded by rulers, judges, divines, and pretended moralists, of all classes. I have a full belief that the mistaken woman is sincere in her creed, if creed it can be called that denounces all creeds, human and divine. But she propagates error under the guise of doing good, and sows the seed of moral evil under the lofty pretensions of eradicating

fixed and settled errors. A misguided multitude follow her ; some honest dupes, but more dishonest mal-contents are in her train. She attacks the altar of God as though it were an altar of Baal ; and solemnly pronounces the whole profession of priests a race of hypocrites. There were many things in her lecture that were very good, if they were unconnected with the vile slanders she so shamelessly uttered. Her whole course of conduct shows that she is both ambitious and benevolent ; and she thinks that she hides the former under the mantle of the latter ; but in this she is as silly as the ostrich, who thinks herself concealed, when she has only hid her head. To see a man in the profligacy of a coarse, strong and misguided intellect, railing at religion and trampling upon every thing sacred, is painful enough ; but to behold a woman, of a refined education, fitted for all the charities of life, so far unsex herself as to promulgate doctrines, that bring down the pride of female virtue, and place every one of her sex on a par with the impure and wicked, is too painful to dwell upon. This misguided woman is now followed and cheered by those who are at war with the established order of things ; but the most will drop off, one after another ; and the probability is, that she will find herself, in her old age, deserted by those who once affected to admire her, and be left to mourn over

her worse than useless life; then she will see the difference between philosophical benevolence and Christian charity; the one is stained with the filthy currents of this world, and partakes deeply of the nature of the earth, while the other is illumined by the light above, and grows brighter and stronger as its burthens increase. Such spirits as Fanny Wright are blessings in disguise. If there was nothing to alarm the city, the watchmen would sleep on their posts. Our spiritual watchmen are but men, and they require to be alarmed by some symptoms of danger to keep them awake. A rude attack may make them more united; a charge brought against them for want of concord, may teach them to move in more harmony. From evil, good may come. Moral evil is, perhaps, as necessary to fulfil the designs of Heaven, as natural evil. Fire, flood, pestilence, and war, are all instruments in the hands of a just God, for wise purposes, and why not a reviler of his nature and government?

There is a most active spirit abroad in the cause of benevolence and religion; it pervades every part of this country; large sums are yearly collected for all the purposes of enlightening the rising generation; Bibles and good books are put into the hands of all classes of the people, and it is a prevailing fashion in the upper circles to know something of the Scrip-

tures. Men now discuss the subject of divinity as well as others, and form their own opinions upon these weighty matters; and while children are taught theology in the nursery, and the philosopher is as much pleased with the subject as the priest, there can be no just fears from a few specious reformers, who make themselves conspicuous by their blasphemies, rather than from their reasoning powers. Ever since I have looked on men, I have never known it fail, that the blasphemous were in the end deserted, and their names held in abhorrence. The Sunday Schools, which are established in all parts of this country, and are so numerous that their honest register seems to stagger all belief, are soon to be the greatest moral engine, next to that of permanent day schools, that civilization has ever devised. A thousand false teachers of infidelity cannot withstand the force of these modes of instructing the youthful mind. These false teachers may seem to have great influence with the people; but it must be remembered, that the sincere followers of such lecturers as Owen and Fanny Wright, are those who have long been infidels; the rest of the audience are made up of those who are curious to hear all things, but are not converts, or likely to be; or those whom idleness, or accident, throw in by way of amusement; and it is not to this latter class the difference of a pin's fee whether they

take a lounge into the theatre, fall into a gambling room, or stroll up to the Hall of Science, to hear the female orator. They must have something to amuse themselves with, and a female preacher is as good as any thing else. It would be wrong to infer their depravity from the place where they happened to be seen. To the honour of the females of the United States, it should be said that they have given no encouragement to Miss Wright or her doctrines. You might follow her from one part of the country to another, and you will not find that she is protected by any portion of the female community. It is possible that now and then one or two women, either careless of their reputation, or urged by insatiable curiosity, may have been seen among her audience; but I have never known an instance. The females of the United States are, in general, well educated, and in some portions of the country highly so. And I have never known more than a half dozen female infidels in my long acquaintance here.

LETTER XVII.

New-York, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

Having glanced at a few of the poets, perhaps you will expect me to say something of the painters. Those who have passed off the stage have found historians, who, if they have not done them justice, have, certainly, had opportunities to speak of them more particularly than I can, in these familiar letters to a friend. As all artists belong to a nation and not to particular cities, I shall not take any pains to name them with any territorial reference, any farther than as citizens of this country. If one place claims their birth, another may have called forth their talents, and the patron is often better to an artist, than a parent.

Dunlap, to use a Yankee phrase, is *one of those artists who started from his own head.* He began by copying some prints in India ink, and then proceeded in painting portraits in Crayons.

In 1783 he painted General Washington and his lady, who sat to him at head quarters, Rocky Hill, New-Jersey, when the self taught artist was only seventeen years of age. These were so much extolled, considering the youth of the artist, that in 1784 he was sent to England to study his art, and on this adventure, for it was indeed a great one, he received the attentions of Mr. West. On returning to this country, in 1787, he gave up his profession and began mercantile pursuits. He early discovered a literary taste, which in fact is almost indivisible from a taste for painting. In 1789 he wrote a tragedy; "The Father of an only child." This was brought out immediately and was very successful. This led him to an intimate acquaintance with theatrical people, who induced him to enter into dramatic speculations, as a manager and author, and which ended as such speculations generally do, in the loss of all the cash a man has when he commences; but as he was honest and honourable, and more *sinned against than sinning*, he had no great difficulty in settling up, and beginning anew. In 1808, he assumed the pencil as a miniature painter, and followed this branch of the art with success, but was induced by the friendly offers of Cooper, the tragedian, then in the zenith of his fame, to take a department in the management of a theatre in New-York; but after two or three years he grew tired of that, and

took up his pencil again as a miniature painter. Stuart saw the cleverness of the artist and advised him to try oil ; and his advice was followed, and with great success ; but soon after this time Dunlap received the appointment of deputy pay master general in the militia of the state of New-York. It was a busy office, as the troops were in arms on the seaboard and frontiers, and allowed him no time for his professional pursuits. In 1816, he returned to the arts he had left, and from which he had so often played truant, and commenced anew, with youthful vigour and delight and has ever since been constant to the Muses.

Since that time he has been most industrious, and besides a great number of portrait and fancy pieces, he has produced four great historical pictures. The first was Christ disputing with the doctors in the temple. This was so much admired that he was induced to try his hand again, and *Christ rejected* was his next. This was indeed a great effort, it is a sublime subject. The great masters of a religious age had devoted painful years to scripture delineations, and while ponderous tomes of divinity, as it is called, have sunk into the dust, those splendid efforts of human genius have survived as models and lessons to this, and, will descend, to future generations. This is indeed an epic labour ; hundreds of figures appear on the canvass,

and most of these full of history. Dunlap had never seen West's great picture ; he had only read his outline. It is quite a different thing in design, and a judicious critic might, we think, say that in many points of his picture he has been quite equal to that great master. The angelic composure of Christ in Dunlap's picture, has, in my mind, as much truth to nature, as the downcast countenance of "*the man of sorrows*," exhibited in West's. We prefer to see his divine, rather than his human nature, in every exhibition of our Saviour ; but we will not dwell on this or any other point in the picture ; the subject is one of eternal interest, and will for ever employ the pen, the pencil, and the tongue of fire of the most gifted of the human race. The next was the bearing of the Cross ;—this was full of holy feeling. The fourth was Death on the Pale Horse. West had done the same, but we have no hesitation in saying that in many points Dunlap has the advantage of West : we mean, particularly, in colouring. The fifth Calvary ; this picture is all original, as in fact the others are in most of their features. It was a remark made by an American lady of taste which is founded on truth, that the more we see of the historical pictures of the great masters of Europe, the more we value the productions of Trumbull, Allston, Dunlap, and others we have seen brought out among ourselves.

Dunlap has been distinguished as an author, as well as a painter. He has figured in biography as well as in the drama. He was admired among the scholars of an age gone by, and is honoured by the present, as a man of genius and of taste, and it is no easy matter to keep up with the march of improvement at this time. He has reared a monument to Brown the novelist, to Cook the tragedian, and to others of less note. May he be rewarded according to his deeds.

Sargent's picture of The landing of the Pilgrims was, I speak in the past tense, for I understand that it was destroyed by some accident, much dmired in its day by the descendants of the pilgrims, and spoken well of by those who did not feel any extraordinary sympathy for that race of men. The event of the landing of those few wanderers had nothing in it of very great sublimity or interest when taken by itself, unconnected with the past or the future in relation to that period. A handful of adventurers setting foot on an inhospitable shore, in an inclement season is, no doubt, a subject of sympathy, but not of wonder. The appearance of a northern sky in such a season of the year was a fine object for the painter, and Sargent availed himself of it. He was northern-born and had lived, for the usual months in the year, under such a sky as

our forefathers first saw on their first landing, a freezing atmosphere, rocks, ground, all covered with a mantle of snow, while a low and sickly looking sun threw a few faint rays on the iron-bound, frost-bound coast. The dignity of the group was conspicuous in the picture. All they had suffered, all they were prepared to suffer, and what they hoped to effect, was well conceived and defined in the painting. The pious, providence-trusting, resigned look, was there also. A little of the soldier was still seen in Miles Standish—yea, more of it than of the saint. The females were well displayed; not with Amazonian hardihood and fearless look; but yet there was no timidity, no shrinking weakness, no dread of the savages, nor of a more appalling foe; a long and dreary winter, without house or home, or any shelter for themselves or their little ones. They stood, they looked, they went forward, as those who believe that they have a God for their protector. That painter is good for nothing who cannot impress us with the moral sublimity of virtue, and give us the majesty of religion, with all her sweetness. There is a spirit of prophecy in the hearts of the good in every undertaking, which if it has no defined views, no tongue, but only speaking looks, yet it lives and dwells in every vein, and kindles in every eye, and has full possession of the soul, as certain as the soul has an

existence; and the painter of this picture had genius enough to seize the thought and make the best of it.

The next picture, from the same artist, was CHRIST'S ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM. This was also a popular picture. It was remarkable for variety in the expression of the countenance of the Hosannah-crying multitude. The face of the Saviour is wonderfully fine. An Indian chief once viewing the picture in the presence of the author of these remarks, looking stedfastly in the face of our Saviour, said, emphatically, *that is a good man.* The last and only remaining picture I know from Sargent, is the *Dinner Party;* a specimen of the extraordinary power of light and shade; to exhibit which seems the great object of the artist in this painting. Sargent formerly took several portraits which were praised for their spirit and exactness.

VANDERLYN'S paintings have attracted the attention of the lovers of the arts, both here and on the other side of the water. His Ariadne is an exquisite painting. It is the semblance of enamoured beauty, in dreaming innocence. The sleeping princess seems to glow with visions of eternal love, while her faithless spouse is stealing away like a thief from the shores of Naxos, and tarnishing by his perfidy the glories of his adventures. Thirty centuries are lost in con-

templating this picture. The mind of the spectator is impressed with the whole scene as if the present was the precise hour of her desertion, and feels all the passion of love and grief and resentment, crowding upon his heart, as he gazes upon the sleeping beauty; and seems to dread that she should awake in his presence, to realize and bewail her misfortunes, before he has quitted the scene. Such is the power of the artist.

Marius on the ruins of Carthage is from the same hand. The savage pride of the great Roman general, nursing himself with high resolves, drawing aliment for the concentrated energies of his soul from the awful ruins around him, and looking, feeling, and expressing, by his very silence, the eternal truth of the indestructibility of mind; that mind, which in him, no misfortunes could subdue.

The panorama of the *Garden of Versailles* is a work of a different kind, but of great merit. Those who have visited the place say that the faithfulness of the picture is admirable; and certain it is that the beauty of the light and shade is hardly to be equalled. This painting has been exhibited in several of our cities, with great success. The artist is now engaged in a panoramic view of the falls of Niagara. All former attempts to convey on canvass this sublime scene in nature, have fallen short of even majes-

ty; and all I have seen did not show any of that terrific grandeur which belongs to the subject. The occasional war of the elements, as exhibited in tornadoes or volcanoes, have often been successfully represented by the pencil; but such a perpetual display of the wonderful works of Omnipotence, as the rising and setting of the sun, and the eternal agitation of the ocean, are not within the capacities of the painter. By great effort, he may bring to your own recollection the images that have been there before; but his powers add nothing to them. These are subjects for the muse of poetry, not of painting; and if his attempt is successful, in any considerable measure, as his friends say that it will be, he will have added to the capacities of his art, and secured his immortality.

Washington Allston, now of Boston was a native of Carolina, and received his education at Harvard College, where he graduated in 1800. His taste led him to think of painting as a profession. Soon after leaving college, he hastened to Europe, and commenced his pupilage with the zeal of youthful genius. In the bosom of the arts he became known as a man of promise, and his fame often came across the Atlantic to raise the expectations of his countrymen. They were not disappointed; he returned with a mind enriched by travel and obser-

vation, without any diminution of his character or simplicity of his manners. In Boston he sat down to his profession, and every production of his pencil was anticipated with painful anxiety; not from apprehensions of disappointment in the work, but from the intense desire of being gratified with the sight of his productions. He is above the envy of his compeers; for he comes in competition with no one. The fashionable world has no charm for him, and he is never found in its circles. A little coterie of dear friends is his passion, and his hours of relaxation are spent with them; but in these hours he is exact and systematic. It is true of him, that he flatters no one, abuses no one, nor is found in the train of any one. He has truly an independent mind, without one particle of the moroseness which often accompanies that *godlike virtue*. He seeks no idol of the day for patronage and praise, nor follows in the train of a reigning belle to catch an approving smile, which on the morrow may lead others to seek him: no, for he feels a security in his own fame, that requires no such momentary aid; his reputation will be increasing when the politician's fame is blown away by some *new burst of infernal smoke*, and the beauty is no longer remembered. He has that popularity that follows merit; he wants not that which is sought for by conforming to the lights and shades of the hour; nor did Alls-

ton ever complain for want of patronage; his productions being promised as soon as commenced. I have seen but three from his pencil—*Elijah fed by the ravens in the wilderness—Jeremiah in prison, dictating his prophecies to Baruch his scribe—and the dead man into whose grave the body of Elijah was cast, waking into life.* These have been seen by a good portion of those who have any taste for the fine arts, in the several great cities in the United States, and their merits thoroughly examined. The first, *Elijah fed by the ravens*, is marked by the boldest scenery. The Judean mountains seemed fitted for the abode of prophecy. It is more natural and more sublime to place the voice of inspiration among the deep caverns and strong shades of the mountains, than by fountains or caves in the sunny fields of cultivation. Allston has caught the true philosophy to nurse his genius by the perpetual contemplation of those scenes and events, in the revelations of God to man, in which the power of God-head, transcending his natural laws, is visible and unquestionable. His two other works are of the same class, drawn from the same source. Such a cause admits every variety of talent and demands every extent of power. The picture of the *hand writing on the wall*, the appearance of which has long been expected and so much desired, is of the same character.

Until within a few years past, our artists had to find their way entirely alone. They had no concert, no associations for mutual aid, and mutual instruction ; they had no place for the exhibition of their productions ; they were seen by chance ; and the fame of most of the painters depended upon ignorant admiration, or ill natured criticisms, even perhaps less intelligent. Ordinary reputation will always be local ; but then it often happened that those of a higher grade found their fame not more extended, and probably not so distinctly allowed when it was known, as those of no solid merits. Academies and exhibition rooms, which have been got up in our principal cities, within a few years past, give the youthful aspirant for fame a chance of being known, and of having his merits justly appreciated. In New-York an *Academy of Design* has been established, and a distinguished artist put at the head of it. Mr. Morse has been known to the public as a painter for some years. His Dying Hercules was considered a good specimen of drawing, as well as colouring. He has, like many of our painters, been chiefly employed in taking portraits ; but his taste and talent, I should think, would lead him to historical painting: but what was more immediately in my mind is, that he has commenced a course of lectures on his art ; the first, probably, that has been undertaken in this country. From what I

have read of them, I think there can be no doubt of their utility and success. He matures his subject well, and gives it those minute finishings which make the great charms of the writers of the classical ages. The bold truths and startling positions, so much the fashion of the present age among men of genius, will pass away and be forgotten, when the more natural, and, at first, less attractive productions of taste, will be fresh and increasing in value. The polished lectures of Sir Joshua Reynolds will appear in new and splendid editions, when those of Fusilli, full of gigantic throes of thought and night-mare figures of rhetoric, will only be found in the libraries of the curious. To aid Morse, there came many young men of merit. A word must answer for them; and as they are now in the glorious career of emulation, adding to their fame every passing day, this course, perhaps, is best. To make only a few remarks on them, is not to say they do not deserve much; but is only saying that, as yet, they are striving for the mastery, and their comparative merits are not as yet decided.

B. W. Wier is a historical painter, he spent some time in Italy in pursuit of his art, with a most perfect devotion to it. He is delicate and elaborate in his finishings, and every thing from his pencil shows, that with the elements of a

great painter he has the industry that ensures success. In colouring, he imitates the Venetian masters, and the effect is often delightful. He is yet young, and the country has much to expect from him.

C. Ingham, is a portrait and historical painter; he has made many fine portraits for the exhibition room. His colouring is admirable; his finishing finely minute. His female heads of taste and fashion, in high dress, have been the admiration of men of judgment, not only in this city, but in other cities, where they could not have been influenced by the social and virtuous qualities of the individual. The talents of the artist could alone have been the foundation of their opinions.

T. C. Cummings is a miniature painter, and possesses a good share of capacity in his line; and it is a branch of difficult attainment. His sketches are full of life—mind and spirit seems to awake in his most shadowy lines.

H. Inman, a portrait and historical painter, is a great favourite in New-York. He is not more than twenty-four or five years old, and yet he has attained to an honourable eminence in his profession. His compositions are bold in design, and happy in effect. He never seems to think

of a difficulty in his art, and seldom does he meet one. His colouring is remarkably fine, and all speak of him as full of still greater promise, while they are admiring what he has already done. This is unforced praise from them, for he has no management in eliciting admiration and praise ; it comes from his labours alone.

A. B. Durand is a landscape painter, and would be very clever in this branch, if his pre-eminent talents as an engraver did not put him as a painter, in the back ground. His productions are in every work of standard taste and talents published in this country. I have many of his works in my mind which are exquisite, but as they are not before me, I shall refrain from my criticisms for fear of not doing justice to his merits.

G. W. Hatch is in the same line as Durand, and has given the most astonishing proofs of genius. A distinguished artist, on seeing some of his productions, and understanding to what age he only had attained, observed, "I know not to what eminence this young man may not aspire if his life is spared."

Bennet is one of this gifted society, and uses his pencil or his graver as occasion requires with ease and talent.

There are others of reputation in their professions who may not be connected with any associations for the improvement in the arts. Frothingham, a self-taught artist, is an excellent portrait painter, who has laboured along with every difficulty, but who has now reached a stand that will insure profitable business. He began his career near Boston, where Stuart was in full business, and if he cannot be said to be a pupil of that great artist, he certainly has caught much of his manner. The public have been gratified this year by seeing some of the specimens of his pencil. The engravings of the heads of Bishop Cheverus, and the Rev. Doctor Channing, with others, have given Hoogland an enviable reputation as an artist. Indeed, one might continue until a volume might be written on the works of the clever artists now in the active pursuit of fame and emolument. There is no want of talent in any department of the arts or sciences, or in any walk of literature in this country; patronage alone is wanted to fill the principal cities with the first rate proficients.

So much has been done for the advancement of female education among us that in almost every walk of life, the women of this country, have claims for distinction. We have named a few of those who, possessing a good share of poetical talent, or are known in the groves of

learning; we will mention a few also who are distinguished as painters. Our ladies are as yet mostly amateurs, a few only have made the art a profession. Among the amateurs, and probably first among them, or female professional painters, is Mrs. L. Russel, formerly Miss Smith, daughter of B. Smith, Esq. of Boston; she is indeed a most talented woman, but I am not now attempting to describe her general scope of intellectual acquirements, but it is as a painter only I mention her. She, early in life, discovered a partiality for drawing, and instead of always copying the lessons of her master, she boldly designed for herself, to the admiration of her acquaintances. A long residence in Europe, particularly in France, gave her fair opportunity of improving her skill and refining her taste in the art.

Some copies she made while she was in Europe from the works of the masters, astonished the modern professors, and while they wondered at her production, would not be persuaded that she was a native of the new world, and not one reared in the bosom of the arts. She has taken several fine portraits of her friends. One of John Adams, which, allowing for a little of the female and the friend which is thrown into the picture, is most excellent, and certainly the next to Stuart's of any one I have ever seen of this venerable patriot. There is a freedom of

pencil and brilliancy of colouring in her paintings rarely equalled in this country, so prolific in painters of great merit. She is to our great painters what Lord Lyttleton was to Pope among the poets—an amateur and proficient of exquisite taste, who did not wish to rank among the poets; this, however, was forbidden by the just laws of Parnassus, and he was put in the catalogue of British Bards, so must she among the painters. Had Mrs. Russel continued her labours, or amusements, call it what you please, we too should have had an Angelica Hoffman.

Miss Jane Stuart, a daughter of the veteran painter of that name, early discovered marks of genius in the art. She had made considerable progress in her studies before her father knew her talent in this way. She copied her father's paintings as often as she had opportunities, and with great success. Her friends persuaded her to attempt original pictures; and encouraged by their kindness and patronage, she ventured to receive now and then a sitter, and was quite successful. She is now engaged in the profession, and discovers much of her father's manner, and no small share of his spirit. Encouraged by the munificent and intelligent patrons of her father, with industry and patient labour, she will, without doubt, be a first rate portrait painter.

Miss Goodrich, of Connecticut, has been a

miniature painter for several years, and some of her likenesses are said to be very fine ; particularly of ladies. She, as well as those we have mentioned, is an estimable woman, as well as a fine artist. In addition to these there are a great number of ladies who excel in landscape and ornamental painting, and several have succeeded in Lithographic drawing, who are unwilling to make their merits known to the public. There are branches of this art for which the retired life of many of the ladies in this country is well fitted to cultivate, and as the country grows in wealth, a taste for the fine arts will increase, and then those high accomplishments may be made, when necessary, a source of emolument far greater.

LETTER XVIII.

New-York, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

I was yesterday introduced to the Lyceum of this city by one of its principal members, Dr. De Kay, whose urbanity, intelligence and devotedness to literary and scientific pursuits, are well known in this city: The subjects of natural history are admirably arranged, and scientifically classed ; but as you are much better acquainted with all these matters than I am, I shall hasten to the authors and builders of these institutions rather than dwell on the minute relations of their extent or excellence.

In one of the rooms of the Lyceum are several large cases, marked with the name of Doctor Samuel L. Mitchell, which is as familiar to you on the other side of the Atlantic as with us, on this ; for he has received academic honours from every literary and scientific institution, I believe, of note in the world ; and the Doctor himself is less understood than any other man living. Some have laughed at him as a credulous, rhapsodical lover of learning, but without much true science,

and entirely destitute of judgment and common sense. Others, and particularly those in foreign countries, hail him as the most learned man in America ; for they have received more information from him than from others, and it is natural they should suppose that he was truly at the head of our savans and literati. The Doctor has analysed every thing which has been brought forward for nearly half a century past, in matter and mind ; and he cannot complain if he should now be analyzed himself. In that part of his character which assures a man true respect and affection from those around him, a kind disposition and a benevolent heart, and a life of charitable deeds, the Doctor has nothing to fear from any scrutiny. But to commence as the moral anatomist, upon his capacities, powers and organizations, it may be said that his memory is wonderful, and he has stored up an immense accumulation of facts in every art and science, and every incident in history ; not contented with this, he never suffers a fact, or circumstance, which he has taken pains to treasure in his memory, to be there alone ; but he makes a minute of it on paper, and puts that in a pigeon-hole, to answer as a voucher to his memory, if that should fail him, or be doubted by himself or others. From these methods he has obtained advantages over most men, in fact, I might say, over any one I ever knew. He has

not only been industrious in this accumulation of valuable materials, but his mind has been active in reasoning upon them. He is happy in great quickness of perception, and falls more naturally into a train of correct reasoning, than those who labour ever so hard for it. He describes with great ease, and often most felicitously. If his style is sometimes tainted with a little vanity, it bears no marks of arrogance. It is true that he never fears to meet a subject, however novel, and it is true that he seldom touches one without giving it some new grace or ornament. He is equally happy in giving names as characteristics. A monster of the ocean unknown, and of course unnamed by ancients or moderns, some ten years ago was caught in our waters; the Doctor saw, dissected it, and named it "the Vampire of the ocean;" and I challenge the lovers of Buffon to produce a more accurate, lively, and philosophical description in all that admired author's works, than was given of this anomaly. The Doctor is called *credulous;* indeed he is; but his is not the credulity of wondering ignorance, that knowing nothing, believes every thing; whose imagination makes hobgoblins and "*chimeras dire*;" and fears the powers of fiends, because he knows nothing of angelic natures. The Doctor's credulity, in all the wonders of creation, is like that charged by the noble Fes-

tus upon Paul—"much learning makes thee mad;" by which madness was meant an unbounded credulity in believing a newly promulgated religion, which was *to the wise a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness.* The Doctor's credulity arose from knowing more than other men. He was acquainted with the laws of nature, and knew not where to fix her bounds. He saw that she was carrying on innumerable processes, in an immense laboratory, and could not say what she might not produce next. If he who knows but little is credulous, he who knows much is more so. About forty years since, a wise father, whose son had been in India, heard his accounts of certain religionists of that country, suspending themselves with hooks thrust through the flesh or the ribs, and swinging for hours in the air, said, "*My dear son, I believe your narrative fully, because you have been taught to tell the truth; but do not repeat the story, for others will not believe you; it is too much for them to credit; wait a while, and others will tell the tale, and you may confirm it; I will assure you it is dangerous to be a discoverer;*"—and the friends of Fulton begged of him not to persist in his speculations on the use of steam engines. Such credulity as Dr. Mitchell possesses, has been the promoter of all that is useful in the arts and sciences. Tecumseh said to an Indian agent, "*You tell me that you know how many*

steps it is round this earth, and you never crossed the mountains! Tell me who is the mother of all the rivers; how deep is the sea; and when the sun will grow old, and die, like my forefathers; I will then believe that you can tell me how long my arms must be to embrace my mother earth." The agent replied, "I can tell you when yon moon shall hide her head, and become dark; and you will see the darkness come on; and all yon tribes shall see it also." The wondering savage seized the thought, and bought the secret; foretold the eclipse to his followers; this increased their confidence in him; the eclipse happened; his fame was established; and he threatened the agent and astronomer, from whom he obtained the secret, with death, if he was not out of his reach forthwith. The moral is at hand; many a one has availed himself of the Doctor's information, calculations, and conjectures, and tried to hide his own ignorance in abusing the source from whence his knowledge flowed. There is a vanity, however, in human nature, which the good Doctor has a share of; that is, a desire of having a reputation for knowing almost all things; yet it must be confessed, that the Doctor's manner is modest enough.

The Doctor has been charged with *enthusiasm*. He is enthusiastic; but it is that ardour of mind that wishes to raise the standard of knowledge above what it is in this country, which

is, indeed, a pardonable enthusiasm. Nothing good or great was ever achieved without it. It is the "*divine inflation*" which swells the bosoms of the gods of knowledge, when they labour for the sons of men.

The Doctor is not only *credulous*, *inquisitive*, *enthusiastic*, but *ambitious*. He wishes this country to be the first on earth, and himself the first in the country. This is fair; and if he fails in either, after having made the struggle to bring about his wishes, who will say that the attempt was not a noble one? Give us more such ambitious men as Sir Humphry Davy, such credulous ones as Columbus and Fulton, and you may cover them with the names of *enthusiasts*, *dupes*, and *insane men*, and every other epithet that ignorance and dulness can pick up, or mouth, after some disappointed rival has once spoken it.

There is another sin the Doctor has long been guilty of; and that is, the sin of *perseverance* in attempting to enlighten mankind, after sciolists and fops have satirized him for attempting to make them wise. This is a "*grievous offence*," and one that can never be forgiven, while envy has so much sway among men.

If any one denies the Doctor taste and science, let him go and view his cabinet of curiosities, and see the order and beauty of his arrangement. Every thing in its place, from *the butterfly and humming-bird, caught on the sum-*

mer flower, to the tooth of the mastodon, the horns of the elk, and the brick, coming all the way from Babylon, to the meteoric stone coming from God-knows-where, and then ask him if there is not taste, science, skill, patience, and much that should make a great philosopher in Dr. Mitchell's cabinet.

LETTER XIX.

Boston, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

I am now in Boston, the metropolis of New-England. It answers my expectations, in most respects, and in many instances, far exceeds them. The city has improved since I visited it in former years. The buildings are of a convenient kind, and many of them elegant. No seventy thousand people on the globe are better lodged, or from what I see of the market, and public and private tables, better fed. The people are mostly of one descent from the first settlers of the country, and have about them all the marks of their ancestors; nor are these characteristics of this people confined to this city, every part of the commonwealth have the same. The city of Boston abounds in public schools of the first order. The poor share with the rich the blessings of education. The city boasts of ample public libraries; and private ones are more numerous, and better chosen than can be found in any other city in this country; and perhaps I might venture to

say in any other in the world. The police is excellent. The streets are clean, and all things show a well regulated community. The affairs of state are managed by a numerous assembly of representatives who are, generally speaking, highly intelligent men; if *in the multitude of counsellors there is safety*, this state cannot suffer, or be in danger.

The College Halls, within three miles of the city are ancient and noble edifices. This university dates its origin nearly as far back as the foundation of the city. The men as you walk the streets have that solemn determined look, which their fathers had when they came out in open warfare with the mother country, and unquestionably are as brave as they were, with much more intelligence. On the Exchange are to be found the old fashioned, honest merchant, with the bustling, modern, brokering speculator. The courts of justice, have the respect and confidence of the people; and when it is said, "*the Supreme Court have so decided*," all conflicting opinions cease, and the rule laid down by them becomes absolute. They venerate the laws and are ready to protect the court on any occasion. The high places of the judgment seats, and even those of minor power, have on general been well filled, for public opinion would not tolerate any but good talents and of unquestionable probity on the bench for any length of

time. The volumes containing the reported decisions of their Supreme Court, have been thought well of in England, and I have heard arguments from lawyers in this city that would do honour to the fierce Brougham or to the straight forward Scarlet.

Every profession has its learned men in this place, and many of them of true merit in society. Although this state first began the revolutionary war, they have but little rebellious matter about them. They are all as quiet as any community I ever saw, under their own government. Three years before the contest for independence closed, the people had made themselves a constitution, and form of government; which was in most of its features a model for many other states' constitutions. John Hancock, the first signer of the declaration of independence, was their first governor. He was a man who filled a great sphere in society, and has left an imperishable name for his country's history. He was in the chair of the commonwealth, except one year, from 1780 until his death in 1792. The learned, philophical Bowdoin filled the chair of the commonwealth, that year. It was this year that this state had to crush an insurrection that threatened to subvert the government. Samuel Adams, who was a patriot, and should have been called *the Inflexible*, was his successor. A good and a great man succeed-

ed him, Increase Sumner, who was as *just* as he was amiable. Caleb Strong was chosen after him. He came from the interior of the state, a wise, shrewd, catious man, who was a fair representative of the first settlers of the country, who were, *as wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves.* He was sudceeded in 1807 by James Sullivan, a bold, energetic chief magistrate; who was strongly opposed, at his coming in, by a powerful party, but died in less than two years, having gained by his upright, and independent administration the confidence of most of his constituents. In 1809 Christopher Gore, a well bred politician, a scholar and a gentleman, was his successor. In 1810 Elbridge Gerry, who had been an efficient member of the state legislature in 1775, and a member of the continental congress afterwards, and had been conspicuous in both bodies, was the successful candidate. He administered the affairs of the commonwealth for two years, and Strong came again into power, and held the chair during the war. The gallant General John Brooks was his successor. His popularity, as a revolutionary officer was paramount to all political, or party feelings, and of course he was the governor of the people. To him succeeded Doctor Eustis, a man who had served in a medical capacity for several years in the revolutionary war, had been a member of Congress from Massachusetts, and afterwards Secre-

tary of War in the general government. The whole of this group were great men; they had enemies as well as friends; but all had done the country some service, and each had high claims for the office, and they were men of whom their opponents were proud. Some of them, it is true, came into power in the spasms of party; but the Commonwealth had not descended, as many others had, to take up men of sixth rate minds, or come so low as to fill the chair of state with the spawn of political apathy. Massachusetts then considered her governors as holding only the second office in the country; and after having filled this, they would not accept of any other. Changes come over every people. Sometimes they oppose those they are proud of; at other times, support those they are ashamed of. The Athenians were an enlightened people, but as volatile as intelligent. At one time they ostracised those of political integrity, and prostituted their honours by lifting into high places those loose, spongy, declaiming demagogues, of whose want of political virtue every one was aware, even in the midst of his infatuation. These things will happen. A sleeping lion will suffer a slimy lizard to crawl over his nose, or hang on the majesty of his mane.

The soil of Massachusetts is a hard one, and will not allow any idleness in the cultivation of

it. Industry has made it productive and valuable. The intelligence of the people has turned every rood of land to advantage, and if it does not *support its man*, it supports precisely that for which it was made. Massachusetts is a land of hills, and of many streams of water; nature pointed out the place for a manufacturing country; and notwithstanding the disasters which have befallen this interest, throughout New-England, it will still be a manufacturing country, and equal to the wants of the market.

This people are struggling to keep the foremost rank in the literature of the country, and are establishing town and county Lyceums for the diffusion of knowledge. These are most admirable institutions; for they offer the ambitious not only an opportunity to acquire knowledge, but also to display it. The antiquities of the country are sought for, and the time is near at hand when a correct history of it will be written by some of their enterprising literary people.

For the happiness of the whole there was too great an inequality of property; but this evil will not last long: in fact the overgrown fortunes have found an agrarian law in overdoing the manufacturing business. This business will fall into other hands; the second, third, and minor classes of wealthy men, have taken the place of the primary classes, and all will go on

harmoniously, and strictly, if not so lucratively as formerly.

The whole of New-England abounds in a wholesome population, full of industry and intelligence. She has also some, yea, many great men. She, with other parts of the country, has committed mistakes in her policy, but she has a defence for most, or all of them. The East, North, and South, had many things to learn, and not a small part of them was a better acquaintance with each other. New-England has produced a large number of patrons of learning, and they still abound here. Names might be mentioned that would answer to be placed along side of the great friends of learning in every age ; but as her own historians have, or should long since have given their deeds to the reader, I shall close by saying that I have packed up a box of books relating to their history, manners, habits, and schools, their possessions, their hopes, their every thing, and shall leave you to read for yourself.

LETTER XX.

Boston, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

When I was here some years since, I by accident, in a mail coach, become acquainted with a singular man of the profession of the law. He was *witty, profligate ;* not "*thin*, but *fat*, *jolly*, and infinitely amusing. On my return, I inquired for him, alas ! he was not here, but although I knew it was not reputable to be seen with him, yet I felt it as a disappointment to find that he had gone the way of all the earth. Expressing my wish to know something of his history, a friend put a manuscript in my hand from which with his consent I have extracted the following account ; if it is as interesting to you as he was to me, I shall be paid for transcribing it.

The Maxim "De mortuis nil nisi bonum," "*say nothing of the dead but what is good*, has wisely been changed to "De mortuis nil nisi verum." But even the truth should not be told at all times, if it casts a shadow over the grave ; for the dead cannot defend themselves. It is far better that the pall of oblivion should be

thrown over the errors of sinful man, than that they should be exposed, unless their exposition may serve as a beacon and a warning to those who may come after us. To drag into public, what was done in private, is wrong; but those who filled every act of the drama of life as public men, who enacted every thing for notoriety and effect, and whose deeds had an influence on society, are fair subjects of examination, and animadversion. They must have expected this when living, and their friends cannot complain of it when they are gone. There are those who must be held out for us to shun, as well as those exhibited for us to imitate; detestation for vice is nearly allied to a love of virtue. As much may be learned from the reckless profligacy of Anthony, as from the severe virtues of Cato; and from the life of Cæsar Borgia, as from that of Pius VII. In our young community, we have, in general, buried every thing in the grave; *and tread lightly over the ashes of the dead*, hardly daring to repeat the maxim, "No good man weeps when gifted villains die:" But the welfare of society demands that this injudicious modesty be overruled; and truth, bold, distinct, and naked, when it can do good, should, unhesitatingly, be brought forth. It is absolutely idle, and in fact, next to ridiculous, to show a shrinking delicacy about one who never had exhibited any regard for himself or for

others. It may be said that the living should be regarded, if the dead are not. This is right, to a certain extent; but not to a very great one. The innocent child should not be distressed by premature remarks upon his parents, nor the aged parent agonized by a display of the vices of the child. There should be discretion in all things; but the subject of this sketch died childless, and his parents are no more, and probably there is not one living to whom a full development of his character would give a pang; for if his profuseness made, for a while, any impressions upon the minds of the grateful, his duplicity and deceptions wiped them all away; and they can hear of him as of men for whom they had no regard, or never knew.

Joseph Bartlet was born at Plymouth, the landing place of the Pilgrims, about 1763. His parents were highly respectable, among the moral and intelligent of that exemplary people. He was sent to Harvard College, and graduated in 1783. He had a highly respectable standing as a scholar in his class, as is, in some measure, proved by his being one of the three to whom the charter of the Phi Beta Kappa Society was sent by the Alpha, then existing at William and Mary College, Virginia, for the University at Cambridge. He early attained that wretched notoriety which has injured so many young men in college—the reputation for wit and excentri-

city. The gay gather round such a man, to join in the amusement, and the grave and sober now and then relish a good thing from him; and it must be remembered, that the age in which he came forward, was not remarkable for its sobriety, or reverence for holy things. The country was indeed engaged, at that time, in a great struggle,—one on which hung the destinies of the nation; but any man acquainted with human nature, knows that great exertions of this kind produce every evil fruit in morals and manners. The elements of society were in a measure afloat, during the revolutionary war, and particularly at its close.

Bartlet left his Alma Mater the year of the peace, 1783; and every thing was in doubt and confusion. The brave were resting from their toils, thinking they had done their share of the great work; and were willing that others should commence their labours. At such a favourable moment for confusion, the demagogues who had been silent, when there was any danger, now raised their voices at every corner, and in every high place, to excite the turbulent against order and moderation. Bartlet issued from the halls of his college to join in the full cry of liberty and equality, with those who intended to profit by uproar and confusion. He was well calculated to assist in raising the whirlwind; but had no talents or disposition to aid in directing the

storm. Bartlet was soon conspicuous among the vulgar and the riotous; for he had a ready elocution that caught the shallow, who were contented with any specious arguments, when it was in consent with their wishes. He was at such times more than a match for men more powerful in argument than himself, for his ready wit never failed him, when he found it in vain to reason; and in any contest he seldom failed to get the laugh on his side; and this is much in a dispute now, and was more then. At this period of life he was an open infidel, and this was thought by some as being a mark of a great mind. The loose in principle wanted a witty leader, one who had the capacity of using profligate satire and indecent ribaldry in their cause, against the decent and pious. They had a man in Bartlet on whom they could rely. The religious had long been unaccustomed to be disturbed in their opinions: they had, it is true, quarrelled a little about points; but had seldom been assailed at all points; and they hardly knew what to make of it, when they were boldly attacked in their very citadel. The pious were alarmed at this course, and shuddered at his attempts to make shipwreck of their faith; while the free thinker enjoyed it, and made him a much greater man in point of intellect than he really was.

Soon after leaving college, he went to Sa-

lem, to study law ; and in the mean time to teach a school. He could not have spent much time in this place, for he was not at all suited for that latitude. They are a quiet, thinking people in Salem, and were not prepared for such opinions. At this time, many of our young men were taking a voyage to England, and Bartlet thought he would go likewise ; and without much preparation he set sail. This was, indeed, an adventure. He had no object in view, except to see if he could bring his wit and convivial talents to a market. In this he in a degree succeeded.

From the opulent Americans around him he obtained supplies for the present, and trusted to chance for the future.

One night when Bartlet was in the Theatre in London, a play was going on, in which his countrymen were ridiculed, I believe it is one of General Burgoyne's plays ; a number of rebels had been taken, and brought into the British camp ; on the inquiry being made about their *occupations*, I believe the play says '*professions*,' before they became soldiers, the answer was, although many of them were officers, that they were of different callings ; some were barbers, some tailors, some tinkers, &c. at this moment Bartlet rose from his seat in the pit, and cried, "hurra ! Great Britain beaten by barbers, taylors and tinkers!" The effect was

wonderful. John Bull took it all in good part; and many of *the Bloods of the day* introduced themselves to him: and he made the best of the occasion. Those who were pleased with his boldness, soon became enamoured with his wit. He had no restraint upon moral, political or religious grounds in saying any thing, and his manners were, when he chose, gentlemanly, and very fascinating; and he for awhile was quite a lion in a certain circle; he was assuredly distinguished wherever he went. The Bucks of London at that time supposed that Americans were savages, and were surprised to find one who had been *caught*, *tamed*, and in their view, somewhat *polished*. He was sought after and petted, and in *good faith* they found that he had seen, before they saw him—a hand of cards. He often boasted, that this time he had frequent meetings with Fox, and Sheridan, and is this unlikely? But Bartlet's maxim of "*carpe diem*," would not suffer him long to be even a fortunate gambler; he was too sensual, and luxurious for that; soon as his purse was full, the society of the table, took precedence of all others. He had no legitimate hold on society, but like the moss on the rock clung to it by siccity or saturation, until blown off, and therefore it is not wonderful that he should have found himself in prison after a season of drought and showers. Here he groaned and cursed

awhile; but found that such a course did not do any good, and he set his wits to work to get out of confinement. For this purpose he wrote a play, which has since perished with ten thousand others, but this was a novelty; a play from an American! This provided him a sum sufficient for his release. His former friends, he has often said, gave it a character it did not merit.

The particulars of this event he would never precisely acknowledge; but met every inquiry with his usual escape,—some facetious remark.

From London he set his face towards Edinburgh, and there under an assumed name went on the stage, and as Mr. Maitland, enacted several parts in genteel comedy; and if his own account of himself may be taken, was quite successful. He prided himself in being at home in Belcour in the West Indian, and in all probability, at that time, he had some qualifications for the part. His histrionic career was not long; he was too fond of society to study enough to make an actor, if nature had fitted him through industry, to have become one. He soon grew tired with this way of life, and hastened back to London, after one season, and made an acquaintance with the mercantile classes, who were then in a rage to fill the United States with goods; and strange as it may seem by his specious representations, and their anx-

iety to sell, he procured a large credit. These were probably insured in London, and perhaps, the creditors did not suffer much, for the vessel in which Bartlet was returning with his goods, was cast away on cape Cod, and was lost, with the bulk of her cargo.

There is an anecdote connected with this shipwreck quite characteristic of Bartlet. On the voyage he had been constantly descanting on his favourite topic, the theme of the French philosophers, "*the eternal sleep of the grave, and the recuperative force of matter*," and that he was ready to take up his march at a moments warning; but when the vessel struck the shore, he discovered the most cowardly anxiety for his safety, and when asked what had become of his philosophy, and contempt of death? like Falstaff, he evaded the subject by saying "that it is not that I fear to die; but I should dislike to be found dead in such a dreary place, as the back of cape Cod." There is nothing more amusing than to trace the selfishness of those of his school who preach disinterested benevolence. This patriot and champion for the new philosophy, took care to get to the shore as soon as possible, leaving the gentlemen of old fashioned principles to assist the female passengers in making their escape.

On his arrival at Boston he formed a copartnership in business as a merchant, and again left

his country for England. He again obtained a very considerable credit for his firm, which soon failed; but how much he was to blame in this I never could discover.

Tired with trade, he returned to his first intention of studying the law. While engaged in reading his profession, the insurrection of Daniel Shays, and his party took place, and the troops of the lower counties in Massachusetts, were ordered to march to suppress it. Reinforcements were soon wanting, and volunteer companies were raised in Boston and the vicinity, and Bartlett was chosen to command one of them. He told them so much of his prowess, that they thought him a great military cheiftain. Captain Bobadil could not have said more of himself. He took up his line of march from Boston to Springfield; but two hours after he had left the town of Boston, he was ordered to return, for the insurrection was quelled and tranquillity established. On this news the captain of the train-band made a speech, regreting that he and his brave followers, had not had an opportunity of showing their courage; and closed his harangue by saying, that he had not the slightest doubt, that Shays had retreated on hearing that he was coming with his brave company.

On his admission to the bar he opened his office at a town called Woburn, within a dozen

miles of Boston, and here began his career as a wit, a lawyer, and a politician. Never was there a better demagogue. He harangued in the grog shops, and at the town meetings ; and at all times had the power of setting the mob in a roar ; and sober men too, if within hearing, found him irresistible. His aim was first to attract attention and then to assail his audience through the medium of their vanity, and then to direct them when they were excited, to a spirit of faction and misrule. As odd as Jo Bartlet, was soon a by word. He had painted his house black, and caled it "the coffin," and the passers-by stared, inquired, and wondered what sort of a man this Jo Bartlet could be. In a few years he moved to Cambridge, the half-shire of the county of Middlesex.

Here was a wider field for the display of his talents, than he had found in a small town ; not that he expected or wished to associate with the literati at Harvard university. The faculty had no love for such a man ; his politics, his religion, or rather his want of any religion ; and all his opinions, and habits were not to their taste ; but he knew that he should gain popularity by annoying them, that is the only popularity with the only class of people he ever expected to secure, the profligate and lawless. By some management he got himself selected as poet for the anniversary celebration of the Phi Betta Kappa. In

this production he indulged his spleen against some of the professors of that institution. This was, however severe, the best production of his pen that is extant. There is poetry, taste and no little splendour in this work, however unjust or sarcastic it may be.

In all the domestic concerns of the college, he strove to have a part. At every quarter-day he watched the poets and the performances of every kind, and gave his biassed and partial opinions to the world, through the medium of the press. This was indeed dreadful; for these candidates for fame imagined their own little world to be all the world; but the public newspaper taught them otherwise; and they found the critic was after them, before they had trusted themselves to the press. By these attacks on the quarterly performances, Bartlet often felt the resentment of the scholars, and had but few or none to support him; but he made mischief, and that was pleasant to him.

He invited a few of the scholars to his table, and kept a small party in his train, who drank his wine, and who were sure, while in his favour, that he would violate every thing like justice, to make them conspicuous. He joined in every little college feud, for the love of confusion and uproar. The town of Cambridge was agitated by party violence, and in the whirlwind he now and then was thrown up to public notice, and

succeeded, more than once, in obtaining a seat in the House of Representatives in the general court; but he had no weight in that body; the materials of that assembly were not much affected by his wit, or in the least guided by his political opinions; still he enjoyed it; for his element was a rancorous opposition. At the Courts he was not more respected than in the Legislature; for he mixed himself up with his clients, who, in general, were harlots, rogues, and knaves, of every size and grade. He amused those he did not benefit; and spunged all by one piece of management or another; and this class often find means to pay counsel when they seem extremely poor. Such a man as Bartlet wears badly in any place; and he found his popularity, such as it was, declining: with the honest he had but little communion, and with the bad he was out of favour, for they found he had no weight with a jury; and often his reputation, and his clients' together, ruined a pretty fair cause. It was time for him, to use his own expression, "*to see new faces.*" From Cambridge he removed to Saco, in the province, now state of Maine. In this place he began, with fresh vigour, the same course he had pursued at Cambridge, as to politics and law. He obtained credit sufficient to erect a good house, and seemed, for a while, flourishing, particularly in politics. He was sent a senator from the

county of York, to the Legislature of Massachusetts. In this body he was courted for his own vote, perhaps, but never carried a single one by his arguments or his eloquence; but it is thought he assailed some propositions with success, by the force of his ridicule; but this more often deters the modest from doing good, than the bold from doing evil; but ridicule is no test of truth, at any time. The next year found him an unsuccessful candidate for the same office; but this did not discourage him; his patriotism burned so conspicuously, that his partizans put him in nomination for Congress, and he was so active with his pen and tongue in electioneering for himself, aided by his followers, that he run nearly equal with his opponent, having, at the close of the polls, within half a dozen votes as many as the successful candidate. Some of his political writings of that period had some pungency, and no little satire in them; yet they went to decay and oblivion with the autumnal leaves of the year; but at that time they were blown about and spread abroad, as thickly as the thistle down, over the fields and gardens, and gave considerable alarm to the sound and virtuous politicians of the day. The demagogue, a happy circumstance for morals, gives his breath to the winds, and its first influence is generally the worst. Even the rancorous words of politicians com-

mitted to the periodical press are soon forgotten. Junius may be stated as an exception; but this only proves the rule. At this day the opinions of that great writer pass for nothing, and his malice would be condemned if it had not been embalmed in so felicitous a style; a style as full of genius as beauty. The folds of the serpent are preserved to accompany and account for the writhings, the agonies and griefs of the Laocoontes; but the very reptile which adds to the wonderful effect of the group would be turned from with instinctive disgust, if it had been chiselled out alone, or by an ordinary hand. By his imprudence and waywardness, he was at length broken up here, also. His power over the multitude was every day diminishing, and his chance of political advancement nearly gone, when he removed to Portsmouth, in New-Hampshire. In this place he had some business, and some influence for a while, owing to the party spirit which then agitated the community; but the sagacious people of that town had formed a pretty just estimate of his character, and he made no progress in political life, and with difficulty found means to support himself as a citizen. His clients were of the same grade in New-Hampshire as his clients had been in other places; but even this class of clients soon discovered that their advocate must have some standing in society to do any good in court;

and they turn from such men as Bartlet, after some experience, to find men of influence to assist them. At this time he had depreciated as a man of talents, his stories had been told a hundred times, his flashes of wit were less frequent, and he often attempted to make up in scurrility what was wanting in acuteness. From day to day he grew more irregular in his habits, and more careless in his person, and of course he was neglected by many, who once from courtesy associated with him; and the good people of Portsmouth were heartily tired of him long before his departure from the place; and at length hired him to go, by agreeing to take a certain number of tickets for some recitation which he proposed to give. This literary exhibition was beneath contempt, but secured him a handsome sum of money, for so slight a labour. Bartlet lingered in Portsmouth a while, until his money was nearly or quite exhausted, and then set out for Boston. Here he opened his office; but very few clients, however, found their way to it; and those few were miserable wretches, who came for a writ for an assault and battery, or some such grievous matter, and from whom he could only squeeze a few dollars. In this situation he became a tax to his friends, or rather on those who had known him in his early days, or had become acquainted with him in the various paths he trod in life; and such was the

liberality of the community in which he lived, that the amount received by him, if it had been prudently expended, would have supported him in all the necessaries of life; but who ever knew such a man with a particle of even forethought? His principal reliance was on the members of the Suffolk bar, but others assisted freely, and particularly the benevolent Mrs. F****, whose husband kept a public house in the city. She was the most judicious of all those who gave him succour; and to her he was always obedient and respectful; and his regard for her judgment was the only proof, for a long while before he died, that he was not lost to every correct principle of conduct. Bartlet's case is not the only instance of her good sense and liberality to the unfortunate. Never was a more judicious philanthropist than this good woman, nor one that did so much with the same means; for she is as discriminating and prudent as she is charitable. For six or seven years Bartlet went on in this way, until he died in 1827; and his exit was a relief to all around him. The death of such a man gives no one the heart-ache, or causes a tear to be shed.

When we sum up the whole matter of the life of such a man, we find it amounts to little; no one has been made wiser, or happier by him; and his whole existence, with all its evils, does not furnish sufficient of incident or variety, *to*

point a moral or adorn a tale. A wit is indeed "*a feather;*" and the smart things said any where, are echoed but once or twice, and then given to the winds. The wit of Bartlet was in general neat and tasteful; and if it had not been allied, like Voltaire's, to infidelity, it would have gained him more fame than it did. Some of his flashes of witty resentment showed so much of heartlessness, that the listener shuddered at the blasphemy, while he could not refrain from laughing, at the moment, at the singularity of it. What can there be so evanescent as wit? for although the writer of this brief sketch has heard many of his witticisms from Bartlet himself, and others, yet he has suffered them to pass from his memory, as the recollection of them would be productive of no good; but in justice it should be said, that Bartlet has never published any thing, with his name, that has an immoral tendency. His poem on physiognomy delivered before the Phi Betta Kappa, at Harvard university, was evidently intended as a satire on particular individuals, and like most satires contains many exaggerations; yet there is nothing in it offensive to morals, or manners, and considering the state of poetry at the time in which it was written, is a very fair poem in regard to the talents it discovers. It had something of his spiteful disposition in it, but none of that outrageous slander that he was

every day breathing out in his intercourse with society. At a later period he wrote a book of aphorisms that are well enough, but the production cannot be said to have any great share of originality in it. After the proverbs of Solomon ; Rochefaucalt, and those of the Spanish writers down to Sancho Panga, there seems but little to glean in aphoristic literature.

In the writings attributed to him which appeared from time to time, twenty or thirty years, ago there was much of vi uperation and false reasoning ; but it is very seldom that truth is found in party accusation or defence, and he never had even a sense of decency to restrain him, to say nothing of principle. In his writings as well as in his conversation a most malicious spirit was evident when he was in the least offended. He raved at the rich because he felt his own poverty, he sneared at the prudent because he knew that he was destitute of all economy ; he ridiculed the learned, for he was too indolent to store his mind with useful knowledge ; and, like many, he affected to despise what he had not industry to obtain. He relied in middle life, and in old age on the acquirements of his youth, which were respectable, but the starved mind soon discovers its deficiencies and weakness. He that does not sow and reap, in seed time and harvest, and that on every season, will soon deal out straw and chaff for

sheaves, and provender. As his head grew more empty his heart grew more rotten, for the time must be filled up with something ; and when emulation ceases envy must come to fill every void of the heart. All the good kind men did him produced only a momentary impression, and his gratitude was a mere transient matter of sunshine, while his resentments were rancourous and lasting. The heart and the head frequently become diseased together. In his times of distress he attempted to poise himself on his philosophy ; but it was a shallow, cold, heartless, infidel philosophy, destitute of hope or enthusiasm, and which could only be supported by human pride. It was that bravery whose parent is cowardice, and which prefers the impulses of desperation to the dictates of a deliberate judgment, that gave the semblance of energy to any part of his conduct. The empire either of wit, or of any other power, mental, political, or adventitious soon passes away, unless the most strenuous exertions are made to maintain and extend it. The wit which once "set the table in a roar," loses its point by repetition, and the laugh, once so contagious that the gravest could not resist it, after a while becomes "*stale*, *flat*, and *unprofitable*," Fashion is every thing, but fashion soon passes away, or rather changes her form, for she is truly eternal in spirit, and power ; and the joke that was once racy and

piquant, after awhile, becomes dull and ceases to attract attention, and the sentimental or national song, takes its place. Foot was sometimes tedious, and Sheridan maudlin, prosaic and intolerable; and they tired their companions even when their talents were brought to a better market than Bartlet could find in this country for his.

An imprudent man frequently under the appearance of carelessness and great liberality, is selfish and exclusive, and often attempts to put down the claims of justice by an assumption of generosity; and the complaints of a large creditor, for his total loss, are drowned in the abundant thanks, and noisy gratitude of some recipient of a slight benefaction. There is no particle of resentment or malice in the remarks I have made on the subject of this memoir, nor any wish to keep his failings alive. The sketch was made to show the young the vanity of a reputation for wit, and the folly of struggling to be thought a genius, unless industry, and expanded feeling are allied to distinguished powers and happy gifts. Of Bartlet the world may speak freely, for his father has long since gone down with sorrow to the grave, and the wife of his youth was obliged to desert him when tenderness and affection had become strangers to his bosom; and he left no child to blush at his father's failings. If the dead, not claimed by re-

lations or friends, may be taken by common consent to the theatre of the anatomist for the public good, surely the character of one whose life may serve to warn us of the dangers incident to our journey from youth to the grave, or teach us to shun the vices of society as we pass on, is common property for the moralist or sermonizer. If there was any thing in such a life to attract attention, there was nothing to secure respect. No mourner followed his hearse, no poet sung his dirge, and where rest his ashes no one will inquire. So pass away the profligate and the unprincipled.

LETTER XXI.

Boston, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

I have not had sufficient leisure to execute that part of your commission which relates to those distinguished men of the United States who have just gone off the stage. They are not numerous, as the old revolutionists are falling like autumnal leaves, and those of the next generation begin rapidly to follow; of the first class much has been said, of the second but little, for there has not been much time to think of their merits. And perhaps it is not best to say much about them now, as there is a revolution taking place in the public mind, and it may be well to wait until this has become settled. Men were estimated according to their offices, the people are becoming wise, and they will be estimated according to their merits. I have sketched one you inquired after, general Brown, and the others I send you, are well known to me.

The physical force of the army of the United States is nothing. A few thousand troops are to be found at the different forts and canton-

ments along the seaboard and frontiers ; the plan pursued I think is admirable. They support officers and not soldiers. These officers are men of intellect and good morals and instead of governing men, which would afford them no opportunity of improving their minds, they are engaged in scientific pursuits and are serviceable to the country by making its topography known to all sorts of people. In case of war men can be raised and disciplined in a short time under skilful officers. The last war gave sufficient evidence of American bravery, but there was a lack of well informed officers. There were men among them of great talents, and who managed well, but even these would acknowledge that there were but few scientific officers at the commencement of the war, and that the army suffered much, for the want of them. Although it sometimes happens that circumstances create the necessary talents for the occasion, yet it is much better to have men acquainted with all that has been done in war or peace ready for service. Among those men who have started up at the moment they are wanted, and act their part with honour, was the late major general Brown. He began life with the peaceful tenets of a quaker, and pursued the unobtrusive employment of a teacher of youth. For some time he was not aware of the spirit that was within him, but at length he saw the sun rise and set, while he was

in the same dull round of humble duty, and the thought came over him that he was destined for something of a more active nature. In 1799 he went on to the frontiers and purchased a lot of land, took his axe, and began to fell the forrest with his own hand, in order to commence a settlement. This was soon done ; he purchased more land ; and was made Agent for M. Le Roy de Chaumont, a distinguished Frenchman who owned a large tract of that country, and was industrious in obtaining settlers, and when he had enough for a company of militia they were formed, and he so far shook off the quaker as to take the command of them, at their urgent request. From the command of a company he soon found himself at the head of a regiment and from that office, at the commencement of the war of 1812, he was raised to a major general, and when the militia were first called upon to assist the regular troops on the frontiers, his name had hardly reached head quarters at Washington ; but such was his promptness, efficiency and success, that the general government, not a little embarrassed at the previous disasters in that quarter, proffered him a high command in the army of the United States. It was accepted and he moved on from one degree of fame to another in this short war, until he found himself at the head of the army, and at the return of peace he made his head quarters at Washington, and

remained there until his death in 1828. General Brown was considerably above the common height, over six feet. His countenance was a fine assemblage of regular, good sized features, which most admirably expressed his striking characteristics, mildness and determination. He had nothing in his manners of that importance and vanity which often accompanies a self-made man ; on the contrary, he was for ever on the watch to gain something new. He was well aware of his early deficiencies as a military man, as any one would be ; and he took the advice of those in whom he had confidence, and weighed it in a sound balance ; and of course was seldom wrong. If he was not the master spirit of the army, he was well calculated to be at its head, he managed all so gently, and impartially. He was as much esteemed in private as in public life. In the social circles at Washington, he thought nothing of that pride of office so common with little men ; but was affable to all. The public deeds of such men will find historians enough in every future age ; but we should see on the records of the present hour, something said of their private virtues. These gems of life, though lasting as eternity, are often buried in the dust at the base of the pyramid of a great man's fame. Brown was a general of a primitive cast ; he emulated antiquity ;—

" Have you not heard of Lacedæmon's fame?
Of Attic chiefs in Freedom's war divine?
Of Rome's dread generals? the Valerian name?
The Fabian sons? The Scipio's matchless line?
Your lot was theirs. The farmer and the swain
Met his loved patron's summons from the plain;
The Legions gathered; the bright eagles flew;
Barbarian monarchs in the triumph mourned,
The conquerors to their household gods returned,
And fed Calabrian flocks, and steered the Sabine plough."

The United States has recently met with a loss in the death of the Hon. WILLIAM TUDOR, late charge d' affaires to the Emperor of Brazil, from this country. Mr. Tudor was born in Boston, in 1777. He graduated from Harvard College 1796; and although very young, was among the first scholars of his class. Soon after leaving college, he travelled in Europe, and acquired a great fund of useful knowledge, without contracting the slightest touch of that manner which so often marks the travelled youth on his return to his native country. "*Sirs, I have seen, and sure I ought to know,*" was no part of his manners. It must be confessed, that he returned to his native city, warm and bright from all the lovely retreats of learning, and enlightened from the halls of science, and brought with him the noble ambition of attempting to make his countrymen turn their attention to literature and science, and to cultivate a taste for the arts.

For this he changed the Anthology into a quarterly review, which was called the North American Review, and at once established a proud, and I trust, a permanent literary work for his country. It was, indeed, a great undertaking. The taste of the writers of this country had not been, at that time, well developed. There were two schools, or rather two styles then in vogue. The quaintness of a former age had, from some few incipient principles of taste, become unfashionable, and the bold, extravagant, tasteless manner of writing had followed it, except by a few who were disgusted with this style of writing, and these took a different course, and wrote with affected simplicity. They were both bad enough; one bloated, flushed, and dropsical, and the other lean, emaciated, and bloodless. Tudor was well prepared by precept and example, to correct these evils of literature; for he was not only learned, but mild, modest, and persevering. He offended none by dictatorial air, or pedantic assumption. He was not timid, however, in his course; nor did he, like most critics, discover an unwillingness to write any thing but reviews, for fear of finding critics in his turn, but was ready to be subject to his own rules. He wrote two or more works: two, certainly; for his own name is affixed to one, and the other was avowed by him. These works show no small share of thought, but are more

remarkable for a pure and gentlemanly style than for any extraordinary efforts of genius.

Mr. Tudor was for several years a member of the legislature of the state of Massachusetts, and though not remarkably popular with the country members, yet he was respected by all of them. In his travels he had so disciplined his mind, that he seemed too mild for party times; and they put down for tameness and indifference, that which was the result of gentlemanly feelings and polished manners. It can be said of Mr. Tudor, that he spoke merely on those subjects in which he was most particularly interested for the commonwealth, and never uttered a word for popularity or fame. Never was there a man of more singleness of heart, or purity of motives. Some of the wise members of the legislature thought him a little romantic; but while they voted against his plans, were fully convinced that he was an honest man. Most of the matters he prepared, when in that body, have since been acted upon; and in many instances, according to his wishes at that time. There was no avarice, no corroding ambition in his soul. He was a bachelor, and only wanted an elegant competency; he asked no more; and had he possessed more, it would have been devoted to the advancement of letters and the sciences. He had been much abroad, but never lost sight of his own country; and in fact it is to be be-

lieved, that he loved it the more from residing in other countries.

This is the effect of travel upon a well regulated mind. He was a patron and friend to the Boston Athenæum, and considered Harvard University as an Alma Mater indeed. It has been said that he first suggested the erection of a monument on Bunker Hill. If this is not correct, as it cannot be, he was the mover of the plan for erecting the very monument which has been begun, and is now pretty nearly raised, and which will, in good time, be finished. He went further than the erection of a simple obelisk, to catch the gaze of the passing traveller, and prepared a temple also; not only as a repository of the archives of the country, but of the relics of the antiquities of it also. This was a noble plan, and will be followed up, most religiously, in due time; but the people here are in the habit of requiring the accomplishment of such great matters in too short a time.

Mr. Tudor moved in the most intellectual circles in his native city, and was distinguished for elevation, refinement and accomplishments among its members. Such was his serenity of temper that even that most irritating of all diseases, the gout, which with him was hereditary, and severe, never disturbed his temper. He pursued his labours when the fit was upon him and wrote with composure when his pain was

almost insupportable. In 1822 Mr. Tudor was appointed consul to Lima. He was anxious for this office, not for its emoluments, for those were trifling, but he wished to read the character of that portion of the world, for he knew from its history that it must have many new features in it, and it had just come into the family of nations. He was industrious while he was consul, in collecting materials for some future work. From Lima he was sent to Brazil as charge d' affaires. In this situation he was an honour to this country. This people were soon apprised of his rank as a literary man, and highly respected him as a public functionary. In some most critical situations he maintained the dignity of his government, and at the same time insinuated himself into the affections of the Emperor. The foreign ministers were his friends, and admirers, for they found him a high minded man, and an open, gentle, yet determined politician. Such men should be sent abroad, who are the pride of the people at home. Mr. Tudor was from the cradle to the grave, a gentleman. He descended from a family that had been opulent for several generations, although by the changes of fortune he inherited nothing of consequence.

His father, Judge Tudor, was one of the most accomplished men of his age. He was a law student with the late patriot, John Adams, and soon after coming to the bar, was appointed

judge advocate general of the army of Washington, then at Cambridge. On the close of the year 1777, he was called on to conduct the trial of col. Henely, arrested on charges preferred by General Burguoyne, for oppression, &c. to some of his soldiers. The English general was a most accomplished scholar, and made in this trial a most eloquent and able argument in support of the charges and specifications he had brought forward. Tudor has often said that it was equal to any speech he ever heard from any one; and Burguoyne said the young American judge advocate went through his duties as a gentleman and a man of learning and good sense. Henely was acquitted.

There has been a meagre report of the trial which has come down to the present generation, but from which nothing of importance as to the particulars can be learned; but one of the court some years since, informed me, as I was anxious to learn any thing of General Burguoyne, that this trial called forth on both sides very conspicuous talents. Judge Tudor has been dead only about ten years, and is remembered in Boston as one of those pleasant and intellectual men that one meets in genteel society, and who are communicative and happy, having a large circle of affectionate acquaintance. His son William was the idol of his heart, for in early youth he was of a graver mien than his father,

who was truly one of the most playful and facetious men that ever gave zest to a dinner, or life to an evening party; he had one of the kindest dispositions that ever man possessed, and it shed its sweet influences every where, in domestic and public life.

The papers have just announced that Bushrod Washington, the senior associate judge of the supreme court of the United States, died at Philadelphia, while on a circuit of his official duties. The judge was an excellent man, and was beloved by all who knew him. His person was under the common size, his face pale, his countenance as serene as if he had passed his life in a cloister; there was no mark of passion, or resentment in any lineament of his physiognomy. He had been on the supreme bench for thirty years, and never had but one of his decisions overruled by the full court. He was so cautious and examined every subject so critically, and thoroughly, that he came to his results by a pure process of reasoning, freed from the prejudices and partialities which so easily beset human nature, even in high places, and responsible stations. He was the favourite nephew of that great and good man who has given immortality to the name of Washington, and was his immediate successor at Mount Vernon. In this mansion for many years he has displayed all the vir-

tues of domestic life and exercised all those hospitable feelings so prominent in the character of his illustrious uncle. Judge Washington was not content with a faithful discharge of his duty as a magistrate only, but added to it the labours of a member of almost all the charitable societies of the country, which are so many sacrifices that go up to Heaven to be heard in mercy, to propitiate through a Redeemer, the Father of all things toward his sinful children on Earth. His rank, talents, and influence in society did much to induce the wavering to join in the great work of philanthropy and religion and to keep steadfast those who had commenced the work in good earnest. He was for several years President of the Colonization Society, and deeply engaged in the objects of that association. He was a slave-holder, but he was not insensible to the evils of the system, which was every day impoverishing his native state, and diminishing her influence in the Federal government. He had the right feelings on the subject ; they were drawn from observation and experience, the true sources of intelligence and wisdom.

Judge Washington was so unobtrusive in his manners, so delicate and refined in his feelings, that his merits were not sufficiently known to the great body of the people, for them to estimate his intellectual and moral worth correctly. Like his uncle, he died childless, and left his estate

to a collateral branch of his family, who will now take his place at the hospitable mansion of the great patriot and chieftain, whose name belongs to his country ; of whom it was wisely said, that "*Heaven wrote him childless, that millions might find in him a father.* Mount Vernon should no longer be the property of an individual, for it has become a place of pilgrimage for every patriot traveller of the land ; and foreigners too, consider the spot where the ashes of Washington repose, as hallowed ground. His bones should ever be mouldering there, and never be removed from these abodes of primitive simplicity. The nation should be proprietors of the soil ; the nation should guard the dead, and individuals of his family should be relieved from the perpetual vigils at his tomb, which the veneration of the people for the memory of Washington have made it indispensably necessary for them to keep. The capitol is not a proper place for the ashes of the dead. It should be the lonely spot, or the chancel of the house of God. No echoes of angry passions, or party strife, should be heard in the chambers of the mighty dead ; no sound should there be heard but that of prayer and mournful music. The end of mortal man is there ; the hopes of immortal man is there ; and "procul, o procul este profani."

LETTER XXII.

New-York, ———, 1830.

Dear Sir,

I have given you but a meagre account of the men of mind in the United States. The slight outline, perhaps I may have an opportunity to fill up during the course of the summer. Of the beautiful city of Philadelphia, I have said nothing, as I have not had sufficient opportunities to select what is most striking in the characteristics of that literary and intelligent place. The people of Philadelphia have taken the lead in the arts, and set a good example to the other cities in the Union, which has been followed in some of them with great spirit. The people of this city have more excellent paintings than perhaps can be found in any other in the United States. They have printed more editions of valuable works than other cities; but perhaps the mass of inventive talent of the nation lies farther to the north. You would be amused to observe the activity of the inventors of this nation. The *Patent Office* within a year past has been under the care of a man of genius, of the first order of

intellect; his perceptions were rapid beyond description; he had coursed over the whole field of invention in the ardour of youthful genius, and in every stage, believed that every track was that of his own footsteps. The elements of his mind to many of his friends seemed in a state of absolute confusion, and the images of things past, present and to come, to crowd upon him at once. He received the premium offered for a plan for the Capitol, and when it was altered, it was for economy sake, not for taste. His was decidedly better than the one built upon. Not a model ever came into his office for a patent that he did not declare that he had had some impression of the same thing, and that virtually, he was a prime inventor of it. Dr. Thornton was a man admired by all who knew him, for his genius, industry, good feelings and true philanthropy and charity, his feelings and observations were those of a man who had thought much on every subject. The web of his fame was such, that if honestly examined by the warp, one could find a thread to match any other that could be exhibited. This office with a little of that encouragement that congress might bestow, might truly be made a museum of science.

The *Patent Office* is now a subject of deep interest to the nation. By a law of the United States, passed among the early acts, and which

has been revised by several subsequent acts, the drawings and models of all the machines, and of new and useful inventions, for which a patent has been issued by the President of the United States, were required to be deposited in the Secretary's office; and in a few years this increased greatly in importance to the country, and required large apartments for the models, and became, in a measure, a department of itself. Machines of complex principles and of great utility, have often been invented by men of but few literary acquirements, who could, with difficulty, find words to convey the outlines of the principles brought to bear in their patent. Loose descriptions, that did not convey the meaning of the inventor, or such ones that satisfied the inventor, but gave no correct information of the invention to others, were every day sent to the office, and produced no little confusion. This has been changed, in a great measure, by time; and not only descriptions of inventions are more accurate, but the models are more finished; and of course the whole business of the office goes on more regularly. There are now nearly six thousand models collected in the office; many of them of exquisite workmanship, others of careless construction; but they exhibit, as a whole, an interesting group of emblems, or representations, "in little" of what are occuping all parts of our country; on the

streams, the hills, within and without doors, in all places of business, are found the marks of mind involving all the great principles of nature and science.

From these reasoners on motion and matter, we may proceed to another class of philosophers which may be less useful, but not less acute, the metaphysicians. This people reason an all things ; their institutions and the nature of their government in all its minor and major features induce this habit. They no sooner see effects than they go on to find out causes for them ; right or wrong, they must and will have a reason for every thing. Untrammelled minds, however wild they may run, have an air of independence about them. There are a great many errors of reasoning among free minds, but no errors of the market, as Lord Bacon calls those settled errors of thinking. They have no dogmas in their creeds, nor hardly any creeds, but such as they alter every day. There is no state religion, and every one reasons upon God and his revelations, as he is persuaded in his own mind.

If this would be bad in England and other countries, it is precisely suited to this people and their institutions.

Having the literature of all the world before them, they are intelligent, producing some fine

writers. The taste of criticism is cultivated before they acquire the habit of writing. And in truth there are but few writers among them, except writers for periodical journals, considering the number of men capable of holding a pen. Opening their ports to all foreigners, and their literature, and taxing their presses with reprints, until the whole country is gorged with foreign literature, there is nothing to bring forward the offspring of their own minds. The growth of English literature was advanced by depreciating the French writers. The following couplet was constantly in the mouths of the English,

"The sterling bullion of an English line,
Drawn in French wire would through whole pages shine."

This was false enough; but it answered a good national purpose. German literature, which now is leading off, as among the highest in the world, was half a century ago, nothing; because they depreciated their own writers, and read French works only. You ought not to judge this people by their writers; for you might as fairly infer their dress from their manufacturing establishments, as their general knowledge from their writers. They dress in English broadcloth coats, and store their minds with English standard works; but this people will much sooner clothe themselves in their own woollens than increase their stock of knowledge by encouraging their own authors. It is hard to break up

old habits ; the good matron will not be driven to moisten her lips, after her morning prayers or evening walk, with a decoction of sage and balm, when gun-powder and imperial teas are at hand. I must not be misunderstood—there is a spirit of education going on among the people, from the nursery to the pulpit, the bench, and to the halls of legislation ; all is full of life and improvement; no people under heaven have a greater mass of ready, wholesome, business literature than this. There is much done, and that ably done in all the walks of life ; but in the regions of elevated, tasteful letters, but few are to be found ; and those few are seldom seen. They have no inducement to cultivate literature ; for as such, it is the most unprofitable of all things ; who would write a book when a fresh English one might be had from Campbell, Moore, or Mackintosh for little more than the price of untaxed paper ? This is a people of liberal feelings and generous conduct; they build churches, states houses, and colleges, but they have not as yet extended any thing like liberal patronage to their authors, if authors they may be called who, feeling the divinity within them, occasionally hazard property and quiet, to vent themselves in prose or rhyme.

ERRATA.

Page 13, line 13, *for* 1809, *read* 1812.

Page 41, line 7, from bottom, after advantages, dele period ;--and line 8 after fashion add a period.

Page 42, line 4, from top, *for* His often" *read* It is often,

Page 153, line 7, from top, *for* George G. Percival *read* James G. Percival,

Page 170 lines 6 & 7 from top, *for* precious, *read*, precocious,

Page 67, 1st line, *for* sage whom all men, *read* sage from whom all men, etc.