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AMERICAN FINANCES AND RESOURCES

LETTER NO. III. OF HON. ROBERT J. WALKER

London, 10 Half Moon Street, Piccadilly,
December 3d, 1863.

It is generally believed, even when the American rebellion should be suppressed, that there would be a great loss of wealth and resources on the part of the United States. As an economical question the great truth is not disputed by me, that, as a general rule, wars by a waste of property, by large expenditures, and by the withdrawal of so much labor from the pursuits of industry, impair the material interests of the nation. The influence of such considerations in the United States is not denied; but there are in the cause of this contest, as well as in its effects and consequences, results which will more than compensate for such losses. Slavery was the sole cause of this rebellion, and the result will be the reconstruction of the Union, with slavery everywhere extinguished. On this assumption, the question is, whether the substitution of free for slave labor throughout every State and Territory of the Union will not, as a question of augmented wealth and invigorated industry, far more than compensate for the losses incurred in the contest. Reasoning inductively, it might well be supposed that the willing labor of educated and energetic freemen would be far more productive than the forced labor of ignorant, unwilling, and uneducated slaves. In the realm of science, as well as in the direction of labor, knowledge is power, education is wealth and progress; and that this is applicable to the masses who compose a community, and especially to the working classes, is demonstrated by our American official Census. In proof of this position, I will proceed by a reference to the official tables of our Census of 1860, to show not only in particular Slave States, as compared with other Free States, whether old or new, Eastern or Western, or making the comparison of the aggregate of all the Slave with the Free States, the annual product of the latter *per capita* is more than double that of the Slave States. I begin with Maryland as compared with Massachusetts, because Maryland, in proportion to her area, has greater natural advantages than any one of the Slave or Free States; and if the comparison with the Free States is most unfavorable to her, it will be more so as to any other Southern State; as the Census shows that, from 1790 to 1860, as well as from 1850 to 1860, Maryland increased in population per square mile more rapidly than any other slaveholding State.

We must consider the area, soil, climate, mines, hydraulic power, location, shore line, bays, sounds, and rivers, and such other causes as affect the advance of wealth and population.

The relative progress of Maryland has been slow indeed. The population of the Union, by the Census of 1790, was 3,929,827, of which Maryland, containing then 319,728, constituted a twelfth part (12.29). In 1860, the Union numbered 31,445,080, and Maryland 687,034, constituting a forty-fifth part (45.76). In 1790, the Free States numbered 1,968,455, Maryland's population then being equal to one sixth (6.12); but, in 1860, the population of the Free States was 18,920,078, Maryland's number then being equal to one twenty-seventh part (27.52). But, if Maryland had increased as rapidly from 1790 to 1860 as the whole Union, her proportion, one twelfth part, would have made her

numbers in 1860, 2,620,315; and if her proportional increase had equalled that of the Free States, her ratio, one sixth, would have made her population in 1860, 3,153,392.

I take the areas from the report (November 29, 1860) of the Commissioner of the General Land Office, where they are for the first time accurately given, 'excluding the water surface.' The population is taken from the Census Tables. I compare first Massachusetts and Maryland, because they are maritime and old States, and both in 1790 had nearly the same population, but, as will be shown hereafter, with vastly superior natural advantages in favor of Maryland.

Area of Maryland, 11,124 square miles; shore lines, by tables of United States Coast Survey, viz.: main shore, including bays, sounds, etc., 503 miles, islands 298, rivers to head of tide water 535; total, 1,336 miles.

Area of Massachusetts, 7,800 square miles; shore lines, by tables of United States Coast Survey, viz.: main shore, including bays, sounds, etc., 435 miles, islands 259, rivers to head of tide water 70; total, 764 miles. When we mark the Potomac and its tributaries, the lower Susquehanna, the deep and numerous streams of the Chesapeake, the commercial advantages of Maryland over Massachusetts are vast indeed. Looking at the ocean shore of Maryland, and also at the Chesapeake Bay, the largest and finest estuary in the world, indented with numerous sounds and navigable inlets, three fourths of its length for both shores being within Maryland, and comparing this deep and tranquil and protected basin, almost one continuous harbor, with the rockbound coast of Massachusetts, lashed by the stormy Atlantic, the superiority of Maryland is striking.

Mortality in Maryland, by the late Census, viz., deaths from 1st June, 1859, to 31st May, 1860, 7,370 persons. Same time in Massachusetts, 21,303; making the ratio of deaths to the number living in Maryland, one to every 92, and in Massachusetts one to every 57; and the percentage of deaths in Maryland 1.09, and in Massachusetts 1.76. This rate of mortality for Massachusetts is confirmed by the late official report of their Secretary of State to the Legislature.

As to area, then, Maryland exceeds Massachusetts 43 per cent.; as to the shore line, that of Maryland is nearly double that of Massachusetts. As to climate, that of Maryland, we have seen, is far the most salubrious. This is a vast advantage, not only in augmented wealth and numbers, from fewer deaths, but also as attracting capital and immigration. This milder and more salubrious climate gives to Maryland longer periods for sowing, working, and harvesting crops, a more genial sun, larger products, and better and longer crop seasons, great advantages for stock, especially in winter, decreased consumption of fuel, a greater period for the use of hydraulic power, and of canals and navigable streams. The area of Maryland fit for profitable culture is more than double that of Massachusetts, the soil much more fertile, its mines of coal and iron, with the fluxes all adjacent, rich and inexhaustible; whereas Massachusetts has no coal, and no valuable mines of iron or fluxes. When we reflect that coal and iron are the great elements of modern progress, and build up mighty empires, this advantage of Maryland over Massachusetts is almost incalculable. The hydraulic power of Maryland also greatly exceeds that of Massachusetts. Such are the vast natural advantages of Maryland over Massachusetts. Now let us observe the results. Population of Maryland in 1790, 319,728; in 1860, 687,034; increase, 367,300. Population of Massachusetts in 1790, 378,717; in 1860, 1,231,065; increase, 852,348; difference of increase in favor of Massachusetts, 485,048; excess of Massachusetts over Maryland in 1790, 58,989, and in 1860, 544,031. This result is amazing, when we regard the far greater area of Maryland and her other vast natural advantages. The population of Maryland in 1790 was 28 to the square mile (28.74), and in 1860, 61 to the square mile (61.76); whereas Massachusetts had 48 to the square mile in 1790 (48.55), and 157 to the square mile in 1860 (157.82). Thus Massachusetts had only 20 more to the square mile in 1790, and 96 more to the square mile in 1860. But if the area of Maryland and Massachusetts had been reversed, Massachusetts with the area of Maryland, and the population of Massachusetts of 1860 to the square mile, would have numbered then 1,755,661, and Maryland with the area of Massachusetts, and the population of

Maryland of 1860 to the square mile, would have had then a population of only 481,728 upon that basis, leaving Massachusetts in 1860, 1,273,393 more people than Maryland.

By the census of 1790, Massachusetts was the fourth in population of all the States, and Maryland the sixth; but in 1860, Massachusetts was the seventh, and Maryland the nineteenth; and if each of the thirty-four States increases in the same ratio from 1860 to 1870 as from 1850 to 1860, Maryland will be only the twenty-fifth State.

These facts all conclusively attest the terrible effects of slavery on Maryland, and this is only one of the dreadful sacrifices she has made in retaining the institution. As to wealth, power, and intellectual development, the loss cannot be overstated.

Nor can manufactures account for the difference, as shown by the still greater increase of the agricultural Northwest. Besides, Maryland (omitting slavery) had far greater natural advantages for manufactures than Massachusetts. She had a more fertile soil, thus furnishing cheaper food to the working classes, a larger and more accessible coast, and nearly eight times the length of navigable rivers, greater hydraulic power, vast superiority in mines of coal and iron, a far more salubrious climate, cotton, the great staple of modern industry, much nearer to Maryland, her location far more central for trade with the whole Union, and Baltimore, her chief city, nearer than Boston to the great West, viz.: to the Ohio at Pittsburg and Cincinnati, the Mississippi at St. Louis, and the lakes at Cleveland, Toledo, and Chicago, by several hundred miles. Indeed, but for slavery, Maryland must have been a far greater manufacturing as well as commercial State than Massachusetts—and as to agriculture; there could be no comparison.

But Massachusetts did not become a manufacturing State until after the tariff of 1824. That measure, as well as the whole protective policy, Massachusetts earnestly opposed in 1820 and 1824, and Daniel Webster, as her representative, denounced it as unconstitutional. From 1790 to 1820, Massachusetts was commercial, not manufacturing, and yet, from 1790 to 1820, Massachusetts increased in numbers 144,442, and Maryland in the same time only 87,622. Yet, from 1790 to 1820, Massachusetts, the most commercial State, was far more injured by the embargo and the late war with England than any other State.

It is clear, then, that the accusation of the secession leaders that the North was built up at the expense of the South, by the tariff, can have no application to the progress of Massachusetts and Maryland, because the advance of the former over the latter preceded by more than thirty years the adoption of the protective policy, and a comparison of the relative advance of the Free and Slave States, during the same period, exhibits the same results.

There is one *invariable law*, whether we compare all the Slave States with all the Free States, small States with small, large with large, old with old, new with new, retarding the progress of the slaveholding States, ever operating, and differing in degree only.

The area of the nine Free States enumerated in 1790, is 169,668 square miles, and of the eight slaveholding States, 300,580 square miles, while the population of the former in 1790 was 1,968,455, and of the latter, 1,961,372; but, in 1860, these nine Free States had a population of 10,594,168, and those eight Slave States only 7,414,684, making the difference in favor of these Free States in 1860 over those Slave States, 3,179,844, instead of 7,083 in 1790, or a positive gain to those Free States over those Slave States of 3,172,761. These Free States enumerated in 1790 and 1860, were the six New England States, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; and the Slave States were Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Kentucky: yet we have seen that the area of those Slave States was nearly double that of those Free States, the soil much more fertile, the climate more salubrious, as shown by the Census, that the shore line, including main shore, bays and sounds, islands and rivers, to head of tide water, was, for those Free States, 4,480 miles, and for those Slave States, 6,560 miles. Thus it is clear that the increase of population of these Slave States should have far exceeded that of those Free States. The population of these Slave States per square mile in 1790 was 6 (6.52), and in 1860, 24 (24.66), and of those Free States in 1790,

was 11 per square mile (11.60), and in 1860, 62 per square mile (62.44). Thus, while the increase of those Slave States from 1790 to 1860 was only 18 per square mile, that of those Free States was nearly 51 per square mile (50.84), or in very nearly a triple ratio, while in wealth and education the proportionate progress was much greater.

No cause except slavery can be assigned to this wonderful difference, for the colonists of Maryland were distinguished for education, intelligence, and gentle culture. Lord Baltimore was a statesman and philanthropist, and his colony was a free representative government, which was the first to repudiate the doctrine of taxation without representation, and the first to introduce religious toleration. While Maryland has produced many of the most eminent soldiers, statesmen, and jurists, her relative decline in power, wealth, and population has been deplorable, and is attributable exclusively to the paralyzing effect of slavery.

While the advance of Massachusetts, with her limited area and sterile soil, especially in view of the thousands of her native sons who have emigrated to other States, is one of the wonders of the world, yet the relative increase of the population of New Jersey from 1790 to 1860, compared with that of Maryland, is still greater than that of Massachusetts. The law is inflexible wherever slavery disappears. Population of New Jersey in 1790, 184,139, in 1860, 672,035, being an increase of 264 per cent. (264.96) for New Jersey, of 225 per cent. (225.06) for Massachusetts, and for Maryland 114 percent. (114.88). The ratio of increase per square mile from 1790 to 1860 was: Massachusetts, 48.55 in 1790, and 157.82 in 1860; Maryland, 28.74 in 1790, and 61.76 in 1860; and New Jersey, 22.01 in 1790, and 80.70 in 1860. Thus, while Maryland from 1790 to 1860, little more than doubled her ratio of increase per square mile (28.74 to 61.76), and Massachusetts little more than tripled her ratio (48.55 to 157.82), New Jersey very nearly *quadrupled* hers (22.01 to 80.70). It must be conceded, however, that the natural advantages of New Jersey are far greater than those of Massachusetts, whose material and intellectual progress, in defiance of such serious obstacles, now is, and most probably forever will be, *without a parallel*. Now the area of New Jersey is but 8,320 square miles; the soil of Maryland is far more fertile, the hydraulic power much greater, the shoreline much more than double, viz.: 531 for New Jersey, to 1,336 for Maryland; while New Jersey, with rich iron mines, has no coal, and one third of her area is south of the celebrated Mason and Dixon's line, the northern boundary of Maryland. While the Free States have accomplished these miracles of progress, they have peopled eleven vast Territories (soon by subdivision to become many more States), immigration to which has been almost exclusively from the North as compared with the South.

The Slave State which has increased *most* rapidly to the square mile of all of them from 1790 to 1860, has had a smaller augmentation per square mile than that Free State which has increased most *slowly* per square mile during the same time of all the Free States, and the result is the same as to wealth and education also. Under the *best* circumstances for the Slave States, and the *worst* for the Free States, this result proves the uniformity of the rule (like the great law of gravitation), knowing no exception to the effect of slavery in depressing the progress of States in population, wealth, and education.

The isothermals of the great Humboldt (differing so widely from parallels), which trace the lines of temperature on the earth's surface, prove, as to heat, the climate of the South (running a line from Charleston to Vicksburg) to be substantially the same as that of Greece and Italy-each, in its turn, the mistress of the world.

The Census of 1860 exhibits our increase of population from 1790 to 1860 at 35.59 per cent., and of our wealth 126.45. Now, if we would increase the wealth of the country only one tenth in the next ten years, by the gradual disappearance of slavery (far below the results of the Census), then our wealth being now $16,159,616,068, the effect of such increase would be to make our wealth in 1870, instead of $36,593,450,585, more than sixteen hundred millions greater, and in 1880, instead of $82,865,868,849, over three billions six hundred millions, or more than three times our present debt.

Before the close of this letter, it will be shown that the difference, *per capita*, of the annual products of Massachusetts and Maryland exceeds $150. As to the other Southern States, the excess is much greater. Now, if the annual products of the South were increased $150 each *per capita* (still far below Massachusetts) by the exclusion of slavery, then multiplying the total population of the South, 12,229,727, by 150, the result would be an addition to the annual value of the products of the South of $1,834,456,050, and in the decade, $18,344,580,500. This change would not be immediate, but there can be no doubt that with the vastly greater natural advantages of the South, the superiority of free to slave labor, the immense immigration, especially from Europe to the South, aided by the Homestead Bill, and the conversion of large plantations into small farms, an addition of at least one billion of dollars would be made in a decade, by the exclusion of slavery, to the value of the products of the South.

Having considered the relative progress in population of Massachusetts and Maryland, I will now examine their advance in wealth.

By Tables 33 and 36, Census of 1860, the value of the products of Massachusetts that year was $287,000,000; and of Maryland, $66,000,000. Table 33 included domestic manufactories, mines, and fisheries (p. 59); and Table 36, agricultural products. Dividing these several aggregates by the total population of each State, the value of that year's product of Massachusetts was $235 *per capita*, and of Maryland, $96, making the average annual value of the labor of each person in the former greatly more than double that of the latter, and the gross product more than quadruple. This is an amazing result, but it is far below the reality. The earnings of commerce and navigation are omitted in the Census, which includes only the products of agriculture, manufactures, the mines, and fisheries. This was a most unfortunate omission, attributable to the secession leaders, who wished to confine the Census to a mere enumeration of population, and thus obliterate all the other great decennial monuments which mark the nation's progress in the pathway of empire.

Some of these tables are given as follows:

First, as to Railroads.—The number of miles in Massachusetts in 1860 (including city roads) was 1,340, and the cost of construction $61,857,203. (Table 38, pp. 230, 231.) The value of the freight of these roads in 1860 was $500,524,201. (P. 105.) The number of miles of railroad in Maryland at the same time was 380, the cost of construction $21,387,157, and the value of the freight (at the same average rate) $141,111,348, and the difference in favor of Massachusetts $359,412,883. The difference must have been much greater, because a much larger portion of the freight in Massachusetts consisted of domestic manufactures, worth $250 per ton, which is $100 a ton above the average value.

The passengers' account, not given, would vastly swell the difference in favor of Massachusetts.

The tonnage of vessels built in Massachusetts in 1860 was 34,460 tons, and in Maryland, 7,798 tons. (P. 107).

The number of banks in Massachusetts in 1860 was 174; capital, $64,619,200; loans, $107,417,323. In Maryland the number was 31; capital, $12,568,962; loans, $20,898,762. (Table 34, p. 193.)

The number of insurance companies in Massachusetts, 117; risks, $450,886,263. No statement given for Maryland, but comparatively very small, as the risks in Massachusetts were nearly one sixth of all in the Union.

Our exports abroad, from Massachusetts, for the fiscal year ending 30th June, 1860, were of the value of $17,003,277, and the foreign imports $41,187,539; total of imports and exports, $58,190,816; the clearances, 746,909 tons, the entries, 849,449; total entered and cleared, 1,596,458 tons. In Maryland, exports, $9,001,600, foreign imports, $9,784,773; total imports and exports, $18,786,323; clearances, 174,000 tons; entries, 186,417; total of entries and clearances, 360,417. (Table 14, Register of Treasury.) Thus, the foreign imports and exports abroad, of Massachusetts, were much more than triple those of Maryland, and the entries and clearances very largely more than quadruple. The coastwise and internal trade are not given, as recommended by me when Secretary

of the Treasury, but the tables of the railroad traffic indicate in part the immense superiority of Massachusetts.

These statistics, however, prove that, if the earnings of commerce and navigation were added, the annual value of the products of Massachusetts *per capita* would be at least $300, and three times that of Maryland. In estimating values *per capita*, we must find the earnings of commerce very large, as a single merchant, in his counting house, engaged in an immense trade, and employing only a few clerks, may earn as much as a great manufacturing corporation, employing hundreds of hands. Including commerce, the value, *per capita*, of the products and earnings of Massachusetts exceeds not only those of *any State in our Union*, but of the world; and would, at the same rate, make the value of its annual products three hundred billions of dollars; and of our own country, upward of nine billions of dollars per annum. Such, under great natural disadvantages, is the grand result achieved in Massachusetts, by education, science, industry, free schools, free soil, free speech, *free labor*, free press, and free government. The facts prove that freedom is progress, that 'knowledge is power,' and that the best way to appreciate the value of property and augment wealth most rapidly, is to invest a large portion of it in schools, high schools, academies, colleges, universities, books, libraries, and the press, so as to make labor more productive, because more skilled, educated, and better directed. Massachusetts has achieved much in this respect; but when she shall have made high schools as free and universal as common schools, and the attendance on both compulsory, so as to qualify every voter for governing a State or nation, she will have made a still grander step in material and intellectual progress, and the results would be still more astounding.

By Table 35 of the Census, p. 195, the whole value of all the property, real and personal, of Massachusetts, in 1860, was $815,237,433, and that of Maryland, $376,919,944. We have seen that the value of the products that year in Massachusetts was $287,000,000 (exclusive of commerce), and of Maryland, $66,000,000. As a question, then, of profit on capital, that of Massachusetts was 35 per cent., and of Maryland 17 per cent. Such is the progressive advance (more than two to one) of free as compared with slave labor. The same law obtains in comparing all the Free with all the Slave States. But the proof is still more complete. Thus, Delaware and Missouri (alone of all the Slave States) were ahead of Maryland in this rate of profit, because both had comparatively fewer slaves; and all the other Slave States, whose servile population was relatively larger than that of Maryland, were below her in the rate of profit. The law extends to *counties*, those having comparatively fewest slaves increasing far more rapidly in wealth and population. This, then, is the formula as to the rate of profit on capital. First, the Free States; next, the States and counties of the same State having the fewest relative number of slaves. The Census, then, is an evangel against slavery, and its tables are revelations proclaiming laws as divine as those written by the finger of God at Mount Sinai on the tables of stone.

For seventy years we have had these Census Tables, announcing these great truths more and more clearly at each decade. They are the records of the nation's movement and condition, the decennial monuments marking her steps in the path of empire, the oracles of her destiny. They are prophecies, for each decade fulfils the predictions of its predecessor. They announce laws, not made by man, but the irrevocable ordinances of the Almighty. We cannot, with impunity, refuse to obey these laws. For every violation, they enforce their own penalties. From these there is no escape in the present or the past, nor for the future, except in conformity to their demands. These laws condemn slavery; and the punishment for disobedience is recorded in the result of every Census, and finally culminated in the rebellion. Slavery and freedom are antagonistic and discordant elements: the conflict between them is upon us; it admits of no neutrality or compromise, and one or the other system must perish.

We have seen that slavery is hostile to the progress of wealth and population: let us now ascertain its influence on moral and intellectual development.

By Table 15 of the Census of 1860, the result for that year was as follows: In Massachusetts, value of books printed, $397,500; jobs, $529,347; newspapers, $1,979,069; total, $2,905,916. Same

year in Maryland, books printed, $58,000; jobs, $122,000; newspapers, $169,000; total, $350,155. By Table 37, Census of 1860, Massachusetts had 222 newspapers and periodicals, of which 112 were political, 31 religious, 51 literary, miscellaneous 28. Maryland had only 57, all political. The whole number of copies issued in Massachusetts in 1860 was 102,000,760, and in Maryland, 20,721,472. Of periodicals, Massachusetts has monthly, 1 political, 10 religious, 18 literary, 7 miscellaneous; quarterly, religious 3, literary 2, miscellaneous 1, and 1 annual. Maryland had *none*. Not a religious, literary, scientific, or miscellaneous periodical or journal in the State! What terrible truths are unfolded in these statistics! None but a political party press in Maryland, all devoted, in 1860, to the maintenance, extension, and perpetuity of slavery, which had 57 advocates, and not one for science, religion, or literature.

We have seen that the circulation in 1860 of the press in Massachusetts exceeded that of Maryland by more than eighty-one millions of copies. These facts all prove that slavery is hostile to knowledge and its diffusion, to science, literature, and religion, to the press, and to free government.

For schools, colleges, libraries, and churches, I must take the Tables of the Census of 1850, those of 1860 not being yet published. There were in 1850 in Massachusetts, 3,679 public schools, 4,443 teachers, 176,475 pupils; native adults who cannot read or write, 1,861. In Maryland, 907 public schools, 1,005 teachers, 33,254 pupils; native adults who cannot read or write, 38,426, excluding slaves, to teach whom is criminal.

Thus, then, slavery is hostile to schools, withholding instruction from the children of the poor.

The number of public libraries in Massachusetts was 1,462, volumes 684,015. In Maryland, 124, and 125,042 volumes. Value of churches in Massachusetts, $10,206,000. In Maryland, $3,947,884, of which $2,541,240 is in Baltimore (which has very few slaves), and the remainder is mainly in the seven counties (from which slavery has nearly disappeared) adjoining Pennsylvania.

As to schools, colleges, books, libraries, churches, newspapers, and periodicals, it thus appears that Massachusetts is greatly in advance of Maryland.

Now, then, let us contrast loyal Maryland with rebel South Carolina, the author of secession, and assuming for many years to instruct the nation. By the Census of 1860, she had a population of 703,708, of whom 402,406 were slaves; and Maryland, numbering 687,049, had 87,189 slaves. Now, by the Census of 1860, South Carolina had 45 journals and periodicals, and her annual circulation was 3,654,840 copies. The circulation therefore of Massachusetts exceeded that of South Carolina more than ninety-eight millions of copies, while Maryland exceeded South Carolina more than seventeen millions of copies. So much for South Carolina as a great political teacher. As to schools in 1850: South Carolina had 724 public schools, 739 teachers, 17,838 pupils. Massachusetts, then, had 158,637 more pupils at public schools than South Carolina, and Maryland 15,416 more pupils at public schools than South Carolina.

The press of Massachusetts, we have seen, circulated in 1860 upward of one hundred and two millions of copies, equal to 279,454 per day, including journals and periodicals, each read, on an average, by at least two persons. This is independent of books and pamphlets, and of the very large circulation of papers from other States and from Europe. What a flood of light is thus shed daily and hourly upon the people of Massachusetts! This intellectual effulgence radiates by day and night. It is the sun in its meridian splendor, and the stars in an ever-unclouded firmament. It has a centre and a circumference, but no darkness. Ignorance vanishes before it; wealth follows in its train; labor rejoices in its association, and finds its products more than doubled; freedom hails its presence, and religion gives it a cordial welcome; churches, schools, academies, colleges, and universities acknowledge its mighty influence. Science penetrates the secrets of nature, and unfolds each new discovery for the benefit of man. Coal, the offspring of the sun, develops its latent energy, and water contributes its untiring hydraulic power. Machinery takes more and more the place of nerves and muscles, cheapens clothing and subsistence and all the necessaries of life, and opens new fields of industry, and more profitable employment for labor. Steam and lightning become the slaves of man. He performs the

journey of a day in an hour, and converses in minutes around the globe. The strength of man may not have been much increased, but his power is augmented a thousand fold.

His life may not have been materially lengthened, but, in the march of knowledge, a year now is as a century, compared with man's progress in the darkness of the middle ages. The eternal advance toward omniscience goes on, but is like that of the infinite approach of the asymptote, which never reaches the hyperbolic curve. The onward of science is in a geometrical ratio, so that in time, the intellectual progress of a day in the future, must exceed that of a century in the past. Knowledge is enthroned as king, and grand truths and new ideas are his ministers. Science takes the diameter of the earth's orbit as a base line and unit of measurement, and with it spans immensity, and triangulates the nebulous systems amid the shadowy verges of receding space. Its researches are cosmical upon the earth and the heavens, and all the elements minister to its progress. Sink to the lowest mine, or fathom the ocean's depth, or climb the loftiest mountains, or career through the heavens on silken wings, and it is there also. On—on—on; nearer—nearer—still nearer it moves forever and forever, with accelerated speed, toward the infinite eternal. Such are the triumphs of knowledge; and he who diffuses it among our race, or discovers and disseminates new truths, advances man nearer to his Creator; he exalts the whole race; he elevates it in the scale of being, and raises it into higher and still higher spheres.

It is science that marks the speed of sound and light and lightning, calculates the eclipses, catalogues the stars, maps the heavens, and follows, for centuries of the past and the future, the comet's course. It explores the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms. With geology, it notes the earthquake upheaval of mountains, and, with mineralogy, the laws of crystallization. With chemistry, it analyzes, decomposes, and compounds the elements. If, like Canute, it cannot arrest the tidal wave, it is subjecting it to laws and formulas. Taking the sunbeam for its pencil, it heliographs man's own image, and the scenery of the earth and the heavens. Has science any limits or horizon? Can it ever penetrate the soul of man, and reveal the mystery of his existence and destiny? It is certainly exploring the facts of sociology, arranging and generalizing them, and deducing laws.

Man, elevated by knowledge in the scale of being, controls the forces of nature with greater power and grander results, and accumulates wealth more rapidly. The educated free labor of Massachusetts, we have seen, doubles the products of toil, *per capita*, as compared with Maryland, and quadruples them (as the Census shows) compared with South Carolina. One day's labor of a man in Massachusetts is more than equal to two in Maryland, and four in South Carolina. So, if we take our savage tribes, with their huts and tents, their rude agriculture, their furs, their few and simple household manufactures, their hunting and fishing, the average product of their annual labor, at four cents a day each, would be $14.60 a year, or more than a fourth of that of South Carolina (56.91). So that Massachusetts, in material progress, is farther in advance of South Carolina than that State is of the savage Indians. Thus we have the successive steps and gradations of man: Massachusetts, with free labor and free schools, having reached the highest point of civilization: South Carolina, with slavery and ignorance (except the few), in a semi-barbarous stage; and the lowest savage condition, called barbarous, but nearer to South Carolina than that State to Massachusetts.

Slavery, then, the Census proves, is hostile to the progress of wealth and population, to science, literature, and education, to schools, colleges, and universities, to books and libraries, to churches and religion, to the press, and therefore to free government; hostile to the poor, keeping them in want and ignorance; hostile to labor, reducing it to servitude, and decreasing two thirds the value of its products; hostile to morals, repudiating among slaves the marital and parental condition, classifying them by law as chattels, darkening the immortal soul, and making it a crime to teach millions of human beings to read or write. And shall labor and education, literature and science, religion and the press, sustain an institution which is their deadly foe?

The discussion will be continued in my next letter. R. J. Walker.

PALMER, THE AMERICAN SCULPTOR

Sculpture as an art is probably anterior to painting. Form being a simpler quality than color, the means of imitation were found in a conformity of shape rather than hue. The origin of sculpture is somewhat obscured in the thickening mists of antiquity, but it was no doubt one of the earliest symbols of ideas made use of by man. In fact, in its primitive development, there is considerable evidence to show that it was the first essay at a recorded language. The Egyptian hieroglyphics, those mysterious etchings upon the rock, representing animals, men, and nondescript characters, were unquestionably rude attempts to hand down to posterity some account of the great events of those forgotten ages. The next remove in the history of this art is its employment in the production of the images of idolatrous worship; and, when confined to this purpose, it never attained any appreciable excellence. The purely heathen mind was incapable of conceiving those forms of ideal beauty which are born of the contemplation of a divine and spiritual beauty revealed in the word of God and the teachings of his immaculate Son.

The grotesque Egyptian images worshipped on the Nile before the building of the pyramids, are, judging from the best preserved antiquities, not very much inferior to the gilded deities to be seen to-day in the thousand pagodas of heathen lands.

Take for example a Chinese idol of modern make: while it is less angular and more elaborately finished than the ancient monstrosities found in Egypt, still, so far as perfection of form or beauty of expression is concerned, there is little to choose between the two. Each is a fitting type of the degree of civilization and soul culture of the peoples that produced them. It must not be urged that the success of sculpture in Greece and Rome disproves the proposition that the art could not develop itself among a strictly idolatrous race.

The splendid mythologies of the Greeks and Romans must not be considered as the highest forms even of the worship of idols or inanimate things. The gods and goddesses of these mythological systems were principally the powers that were supposed to preside over the different forces and elements of nature, and were invested with the celestial attributes of a higher order of beings. Neptune ruled the sea, Pluto was director of ceremonies in the infernal regions, while Jupiter was emperor of the sky and king of all the lesser gods.

These deities were the invention of a cultivated intellect, a refined taste and polished civilization, and furnish a striking proof of man's longing after the Infinite, unguided by the star of revelation.

The imaginative Greeks did not worship the statues of the gods *per se*, but only admired them as the fitting representations of those mysterious forces that hold sway over earth, air, fire, and water, or reverenced them as the symbols of noble sentiments or sublime passions. The thing itself, the cunning but lifeless figure, was only incidental, while the idea thus typified was the real incentive to worship. This was also the age that produced hero worship, and the great man who won the praise and admiration of the people by his exalted qualities, or his prowess in arms, was considered as a demigod, or one in favor with the tenants of Olympus, and his statue was accordingly erected, to stand beside that, perhaps, of Mars, Apollo, or Mercury.

Thus we trace the history of sculpture in its steady progress from its use as a chronicler of events to its employment in the production of the objects of idolatry, and thence to the mythological period, when it became the medium of æsthetic expression, attaining its highest perfection in the palmy days of Greece.

In no people of which the records of the past give any account, can we find such an active sense of the beautiful as that which permeated the minds of the polished Greeks. The admiration of physical beauty became an almost absorbing passion, and its attainment was sought after in every process which human ingenuity could devise.

The Lacedemonian women were accustomed to place the statues of beautiful gods or goddesses in their rooms, to the end that the children they should give birth to, would, by nature's mysterious methods, assimilate the artistic graces of these celestial models. Perfection of form and manly strength were the pride of the wisest and most learned men of the nation, denoting that physical excellence was considered the necessary concomitant of moral or intellectual worth. Authentic annals tell us that Plato and Pythagoras appeared as wrestlers at the public games; and who shall say that these philosophical gymnasts did not derive much of their mental vigor from this exciting exercise? In this age it is easy to see that sculpture must have received every incentive to full development. In the people about him the artist saw the most excellent models for his chisel, while the national taste was educated to the highest degree in the beauties of form and the harmonies of proportion.

But the grand conceptions of Phidias, full of majesty and of grandeur as they are—the matchless finish of the works of Apelles and Praxiteles, ravishing the senses with their carnal beauty, still lacked one element, without which art can never reveal itself in the full perfection of its latent capabilities.

Mere physical beauty, which contains no spiritual element, no drawing of the immortal soul, no suggestion of purer and nobler sentiments struggling for expression in the cunning marble, can never satisfy the requirements of the Christianized taste of modern times.

The Venus de Medici was undoubtedly the ideal type of womanly perfection in the age which produced it, but now the sex would hardly feel themselves flattered by so poor an interpretation. The form is all that could be desired, but the head and features are positively insipid, and a phrenologist would tell you by the development of the cranium that female education was not a part of the Grecian policy. There is in this statue a certain air of wantonness, a perceptible consciousness of being valued and admired solely for physical beauty, which just as plainly tells the estimate placed upon woman in those times as we can read the fact in history.

Thus we perceive sculpture as a representative art has become a chronicler of the world's advancement, so that those who accept the theory of human progression would naturally look for purer and more spiritual conceptions in the artist's soul, with a corresponding nobility in the creations of his genius. The æsthetic principle in its higher manifestations is not the product of pagan mind, because ideal beauty and the rules governing its expression can only be conceived by him to whom Faith has opened the glorious possibilities of our existence beyond the grave. In no classic picture or statue is there anything akin to that divine affinity that is apparent in the Madonnas of the Italian masters of the sixteenth century, investing them with a charm that lingers like an autumn sunset In the recollection of long-departed years. Compare the loveliest of the Madonnas of Correggio and Raphael with the Venus of Cos, and we perceive the inferiority of mere physical perfection to that spiritual beauty that exalts the soul of the beholder, and awakens the slumber of his immortal longings.

Faultless finish, harmonious outlines, and voluptuous proportions are only the result of mechanical skill, that a good imitator or copyist can for the most part achieve by the aid of his master's model. But the sentiment, emotion, passion, the *character*, so to speak, of the statue, is the creation of the artist, the offspring of his quickened brain.

It is to express the æsthetic idea struggling in the soul of genius, that the marble takes its form, the canvas its color, sweet sounds combine in melody, and language weaves itself into the wreath of song. The same divine impulse, the same grasping after a higher excellence inspires the sculptor, the painter, the composer, and the poet, but some chance bent of nature has decided them to choose different mediums of expression.

Some critic has written, had Coles' 'Voyage of Life' been executed in verse, instead of a series of pictures, it would have ranked as one of the grandest poems of the age. High art, then, whatever its kind, is the language of the æsthetic feeling in man—it symbolizes the god-like element in his nature. Cumulative and progressive, it keeps even pace with an improving civilization, and should therefore furnish fairer products to-day than in any period of the past. It assimilates the spirit of the times in which it is exercised; for as Ralph Waldo Emerson remarks in his subtle, essay: 'No man can

quite emancipate himself from his age and country, or produce a model in which the education, the religion, the politics, usages, and arts of his times shall have no share.'

So we see from the very necessity of this truism, that if our painters and sculptors would not be mere imitators of the exponents of another age, there would be soon established a national school of art. We do not mean by this a mere conventional type in finish and mode of treatment, but certain marked, characteristic excellences and features that would identify it with the history of our country and the peculiarities of our people. There are a few native artists who have struggled to achieve this consummation, and preëminent among these is Erastus D. Palmer, the American sculptor.

The history of his career, his origin, his process of study, his choice of subjects in all his great works, his rise and triumph as an artist, all entitle him to this distinctive appellation. He commenced life as a carpenter and joiner, but, while practising his trade in Utica, N. Y., his eye accidentally fell on a cameo likeness, and as the dropping of an apple suggested to Newton the laws of gravitation, so the sight of this little trifle was the talisman that revealed to Palmer the artistic capabilities of his genius. Being thus led to attempt the portrait of his wife upon a shell, he executed his task—which was in a twofold sense a labor of love—with such fidelity to nature, such bold outline, and delicacy of finish, that connoisseurs detected in it the hand of a master. Thus encouraged, he for two years made cameo cutting his business, and followed it with remarkable success, till, his eyes becoming affected by the exercise of this talent, he was obliged to relinquish it, with the expectation of returning to his old trade. But happily he was induced to try his skill at modelling in clay, and then he discovered what was in him. Taking his little girl for a model, he produced a bust, styled the 'Infant Ceres,' which, when finished in marble, immediately took rank as one of the gems of art. The sweet *naïvete* of budding childhood, the timid eyes and dimpled cheek, all refined and sublimated by the ideal graces added by the magic wand of genius, combined to make this earliest bust of our sculptor one of the most felicitous products of his chisel.

Soon after this satisfactory experiment, Palmer removed to the city of Albany, where he has since remained and won his well-deserved fame. His two allegorical pieces, 'Resignation' and 'Spring,' we cannot forbear to describe, familiar as they are to the *virtuoso* of art, and well known even to the great public.

The latter is a female bust, her hair bound with a fillet of grass and half-developed grain, her face wearing an expression of modest coquetry, quite in keeping with the capricious, 'celestial maid;' while the gently swelling bosom suggests the latent forces of nature which only reach their fulness in the summer sun. And about the eyes there is a look of joy and freshness in which you fancy you can see

> 'the flowers begin to spring,
> The skies to brighten, and the birds to sing.'

The 'Resignation' represents the refined voluptuousness of riper womanhood. The features are exquisitely cut, and represent a type of beauty fit for angelic spheres. The head, so finely proportioned, and crowned with luxuriant, waving hair, inclines gracefully to one side, as in submission to the chastenings of Providence. But in the downcast, sorrowful eyes, there is an expression of mingled hope and patient endurance such as Mary might have worn at the foot of the cross. The marble is eloquent of that Christian sentiment: 'He doeth all things well.' The religious feeling of the sixteenth century, which gave to art both its inspiration and theme, never found so fair a mould as in this bust of 'Resignation.'

Both of these works are entirely free from all explanatory accessories, and interpret themselves to the most sluggish soul.

Another of Palmer's compositions, and one of the most purely ideal, is the 'Dream of the Spirit's Flight.' This is a large bas-relief, executed in medallion style. To give any idea by mere words of the spirit of this performance is impossible. It is the half figure of a peri-like girl, with tresses swaying in

the higher air, with butterfly wings, arms and drapery gracefully disposed, and all the parts uniting to impress you with a sense of upward, soaring motion! There is a divine beauty about the face reflected from a brighter world. Sculptured in pure white marble, it seems a very soul just escaped from its prison house of clay, and, listening to those 'sounds seraphic,' bearing away to the great Beyond.

While gazing on this airy sprite, the beholder feels an exhilarating influence steal over him, and involuntarily there goes up from his heart, like incense, that yearning prayer:

'So grant me, God, from every care,
And stain of passion free,
Aloft through virtue's purer air
To hold my course to Thee!'

We cannot speak separately of his 'Morning and Evening,' 'Immortality,' 'Sleeping Peri,' his statue and bas-relief of 'Faith,' busts, and other works, which are grouped in odd companionship about his studio. But the 'Indian Girl' and 'White Captive,' the crowning achievements of Palmer's genius, and the ones that give a thoroughly American character to his reputation, demand an elaborate consideration—not to explain their merits, but to show what materials for art exist in our history, when appropriated by the master's hand.

Romance and poetry have not often been successful in treating of the character and customs of our aborigines, for the elements of true heroism in the savage nature are so exceptional and few, that the red man is a very poor subject for the higher manifestations of art. Cooper and Longfellow alone have come back from this field with the trophies of praise. But Palmer, with a striking originality and a subtle perception of spiritual influences, sees in the effect of Christianity on the 'untutored mind' of the Indian, a theme to inspire his plastic clay. So from this idea he evolves the 'Indian Girl,' standing in an attitude of perfect repose, holding in her right hand a crucifix, on which her eyes are bent pensively in a sweet, absorbing reverie, which shuts out the consciousness of the external world. In the other hand, which hangs listlessly by her side, she barely touches rather than holds a bunch of feathers, evidently gathered to adorn her person, and which she forgets in the contemplation of the story of the Cross. The artist supposes she has found this crucifix, which the early Catholic missionaries were wont to attach to the forest trees, and having heard from some of these zealous teachers an exposition of Christ's mission, the better life has already begun to dawn in her soul, and her whole aspect tells that this mysterious influence is upon her.

The features are Indian, fair and comely—we do not say beautiful, because this term expresses the highest excellence, and ought as a descriptive phrase to be more sparingly used. The face is idealized, as the rules of true art always require, but still preserves its fidelity to the natural type. The form is nude to the waist, the drapery arranged with unrivalled grace, the hair is clubbed so as to reveal the neck and shoulders, while the perfection of contour and the completeness of development satisfy the most critical eye for the study of detail. The 'Indian Girl' forms one of the landmarks in the history of American sculpture.

But Palmer's grand, characteristic work, in which his genius seems to have reached its noblest expression, is the 'White Captive,' which we believe to be one of the most perfect creations of ancient or modern art. It is something more than the nude figure of a surpassingly beautiful woman, bound to the stake, and defying the gaze of her barbarous captors—it is not merely an exciting incident in pioneer life, but it has a grand symbolical meaning that reaches beyond a literal interpretation of the situation.

We see in this statue the contact of civilization with savage instinct, and in the expression of the 'White Captive,' peering through maiden timidity, and rising triumphant above physical fear in a look of intellectual and religious strength, before which the swarthy warrior feels himself in the presence of a superior power—a ruler! As we gaze on in mute admiration, we behold the race of the

red man receding westward before that same power pictured in this wonderful face: now the Indian tribes pass the Rocky mountains, they come within the roar of the Pacific, and, growing less and less, they at last vanish away into the uncertain mists of the ocean—a lost people, who have served the purpose for which they were created, and disappeared from our continent to make room for a nobler humanity. It is this melancholy fate, this glorious triumph, that Palmer has recorded in a language more forcible than history, more eloquent than song, more ravishing than the lyre! To define how the statue spreads before you this great vision, eludes the acutest analysis; but there it is, told just as plainly as the Falls of Niagara or the eternal stars tell the omnipotence of God.

The longer one studies this marvellous work, the more he sees to admire, to reflect upon. There is something in the general effect that makes the beholder forget the perfect nudity of the figure, which necessarily grows out of the circumstances of the case, and which is entirely unfelt by the captive in her terrible realization of the peril which surrounds her. Thus two great difficulties that embarrass the execution of undraped statuary are entirely overcome:

1. The nudity is only incidental to the general effect, and the subject seems entirely unconscious of the fact.

2. The nudity is accounted for by the situation—the captive is tied unclad to a tree, to be burned alive, according to Indian custom.

Thus a criticism that has been frequently made (and not unjustly) on the *morale* of certain works of art, has no application to this.

Of the details of this ideal creation—its matchless finish, the graceful undulations of the perfect form, the firmness expressed in the clenched fingers, the instinctive shudder gathered on the fair brow, the lofty defiance of the eyes and half-parted lips, the radiant beauty of the face—we can only say they live in our memory, but too deep for words. We believe the truth of the artist's conception, that the revengeful savages acknowledged the divinity of her beauty and Christian reliance, and the 'White Captive' went free—the spirit of civilization triumphed!

As a man's character is always more or less associated with his achievements, the reader may wish to learn something of Mr. Palmer as a man. In all kinds of soul-work, there is ever perceptible a certain flavor of the mind which produces it, and the things thus created usually suggest the qualities of the creator. So the works of the sculptor are to some degree the exponents of his character, the expressions of his inner life.

Therefore in Mr. Palmer we should expect moral and intellectual worth of a high order, added to the purest and most exalted motives. He is in spirit a reformer, taking an interest in every measure for the improvement of our race, and sympathizing with every struggle of our aspiring manhood.

The eccentricities, excuses, and conventional affectations of many real and pretended geniuses he entirely eschews, feeling himself one of the people, and laboring for their elevation.

Neither does he deem it any part of genius to neglect his family, forget to pay his butcher's bill, and ignore the claim of his tailor. His ample house and neat atelier, at the north end of Eagle street, in the city of Albany, are the fruit of his patient and inspiring toil—his chisel has won him moderate fortune as well as world-wide fame.

Photographs of the 'Palmer Marbles' are seen in the show windows of Paris, London, and Berlin, while in this country they help to fill the portfolios of the *virtuoso*, adorning the walls of the parlor and the private gallery.

Though in youth Palmer did not receive an average common-school education, he converses like a man of liberal culture, showing that he belongs to the class of self-made men.

He has never visited the interminable art palaces of Europe, nor studied, in the sense in which that term is used, the 'old masters;' still he has appropriated all the valuable hints to be obtained from the classic models, without regarding them as the *ne plus ultra* of artistic execution, and therefore to be only imitated, to the exclusion of the higher ideals of an advanced civilization.

He has an intelligible and correct theory in regard to the fidelity of art to nature. For instance, he insists that he should *represent*, not imitate; and in making a bust of a man, the sculptor should express the higher moods of his subject, and show him with his better qualities brought to the surface. So the forms of nature should be idealized in the direction of their primitive tendency, and thus art help to express that ineffable longing of the soul, that reaching upward for a perfection that is approximated on earth, but never attained. This idealization is like the humor of Dickens, something more than nature in its grotesqueness, yet a stimulated growth of the natural quality. Palmer always takes nature for his model, and then assimilates it to that ideal beauty which dwells in his imagination and sheds a spiritual halo over the creation of his chisel.

Like every true disciple of genius, he feels that he has a mission to perform, and that he is responsible for the influence he exerts on the tastes and æsthetic culture of the people. As you chat with him in his studio, dressed in his blouse and cap, his dark eye glowing with enthusiasm for his art, or sparkling with playful humor, standing before you tall and vigorous, you see in him one of the earnest workers for the elevation of our humanity.

The utilities of the world will take care of themselves: let us foster the beautiful, because, like all divine attributes, man reaches it through striving, and is made better by its contemplation.

Palmer does not look older than forty, and has perhaps not yet attained the fulness of his powers, but has in him the elements of a healthy growth.

Work on, thou almoner of sweetest joys, thou pilgrim in that fairy realm whence come the high ideals of life; work on, striver for the perfect type of beauty and of truth, and in thy progress let the people trace our human nature rising to diviner heights—expanding to sublimer bounds!

CLOUDS

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO PROFESSOR GUYOT

High and fathomless above us vaults the pure aerial sky,
Solemn bends its arch of Beauty round a world where all things die.

On the dome through which Earth's swinging, spun of palpitating air,
Angel artists fresco vapors into pictures passing fair.

No cold canvas of dead color has the Mighty Master given:
Trembles with His Infinity the azure vault of Heaven.

On and in the lucent background float the ever-changeful forms,
Sometimes glowing into glory, sometimes glooming into storms.

God's blest seal is on creation; signs and symbols throng the sky,
Though too dull to read their meaning droops the stolid human eye.

Over mountain, over valley throng the clouds to soothe the sight;
Through the dim walls of the city gleam they buoyant, fleeting, bright.

Gentle, dreadful, or fantastic—nearer, farther as we gaze;
Varied, spiritual, tender, forms and melts the surging haze.

'Heavenly secrets' breathe around us—lowly flowers on the sod,
Cloudland's curves and grading colors veil the Infinite of God.

The Infinite—we shudder! but wild longings through us steal
As we vainly strive to grasp It till our failing senses reel.

Ever longing, never grasping, though in tenderness It stoop
To shade the scented cups of flowers, to bend them as they droop.

For through infinite gradations pass the changeful hues of light,
That the infinite through color may send greetings to the sight.

Through ne'er-returning, endless curves, flowers, trees, clouds, mountains pass,
That man may see the Infinite through nature's magic glass.

Oh, tender stooping! soothing! Infinite Love must be
The cause, aim, end, the burning heart of everything we see.

Earth may cover deep her dying, parted hearts chant weary dirge,

But we *feel death is but seeming* in the Cloudland's evening surge.

CIRRUS

Floating high above the mountains, in the fields of upper air,
Multitudinous throng the Cirri, ranged in order, heavenly fair.

Rank upon rank in glory lie the transverse, plumy bars;
Tranquil beauty rules the union which disorder never mars.

Perfect symmetry, obedience, mark their finely chiselled lines—
In the highest sphere of being flexile *grace* with *law* combines.

Now they break in fleecy ripples as innumerably they press;
Shines the blue of Heaven between them as they fly the Wind's caress.

Millions fleck the face of Heaven, but no two alike are ever:
Restless mirror of the Infinite, form seems exhausted never.

Are they lambs 'mid Heaven's blue pastures? are they swans with downy breast
Floating through that azure ocean round the region of the Blest?

Are they snowy wings of Cherubs gathering round the Throne above,
As the vesper hymn of Heaven rises to the Eternal Love?

Gazing on their wavy ripples, they seem mingling with the sky,
Yet the heavenly little islets still innumerable lie.

How the fleecy cloudlets glitter as they sail so clear and high!
Is light curdling into snowflakes as it streams athwart the sky?

Freezing? No—warm and glowing, ambient, changeful, feathery, bright,
Rather seem the floating vapors melting into roseate light.

With the white flame in their bosoms, and the pure blue depths above,
When the sunset rays dart kisses, how they kindle into love!

See, with every shaft electric flash the bright hues deeper, higher,
Till the chaste and snowy cloudlets fleck the Blue of Heaven with fire.

How they flush and how they quiver! how the virgin drifts of snow
Drink the sunset's dying passion, catch his ardent parting glow!

Love weaves close in chords harmonic all the finely fretted dome,
Blue, white, purple, gold, and crimson, fringe, melt, ripple into foam.

Thus the angels drape God's footstool with soft vapor, wind, and sun:
Does His smile rest on the artists when their pleasant work is done?

Do they see Him bend the Heavens, riding swiftly on the clouds,
Heat His Heart, and Light the shadow which His inner Glory shrouds?

Seraphs, cherubs, thronging round Him, shall our hearts no raptures move?
Shall we prove dull links reluctant in the chain of endless love?

No. We feel the electric secret flashing through the Perfect Whole,
'Bliss eternal' telegraphing upon every faithful soul.

CUMULI

Leave we now the upper regions
With their wonders pure and high,
Gone the barred and fleecy Cirri—
Mountain Cumuli storm the sky.
High the calmness floats above us,
Tears and rain lie far below,
As we sail the middle Cloudland,
Where the vapors come and go.

Throbs a wilder pulse of passion,
Stronger individual life,
Rapid, energetic motion
Tells of elemental strife.
Nearer seem they to the human,
Rearing dizzy forms on high,
Than the order-loving Cirri
Barring the translucent sky.

Lovingly they crest our mountains,
Hovering o'er them all the day,
Copying all the soaring outlines
In artistic, skilful play;
Following close on the horizon,
Dip, break, gap, and lofty peak,
As to build Earth into Heaven
Would the haunting vapors seek.

Drifting swiftly through the azure,
Chase they shadows over Earth:
Flying footsteps, soft and silent,
Flit o'er grassy graves in mirth.

Shudder not—the bearded harvest
Quivers not, so light the tread:
Let it glide o'er moss and violet—
Would its touch could wake our dead!

Piling now, the tossing vapors,
With a wild exultant power,
Rise in turrets, towers, mountains,
Changing with the changing hour.
Glittering, gleaming, dazzling, snowy,
Heart-tossed shadows in them lie;
Broken, scattered, wind-torn, foamy,
Haunt they through Earth's panting sky.

Luminous jets of boiling vapor
Topple into sudden rifts,
Open into yawning chasms,
Break in tortured whirling drifts,
Panting, surging, rocking, reeling,
Cradling in their hearts the storm,
Spirit, power, passion flashing,
Lightning bares each secret form.

Banding now in groups colossal,
Piling o'er the mountain crest,
Sweeping down his rocky summit,
Crashing through his wooded breast,
Shattering fall his pines and larches,
Rain, hail, tumult onward swell,
Lightning scathes the shuddering forest,
Thunder frights the leafy dell.

Sunset fires the whirling vapors,
Now they sway and rock in light,
Toppling crests fling back the radiance,
Through the rifts it glitters bright,
Gloomy clouds are ruby kindling,
Rippling fringed with molten gold,
Rosy streams of color pouring,
Through the tempest's blackness rolled.

Surging weird in fitful beauty,
Every moment fraught with change,
Every break and mystic chasm
Opening up a Heaven-range:
Now the eastern peaks are kindling
Glow as though the Morning's heart
Throbbed against them, while the formless
Clouds to phantom being start.

Thus through storm-tost human bosoms
God oft sends His rays divine;
Passionate errors, when forgiven,
Lead us on to trust sublime.
God rays light through moral tempests,
Brings repentance out of crime;
'Much forgiven' ploughs the spirit,
Former faults as beacons shine.

Through our ruins Love is gleaming,
Rippling o'er in molten gold,
Rosy streams of life are pouring
Through our tempest's blackness rolled.
Glittering thus in growing beauty,
Every moment fraught with change,
Through each rift and shattered chasm
We may see the Heaven-range.

Thus the angels build the pictures
In the vext or tranquil skies,
Of our changeful human passions,
Stormful fall and heaven-won rise.
Thus they write in love and pity,
Radiant with their heaven-dyes,
Lessons for the lost, the erring,
Hope for weary, dying eyes.

RAIN CLOUDS

High float the Cirri,
Passionless, pure;
Wild pile the Cumuli,
Never secure;
Low sweep the Rain Clouds
Over the sky,
Glooming the sunshine,
Slow trailing by.

Mystical region
Typifies Earth—
Light in the bosom
Of darkness has birth;
Magical mingling
Of beauty and gloom,
Calm follows tempest
As Heaven the tomb.

Shrouding the distance,
Legions of mist
Glide down the river
Joining the list
Of the shadowy army
Hurrying on
Over wide waters
To welcome the sun.

Catching his gleaming,
Faster they run,
Roseate surging,
Roll into one;
Filling the valley,
Luminous haze,
Heavenward soaring,
Rocks as we gaze;

Lifting strange columns
Of light in the air,
Weaves golden sunshine
Fitful and fair
Through the cloud pillars
Thrown to the sky,
Like the Dream-ladder
Jacob slept by.

Trailing o'er treetops,
Shadowing graves,
Gloomily weeping
While the wind raves,
Blurring the landscape
Rain clouds press on,
Lowering on nature
With leaden-hued frown.

Sulphurous, lurid,
Thunder is near;
Sobbings and mutterings
Fill us with fear.
Palls with wild fringes
Stream on behind—
Death may be riding
The wings of the wind.

Jagged clouds hanging
Formless and black,
Hurtle the whirlwind

Fast o'er their track;
Fiery flashes
Scathe the green plain;
Cataracts falling
In torrents of rain.

Thunder and lightning
Crash through the sky;
Whirlwinds are carding
The clouds as they fly!
Nature is reeling,
Sin at our heart,
Heaven is angered—
Well may we start!

God throws His shadow
Into the gloom;
The raindrops have caught it,
And break into bloom!
His light on Earth's teardrops
Gems Bliss on her clouds,
His rainbow of color
Paints Hope on her shrouds.

Tender and lovely,
Luminous, fair,
Infinite Beauty
Is bending through air,
Breathing through color,
Through Order, through Form,
That infinite Love
Rules the heart of the storm.

Caught in soft meshes,
Fractions the light,
Gold, green, or ruby,
Tremblingly bright.
Through the torn chasms
Smiles the lost blue—
The wilder the drifting,
The deeper the hue.

Beauty above us,
Beauty around,
Clouds, stars gem the heavens,
Trees, flowers paint the ground.
Rapturous meaning
Illumines the whole:
God gives us Beauty,

For Love is His Soul!

High-floating Cirri,
Passionless, pure;
Wild-piling Cumuli,
Never secure;
Low-trailing Rain Clouds
With rainbow-lit pall—
Softly ye whisper
That Love ruleth all!

SKETCHES OF AMERICAN LIFE AND SCENERY

II.—THE CATSKILL MOUNTAINS

Who, in ascending the Hudson River, has not watched for the first glimpse of the Catskills, and followed with delight their gradual development of peak and clove, until, near Hudson, they stood fully revealed, flooded with sunshine, flecked with shadows, or crowned by storm-laden clouds?

This region is noteworthy, not alone from its beauty and incalculable utility, but also from the associations clustering around it through the pen of poets and writers of romance, the brush of the artist, and the memories of thousands of tourists, who have found health and strength for both body and mind upon its craggy heights or beside its numberless wild and beautiful mountain torrents. It comprises the whole of Greene County, a portion of Delaware, and the neighboring borders of Ulster, Schoharie, and Albany. It truly deserves the appellation of 'many fountained,' giving rise to great rivers, such as the Delaware, and one of the main branches of the Susquehanna, and to manifold smaller watercourses, as the Schoharie, Catskill, and Esopus. Unlike the Highlands of Northern New Jersey and Southern New York, and the region of the Adirondacs, its lakes are few and very small. The best known are the twin lakes near the Mountain House, and Shue's Lake, not far from the summit of Overlook Mountain. These are all at a height, approximately, of two thousand feet above the river, and add greatly to the variety and interest of the landscape in their vicinity.

Names among these hills are a commodity so scarce that their paucity presents a serious obstacle to intelligible description. Round Tops and High Peaks are innumerable. We hope, when Professor Guyot completes his cursory survey of heights, made eighteen months ago, he will strive to do as in North Carolina, and supply the deficiency. Nomenclature is a difficult matter, and requires a poet, a poetic man of science, or the imaginative intuitions of a primitive people.

The main range of the Catskills finds its southerly corner in Overlook Mountain, not far from Woodstock, and about seven miles (more or less) west of the Hudson. One ridge extends northerly (a little east, parallel with the river) from twelve to fourteen miles, and then, at the North Mountain, making an obtuse angle, turns to the northwest, and passes through Windham into Schoharie County: the other ridge, starting from Overlook, runs in a westerly direction along the southern border of Greene County, and finally in Delaware sinks into broken hill ranges of less elevation. The space intermediate between these two main ridges is at first narrow, but gradually widens as they diverge from the starting point; its interior (northwesterly) slope is drained by the Schoharie (a branch of the Mohawk) and its tributaries, the East, the West, and Batavia Kills. Singular gaps or cloves intersect the range, affording easy communication with the lowlands bordering its base. Each clove has its own stream, and in the main ones on the river front are found the countless and beautiful waterfalls which constitute the chief characteristic of Catskill scenery. The more primitive rocks of the Highlands, the Adirondacs, and the White Mountains do not offer such numerous and picturesque sheets of falling water as the red sandstone of the Catskills.

Starting from Overlook Mountain, whence the view is said to be magnificent, and proceeding northward, we first reach the Plattekill Clove, up whose steep and wooded cleft winds a wild road, chiefly used for quarrying purposes, and down whose abrupt declivity the Plattekill leaps from crag to crag in a series of fine falls and cascades. The quantity of water during the summer months, except after considerable rain, is small, but the rock formations are very interesting, reminding the traveller of wild passes in the Tyrol. This is perhaps the grandest of all the Catskill clefts, but human ingenuity has here afforded no aid to the sightseer, and strong heads and agile limbs are needed for the enjoyment of its hidden beauties.

The mountain to the north of the Plattekill Clove has two crests, known as High Peak and Round Top. It was long thought to be the loftiest summit of the Catskills, but must now yield to the Windham High Peak or Black Head, 3,926 feet high, and perhaps to other elevations in the same range. Professor Guyot gives its height at 3,684 feet, and that of the Mountain House as 2,245 feet. This mountain has frequently been ascended, although there is no regular path leading to the summit, but the thick growth of wood on the top greatly hinders the satisfactoriness of the view. Between Round Top and the nearest mountain to the north lies the Kauterskill Clove, known preëminently as *The Clove*, the home of artists and the theme of poets. Its springs are drained by the Kauterskill Creek, a branch of the Catskill, and it is one of the loveliest spots in America. The road through this clove is one of the main arteries to the back mountain country, and, from the summit of the clove, near Haines's sawmill, winds for about three miles to the base, by the side of streams offering fifteen fine falls and cascades in a distance of five miles, and between steep and wooded mountain slopes or rocky crags lifted high in air, now swelling out into the sunlight, and anon curving back into amphitheatres of shadow. The main Kauterskill flows from the twin lakes already mentioned, and just below the Laurel House falls over a precipice of 175 feet, which, with another dash of 80 feet, makes the entire depth of the stream's first grand plunge into the wild ravine 255 feet. A short distance below is the Bastion Fall, and, immediately following, the Terrace Cascade, the united height of the two being certainly not less than 100 feet. These four fine falls are found in an easy walk of three quarters of a mile leading down the ravine from the Laurel House to the Clove road.

The Little Kauterskill flows into the main stream at a short distance below the bridge where the Clove road first crosses that torrent. The ravine through which it flows is incomparably beautiful, with the grand plunge (Haines's Fall or Fawn's Leap) at the head, and the seven graceful cascades, all visible from one projecting table rock, soon after following. Below the above-mentioned bridge are the Dog Fall, the cascade at Moore's Bridge, and the Dog Hole, with its steep cliffs and foaming rapids. At the mouth of the Clove is Palensville, a little manufacturing village, where town-wearied denizens find fresh air and pleasant walks and drives during the summer months. To our taste, however, the summer climate at the various sojourning places, about two thousand feet above the sea level, is far preferable to that at the base of the mountain.

Rising to the north of the Clove is the South Mountain, from whose beetling crags are obtained some of the finest views offered by the Catskills; then follows the Pine Orchard, where are the well-known Mountain House, the twin lakes, and the Laurel House at the head of the Kauterskill Falls; and finally, the North Mountain, which looks down upon a graceful spur to the east, Kiskatom Round Top, and then sweeps away to the northwest. Beyond the North Mountain is a considerable depression, down which passes an execrable road, leading from East Jewett, within the mountain range, to Cairo, at its foot. Finally, we reach Windham High Peak,[1] and the fine road crossing the mountains from Catskill to Delhi, and passing through Windham and Prattsville.

On the southern side of the range, west of Overlook, are two wild and beautiful clefts, the one known as the Stony Clove, and the other as West Kill or Bushnell Clove. The first begins as a narrow gorge with lofty hemlock and moss-clad mountain sides, and gradually opens out, at Phœnicia, upon the hills of Ulster and Esopus Creek. It is watered by a trout stream, and its few but cosey farm cottages offer shelter sufficient for amateur fishermen and artists, bewitched by its fairy recesses and fine forest growth. In the narrow portion of this clove are ice caves, where ice may be found at all seasons of the year, and whence issue cooling winds appreciable in the warmest summer days.

The West Kill, or Bushnell Clove, is said to be still finer and more alpine than the Stony Clove. The last-mentioned gap and that of the Plattekill join the main or Kauterskill Clove between Tannersville and Hunter, while the Bushnell Clove does not intersect the valley of the Schoharie until

[1] Or Black Head. There is great confusion in names in this part of the range.

the West Kill flows into that stream near the charming village of Lexington, six miles south, a little west of Prattsville.

These geographical details may seem uninteresting, but if the writer had possessed them eight years ago, when first making the near acquaintance of the Catskills, many a mystification might have been avoided, and many a pleasant excursion, now only known to the fancy, have been found practicable. One great attraction of the Catskills is, that the greater number of the spots chiefly interesting are within walking or driving distance from the chief points of sojourn. Visitors in general confine themselves to the Mountain House and its immediate vicinity, and hence see but little of the beauties hidden among the cliffs and ravines of the inner peaks. The view from the Mountain House plateau is extensive, but tame and monotonous in character; the horizon is not interesting, and the cloud scenery is far more impressive than that of the land beneath. The views from the very easily ascended North or South Mountains, where, in addition to the river valley, the eye embraces the lakes, the opening of the Clove, and the distant mountains toward Lexington, are far superior. Clum's Hill, a terraced eminence, visible from many points among the Catskills, and the Parker Mountain, east of Tannersville, both offer peculiar and interesting prospects; but the king of views is that obtained from the cliffs of the South Mountain overhanging the Clove. This vista has furnished sketches for two remarkable pictures painted by that rare artist and genuine son of Helios, S. R. Gifford. Looking toward the west is the rolling plateau of the Clove, with the far-away mountains beyond Hunter, the Parker and North Mountains, the openings to the Stony and Plattekill Cloves, Clum's Hill, and the silver thread of Haines's Fall. At the foot of the cliffs, more than a thousand feet below, lie Brockett's (classic ground for artists), the Clove road, Moore's Bridge, the Dog Fall, and the brawling Kauterskill. Directly opposite stands the wooded crest of Round Top. The entire mountain side is visible, and the cleft is so narrow that the trees can almost be counted as they rise one above another to a height of 2,500 feet above the roaring stream, which here receives two slender cascades that have threaded their way through the tangled forest. Toward the east, the river is visible, and the sloping mountain declivities frame a lovely picture of lowland country and far-away Connecticut or Massachusetts hills. The effects of light and shadow are such as we have never seen surpassed. This earth there seems made of gold or crimson lights, of gray seas of mist, or of every imaginable combination of beautiful hues.

These cliffs are reached by a charming walk through a beech wood, and are distant about a mile from the Laurel House. A longer and still somewhat rough path was opened thither last summer from the Mountain House. But we should never end were we to characterize all the beautiful spots, the entrancing walks and drives to be found amid these cool and healthful slopes and plateaus. A difference of at least ten degrees is felt between the mountain resorts and the villages on the river bank, and the air is inexpressibly fresh and invigorating.

These mountains have also a very interesting flora. The oak, beech, birch, chestnut, hickory, maple, ash, hemlock—pines, black, white, and yellow—spruces, fir, and balsam, are among the most widely spread trees; and of fruits, the blackberry, gooseberry, raspberry, whortleberry or blueberry, and strawberry, grow in profusion and of fine flavor. Violets, anemones, liverworts, the fairy bells of the Linnea Borealis, the fragrant stars of the Mitchella or partridge berry, the trailing arbutus, Houstonia, the laurel, honeysuckle, sarsaparilla, wintergreen, bottle gentian, white and blue, purple orchids, willow herb, golden rod, immortelles, asters in every variety, St. John's wort, wild turnip, Solomon's seals, wild lilies of the vale, fire lilies, Indian pipe, with other flowers, ground pines, and varieties of moss and ferns innumerable, border the winding woodpaths and secluded roads. There are many regions in America more grand than that of the Catskills, but none, we think, more easily and gratefully compensatory to a careful survey.

Within Gethsemane's Garden kneeling,
Bends the Lord His sacred head,
His soul, each human sorrow feeling,

Quivers with keen shafts, sin-sped,
Every human misery knows,
Bears the burden of our woes.

Perchance not men alone His sinking,
Bleeding heart to weep is fain,
But poor dumb creatures sees He drinking
Deep the bitter cup of pain,
Hears the wailing, anguished cry,
Hears but curse and blow reply!

L. D. P.

THE ISSUES OF THE WAR

The life of the soldier is one of constant anxiety and suspense. He never knows with any certainty to-day what he shall have to do to-morrow. Upon seemingly the greatest calm may suddenly burst the most terrific storm. There is little incentive to thought, except of that practical kind which directs the activities of the soldier's perilous life. Here we are, thousands of us, an acting mass rather than an assemblage of thinking individuals. Indeed, it is not strictly military to think; implicit and unquestioning obedience is the law. When the order was finally given on Monday night (September 21st) for the whole army to fell back on Chattanooga, the writer remarked:

'Well, if we shall not have to go any farther—if we can hold Chattanooga, we are not defeated;—it is even a victory, and we have won Chattanooga at the battle of Chickamauga.'

'We want none of your speculations,' retorted our Prussian commander; 'it is a soldier's business to obey, and not to think.'

But, it is hardly natural for an American soldier to execute a movement without inquiring the wherefore. And if we are marched over mountains, and down the Lookout at Alpine Pass, within a few miles of Rome; and then marched back again, up the perilous steep, and northward to Stevens's Gap, and down again;—why, even common soldiers, without the evidence of brains which there is, or ought to be, in shoulder straps, inquire of each other for the strategic value there may be in all this marching and countermarching, and find it hard to believe that it was all provided for in the original programme.

But in a still higher sense is the American soldier given to thinking. He is quite likely to have an opinion as to the origin and cause of the war—as to the issues involved therein, and the results which it is likely to bring about. There is, moreover, a multiplicity of views, and not the unanimity of dulness.

The causes, the issues, the results of the war—momentous themes! and likely to be thoroughly canvassed by those whom they so vitally concern—the American citizen and our citizen soldiery.

The causes, issues, and results of the war are so intimately related that we can scarcely think of one without also thinking of the others. The causes are more especially a thing of the past—they already belong to history: the results belong more particularly to the future; the issues pertain to the present. It is these with which we have more immediately to do, and which it behooves us, as intelligent actors in the great drama, to understand. We should not be indifferent to results, and we are not; but if there are real issues of right and wrong involved in the contest, and we are in the right, we may rest assured that the results of a successful prosecution of the war will be worthy of all our sacrifices, and honorable to us as a people and nation.

In the midst of a beleaguered camp, with no notes of former reading, or books of reference, it is a poor place for the elaboration of one's ideas;—the writer, nevertheless, proposes to make a brief inquiry into the issues involved in this terrible war.

The fact exists that there is a war between the North and South, brought about, as we believe, by unwarranted and aggressive acts of the Slave Power. This slave oligarchy of the South either had, or affected to have, a profound contempt for what they supposed was the want of spirit in the Northern people. It was a current swagger that we should barely furnish them with an opportunity to show their superior military prowess. 'This war shall be waged on Northern soil,' they said. Events have shown that they miscalculated; but the raids of Jackson, Lee, Morgan & Co. show how great their will has been to carry out their threats of invasion. When the rebel guns opened upon Sumter, there was no alternative left us but fight now, or soon. Had we hesitated and compromised then, the arrogant spirit of the insurgents would have been still further flattered and puffed up, and their contempt for the submissive North made genuine, whatever it may have been before. A compromise then would have made no lasting peace; the South would soon have become tired of being merely 'let alone;' her exactions and aggressions would have become more and more insolent and intolerable,

till warlike resistance or ignoble submission and slavery would have been our only alternative. This war is, therefore, on our part and in one sense, a war in self-defence; and this may be regarded as one of its issues.

Every loyal soldier is fighting for the security of our Northern homes; and the issue resolves itself into this: The resistance of invasion; the vindication of our manliness as a people; the protection of our own firesides—else be overrun, outraged, desolated, enslaved by the minions of a Southern oligarchy, which indulges the insane conceit that it is born to rule.

Unfortunately for our country, it embraces two distinct forms of society, of dissimilar, if not of antagonistic character. It is a heritage from our ancestors; but none the less an evil for its prestige from the sanctities of time; and we are now reaping its bitter fruits in the manifold and hideous forms of a great civil war. Taking human nature as it is, there appears to be no escape from this cruel ordeal. We of the North claim that we have transcended that type of society whose vital and informing element is chattel slavery. There is natural and irrepressible antagonism between the two forms of society; they cannot subsist in peace and good feeling by the side of each other, and still less under the same Government. Conflict was inevitable, and it came.

At this stage of the war and of elucidation respecting its cause and origin, this may be only commonplace, yet necessary to fulness of statement.

Slavery felt the necessity of efforts to save herself from impending ruin; she became taunting and aggressive in her manners and acts, and resorted at length to violence, reminding one of the oft-repeated proverb, 'Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.' History has no readings for the comfort of slavery. There is a progress in human affairs, and the tide of that progress is against her. Threatening attitudes and impetuous dashes do not appear to come with salvation; and the promise—of glory for freedom, and doom for her—now is that, as a turbulent and rebellious power, she will be completely overthrown; a sudden and deserved judgment, the legitimate consequence of her own violence and desperation.

This struggle between a progressive and triumphant civilization, on the one hand, and a crude, unprogressive, and waning one on the other—if civilization it can be called—is another of the issues of this war. It is but the ultimate, the closing catastrophe of the 'irrepressible conflict.'

Involved in this feature of the war, there is much beside the naked issue of freedom and slavery.

Slavery has no respect for the affections, as is evinced by the mercilessness with which she sunders every family tie. The refining culture of growth in civilization demands respect for the domestic loves, even of an inferior race. Where chattel slavery exists, labor is not held in honor, and just in proportion to the depth to which one class sinks by industrial oppression, does the other sink through enervating indolence and exhausting indulgence. Where there is chattel slavery, there cannot be free speech: the utterance of truth may indeed be incendiary, and the rickety, combustible institution standing out of its time, must needs protect itself. There must not be free education or free inquiry. It would never do to teach the slaves; and it is likewise the interest of this form of society to retain the lower strata of the nominally free population in ignorance equally dense and impenetrable. A cringing servility must be generated and maintained on the one side, and a haughty and exacting superciliousness on the other.

All these may be regarded as constituting minor issues, which are dependent for their vitality on that which is greater; and when the fate of the issue between chattel slavery and its antagonist shall have been determined, there will be no further trouble with the collaterals. When the main trunk is torn up by the root, the branches will all die.

But while the issue between slavery and freedom thus comprehends within itself a class of issues which are subordinate, may there not be a still greater issue which dwarfs that of slavery and freedom into a secondary, and comprehends within itself this and other issues of equal magnitude and importance?

Our Government has never given out that its object in the prosecution of the war is the extinction of slavery. It claims to have adopted emancipation only as a war measure; the great purpose of the war being avowedly the recovery of Governmental possessions and the restoration of the Union. Many moralists, failing, as we believe, to see the real significance of the idea of political unity, have looked upon the proposed object of the Government as a low and unworthy one; but have, nevertheless, rejoiced that the hand of Providence is in the work, and overruling it to bring out of these meaner aims a great and noble result.

It may be well to recollect in this connection that it is not always when great moral ends are the real aim and purpose of a movement that the greatest good has been accomplished. The greatest moral results have often followed when the movement proposed no moral end whatever; while efforts having a direct moral aim have resulted in signal failure, and sometimes in disaster even to the very end proposed. Well-meant efforts to save the heathen in a spiritual way have sometimes resulted in their physical destruction, through the stealthy obtrusion of the pests of civilization.

It is by no means as yet a settled question that emancipation will enhance the happiness of our negro population, or that it may not be the beginning of a series of disasters to the race which will eventuate in its extinction on this continent. The settlement of the slave question may be the beginning of the negro question; and the end of one difficulty the beginning of another.

It may be that sympathy for the negro is seeking to put in train a series of changes which would terribly revulse those same sympathies, if the end could be seen from the beginning. Yet these sympathies, even if mistaken in their direct object, may be working to a great and desirable end, which they do not as yet recognize. The Crusaders aimed at what they considered a good, but, failing in that, accomplished a real good of which they had no conception. They did not make themselves permanent masters of the Holy Land, but through their intercourse with each other and with the more cultivated people of the East, they nourished the germs of a forthcoming civilization in the West.

In the natural history of the world we discover that certain tribes of sentient beings prey upon certain other tribes; and this seems, on a cursory view, to be very shocking to the finer sensibilities of our nature; yet it is an arrangement which results in a larger amount of sentient enjoyment than could otherwise obtain among these lower denizens of our inexplicable world. The most vigorous—that which embodies within itself the greatest and the most various elements of vitality and power—the most vigorous, I say, prevails; and if the negro race of our continent should begin to wane and finally go as the 'poor Indian' has done—a fate which I do not here predict for him—the field thus vacated will not be lost, but occupied at once, and in time to its fullest extent, by a race of greater capabilities for culture, progress, and enjoyment. The physical world has attained to its present advanced geological condition through much of violence and pain; the same is true in a moral sense of mankind at large; and there may be still quite a great deal of this same career to run.

Sympathy of itself is blind, and may 'kill with kindness.' It has often done so. But it is a noble emotion: let it play its role, since, in the working out of destiny, 'the will may be taken for the deed,' and a good accomplished which was not intended or foreseen.

Governments may not be greatly at fault for not proposing 'high moral aims.' We need only recall the names of Watt, Fulton, Stevenson, Morse, and others of that class, to perceive that great moral changes are brought about when no moral purpose is intended. It is not affirmed that these benefactors of mankind never thought of the moral consequences which their purely physical labors would produce, but only that the moral consequences were not the incentive to the mechanical achievement. The genius of invention had to work out its legitimate results through the innate force of its own peculiar constitution. The impetus was that of essential genius, not of moral calculation.

The same thing is true of the cultivation of science for its own sake. The stargazer with his telescope, the chemist with crucible and retort, the physiologist with his chemical and optical aids, the purely scientific thinker—all who prosecute science for the love of it—have wrought out results which are breaking as light of the clear morning sun upon the history of nations, thus enabling us

to avail ourselves of the past in order to comprehend the status of the present and the possibilities of the future.

Great social and political results have thus been attained without consciously intending them, or seeing how they were to be brought about. Our Government, without professing great moral purposes, may yet accomplish more in that direction, and this, too, by the relentless and bloody hand of war, than has ever been the result of purely moral design by the most approved moral means, on the part of any combination of mankind. It may be a crisis in history, and the ushering in of a new era.

Our Government proposes to recover lost possessions, and restore the integrity of the Union. Wherefore? Ours is the most beneficent Government upon the earth, blessing the most human beings, and it should be sustained. The whole nation has contributed to the acquisition of Southern territory, and it is not meet that the Northern people should surrender their interest in the same. The Mississippi River belongs as naturally to the great West as to the South, and it should be under the control of the same sovereign power, to be used for the good of one great people. There is no natural division line between the North and South, and it would be fatal to the future peace and prosperity of this continent to attempt to make one.

These are some of the reasons ordinarily given for the prosecution of this war—for our great effort to reëstablish the Union. They are practical, readily comprehended, and to urge them is well—enough, really, for present practical purposes; but may there not be in the idea of political unity a meaning—a philosophical significance, if you please, which these practical and obvious considerations do not reveal?

It is the confirmed conviction of the Northern people, with certain unnatural exceptions, that it is our true policy to maintain the integrity of the Union at any cost, however great; the people of the South evidently take a different view of it; the political thinkers of Europe appear to be divided in their sympathies between the North and South.

An article appears in a British quarterly to prove that it is the fate of great empires to fall to pieces; and that China, Turkey, Russia, and the United States show signs of approaching dissolution. It is observed that French writers of authority in the Government have issued pamphlets to prove that the peace and stability of nations require the dismemberment of the United States. The 'fire eaters' of the South are not the only people who would like to see the United States in fragments. We have such even in the North; and in Europe, especially near the thrones, 'their name is legion.'

The thinking world has not yet settled into the conviction that a great continental policy, preserving internal peace, and enduring for an indefinite period into the far-off future, is a possible thing. The fate of nations and empires, as revealed in history, is apparently against such an idea. Many empires have already appeared, risen to power, fallen into decay, and become dismembered, having run their course and disappeared. May it not be so with our own great confederacy of States? The authority against a great, practical, enduring political unity is respectable. May we not be fighting for an illusion? What guarantee have we in history, science, and common sense, that our Federal Union will not crumble as the empires of the past have done, and as the political prophets of Europe, casting the horoscope of nations in the shadows of their own political fragmentarism, have predicted for us? Even should the rebels South be chastised, and the Union restored for the present, have we solid reasons for believing in the permanency of our institutions? What is the warrant for our faith that American destiny comprehends the principle of American unity?

People contract habits of thought in a great measure from the nature of the institutions which surround them. Europe could think nothing but feudalism at one time; she had no conception of religion outside the Church of Rome. The Turk thinks by the standard of political absolutism and the Moslem faith. The reflections of every people are cast in the national mould; it is so the world over, and has been so in all times. Europe, or at least a very influential portion thereof, thinks that the 'balance of power' system will yet be inaugurated among the family of nations yet to spring up on this continent. Her people think balance of power, and the London *Times* and like organs of the

existing polity write balance of power for our edification, and for the future of America. They cannot conceive that there is any other way to get along for any considerable length of time. In like manner is it concluded—keeping up the old trains of thought—that if nations once fell into fragments when shaken, they will do just so again.

Now, perhaps we have contracted habits of thought from the character of our country and her institutions, and are deceiving ourselves with hopes which have no real foundation. These, we believe, are considerations which have engaged the attention of every reflecting man; and it behooves us, as intelligent Americans and members of a young nation of hitherto unexampled prosperity and promise, to be able to give a reason for the faith that is in us.

There are changes and crises in the course and destiny of political systems. The conditions of one period of time are different from the conditions of another period. Different conditions necessitate different political systems. Feudalism did not last always; European diplomacy is only three hundred years old. If Europe, out of her peculiar situation, originated the doctrine of balance of power, thus innovating upon the past, may not we, owing to the novelty of our situation, originate a continental system which will endure to the remotest periods of time, or so long as political systems shall have place on the earth?

One empire may fall into fragments to-day; while another may not only not suffer dissolution, but really grow stronger, and appropriate, in a most legitimate manner, parts of the dismembered empire.

We must allow, not only for the difference of conditions with reference to time, but, also, for the different situations at the same time of different political structures. To assume, because nations have been ground to atoms, or have fallen to pieces of their own weight, that therefore Russia and the United States are about to go in the same way, is a species of reasoning which is hardly warranted by scientific methods. It may be that the empire of Great Britain is itself doomed to dissolution at no very distant day; but it does not follow that the United States are, therefore, liable to the same fate, now or ever. So far from this, it is possible, if not highly probable, that as the remote provinces of the British empire shall fall away, the central political system of this continent may very naturally absorb at least one of the fragments, and thereby become stronger as a Government, and more potent for good to the people of an entire world.

There are laws of dissolution, and laws of segregation and combination in the political as in the natural world. Great Britain may fall into fragments because her geographical and political conditions render her amenable to the laws of dissolution; while the United States may go on enlarging their boundaries and becoming more stable and powerful from the fact that their political status and local surroundings render them the legitimate subject of the laws of political growth and geographical enlargement. The British possessions are geographically too remote; they may not be united together by the necessary bonds of political union. The weakness of Great Britain may now be what the weakness of the Spanish empire once was. Her geography is against her. The day is gradually passing away when arbitrary power may hold distant regions in subjection to a central despotism; the day is at hand which demands that the bonds of union shall be natural and just, not arbitrary—bonds which forever assert their own inherent power to unite and grow stronger, not weaker, with the inevitable changes constantly being wrought out by the busy hand of time.

Man's social and political life depends much on the physical conditions by which he is surrounded. We have only to instance a mountain and valley population. The former is isolated and out of the way, and the people simple, uncouth, and uncultivated—contented, it is true, but, nevertheless, enjoying but little of the abundance and variety in which people of culture luxuriate. The valley population have a city, villages, rich lands, trade, and commerce; they are wealthy, cultivated, and realize far more the legitimate fruition of our entire nature.

Even missionaries, whose prejudices may be presumed to have been in favor of purely moral means, tell us that that heathen can only be permanently Christianized through changes in their physical conditions which commerce alone can bring about.

Physical conditions affect the destiny of nations, and go far to determine the extent and character of political organizations. It makes a great difference whether a country has or has not the means of ready communication and transportation from one section to another. While the great body of Europe was comparatively uncultivated, with only the natural channels of commerce, and these unimproved, there could be little communication between the different sections of country; and Europe had no political or social unity. The people of the entire continent were in a fragmentary and disorganized mass, comparatively isolated, and independent of each other. The jurisdictions of the great barons and of the cities became at length united into kingdoms. The increase of commerce brought these kingdoms into relations with each other, and diplomacy grew out of national necessities. As the countries improved and the facilities and occasions for intercommunication and commerce increased, the principle of political unity must needs comprehend a wider range. At first, it took in only the component parts of kingdoms, and then the kingdoms in the form of great national leagues of more or less permanence. This form of political unity may be very imperfect, but it is nevertheless unity consummated in the best possible manner which the system of separate thrones would permit. Changes in the conditions and relations of peoples render changes in their political forms an absolute necessity. The facilities for education, intercommunication, travel, and commerce, are the great unitizers of peoples and nations.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.