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POETRY.

LIFE'S ERRORS.

What if, in that sublimer state,
To which our souls shall once attain,
The things of earth, and time, and fate,
Shall pass before our eyes again,
Shall we review our life's slow way,
Its wants and weariness beholding,
And by heaven's purer noon survey
What earth's dim twilight now is folding?

O, what a wondrous change will pass
O'er all that here hath seemed and been!
Darkly we see, as through a glass,
What then shall face to face be seen;
The nothingness of all we prized,
The falsehood of the love we sought,
The priceless truth of hearts despised,
The worth of all we valued not!

Perchance, it shall not then be seen
That this, our earthly path of tears,
So desolate a waste hath been
As to the mourner's eye appears:
When clearer light around us breaks,
Our eyes shall read their course below,
A dreary line of long mistakes,
Atoned by many a needless wo.

Our youth was passed in visions fair,
In lavishing the wreath of heart;
Our manhood had the harder care
Of watching all those dreams depart.
What was there left for sad old age,
Except in useless grief to rue
The errors of a pilgrimage
We could not, if we would, renew!

Yet in ourselves the evil lay,
Poor, weak artificer of wo!
Our idols then were made of clay,
But 'twas our hand that made them so,
We needed some diviner call,
To teach our hearts alike to shun
The lovely fault of trusting all,
The bitter sin of trusting none.

Turn we not then with vain disgust
From love betrayed and faith deceived,
Nor let our hearts forget to trust,
When they are wounded, wrung, and grieved;
Take home this lesson—it is such
As turns life's darkness into light:
O! we can never love too much,
If we will only love aright!

[*Forget-Me-Not for* 1844.

From the Star.

FRIENDSHIP.

TO HER WHO UNDERSTANDS.

Friendship! the sweetest theme that poets breathe,
The purest flower that gems affection's wreath;
To see the virgin heart's soft tendrils twine,
In youth's bright morning, round affection's shrine.

Friendship! that word sounds sweetly in my ear,
And tells me what I long had wished to hear,
From those bright lips of richest rosy hue,
Melting in sweetness like the honey dew.

Friendship! the crown that on thy brow reposes,
In fragrance, far transcends bright Persian roses,—
Thy coronets, and brilliant flowery diadems,
My heart holds dearer far than golden gems.

Friendship! the best beginning love could ask,
To found his flower—inwoven, sacred task;
Of ivy, lilac, myrtle, emblems sweet,
When lover's hearts in mutual rapture meet.

Friendship from woman! is a gift sublime,
It is the soul's devotion—fitting for a clime,
Where spirits of the just, in glory reign,
Where all we love shall flourish bright again.

Friendship! and may I still the treasure find,
Pure as thy image painted on my mind;—
As life advances, may our hearts together twine,
Like bowers of roses wreathed with jessamine.

Friendship! from a heart and mind like thine,
Can language give me words that will define
The glowing ecstacy—the rapturous bliss,
That is contained within a word like this.

St. Michaels, Feb. 6, 1844.

Strawberries in February.—Dinn, the florist, sent us yesterday a delicate sample of seeding Strawberries, raised from seed sold by him to Mr. Dewees, just above Lafayette. Mr. Dewees, has plenty in his garden, now nearly ripe, and springing from the open ground.—They are large and beautiful as any we have ever seen. —*N. O. Pic. 4th inst.*

THE LEGISLATURE.

TUESDAY, February 6, 1844.

[TAX BILL—CONTINUED]

Mr. THOMAS then moved to strike out the first section of the bill. He was opposed to the circuitous plan of collection which that section would cause. The power of appointing is first left with the county authorities, and if they do not perform their duty, then the Governor exercises the power, and should he fail, the Treasurer appoints receivers of voluntary contributions, and then suit is to be commenced against delinquent individuals, who do not voluntarily pay. Why not adopt at once a direct plan of collection. Why not at once send receivers of voluntary contributions among the people, and then sue the delinquents. The section involved an unnecessary circuity, and he therefore hoped the House would strike it out.

This motion gave rise to a debate which occupied the remainder of this day's session

WEDNESDAY, February 7, 1844.

The question pended on striking out the first section of the bill, and the subject was debated by Mr. Yellott in opposition, and Mr Powder and Weber in favor.

Mr. YELLOTT reviewed the general provisions of the bill as being the best plan devisable for ensuring the collection of the taxes, argued the ability of the people to pay, and concluded with an eloquent appeal to the members of the House, to give their support to the honor and faith of the State.

Mr. POWDER's was a regular repudiation speech, opposing from beginning to end, any disposition towards a collection of the taxes.

Mr. WEBER, though in favor of the principle held in view by the bill, would vote to strike out the first section, and indeed was opposed to the whole measure as it stood. He considered it but a patch upon the old system passed last year, which had proved ineffectual, and he did not suppose any mending would make it work better. He was therefore in favor of a new system in toto.

The question still pended, when the committe arose and reported progress.

THURSDAY, February, 8, 1844.

The question on striking out the 1st section.

Mr. CROPPER supported the motion, on the ground of circuity, in attaining the object attempted to be accomplished, and the inefficacy of the bill.

Mr. PHELPS had not intended to have troubled the House with remarks upon the question before them; nor did he now intend to investigate the constitutionality or legality of the debt which Maryland has incurred, or of the laws which have been passed for the liquidation of that debt. But in the course of debate, many strange remarks had been made by gentlemen in opposition to the bill, and many strange objections and propositions started, some of which he deemed should not be passed by in silence, and proposed to take some notice of them.

One thing he noticed in the remarks of the opponents of the bill,—that they almost without exception declare themselves in the very offset of their speeches, prepared to vote for the strongest measure which could be concocted for the enforcement and collection of the taxes; yet at the same time oppose this bill as strenuously as possible. But where is this great and mighty system that they are so willing to support. Where is the strong measure that they would vote for and advocate. Is it but in the breath and nostrils of gentlemen. We have had no preposition from you. You offer to adopt no substitute for this bill. Why do you not come forward and propose your stong system. Why do you throw every obstacle in the way of the passage of this bill, when you propose none more feasible. For his part, Mr. P. could not conceive that a stronger bill for effecting the object could be drawn up; nor was the consistency of the opponents of the bill, evident to him, since they propose nothing better.

His friend from Carroll (Mr. Powder,) in his argument of yesterday, had started upon the ground that the acts of Assembly under the provisions of which the debt of the State has been incurred, were unconstitutional and in opposition to the fundamental law of the land; and he therefore concludes that there is no *moral* obligation to pay, resting upon the people; and that you cannot legislate them into any moral obligation. The gentleman from Worcester, (Mr. Franklin,) also assumes the unconstitutionality and illegality of the laws creating the debt, but towards the end of his speech, recognises the *moral* obligation to pay, and declares that the citizens of his county are willing to pay so soon as the State has exhausted all her other resources; that they are willing to be taxed, as soon as the interest of the State in the public works and other interests of property are disposed of;—that then they will submit to the moral obligation that rests upon them. Both these gentlemen believe the debts to have been incurred in opposition to the provisions of the constitution, and yet the gentlemen from Worcester is willing to pay.—As for himself, Mr. P. differed with the gentleman from Worcester,—in so far,—that if the debt were unconstitutionally incurred—if it were assumed, in direct violation of the fundamental law of the land, and in opposition to justice to the people of the State, he for one, would go the whole length and pay nothing. He too would then refuse to be legislated into a moral obligation to pay a debt unjustly and illegally imposed upon him. But we have been told by the gentleman from Worcester that there was a mode of testing the constitutionality of the law; true there may be a mode of testing it;—but as the debt has been incurred, and the test had never been applied, we were, until it be tried, and its unconstitutionality determined, bound to consider it as legal, and therefore both legally and morally obliged to pay the debt.

But their constitutionality has been frequently reiterated by the confirming action of consecutive legislatures. They have from time to time passed laws, not only recognising, but enforcing their legality,—and the people have not only *thereby* acknowledged it, but directly and unequivocally, by, from time to time, reelecting the very men, by whose votes the debts have been incurred: Not only so, but one of the principal supporters of these measures, has since been elected to the highest office in the gift of the people,—while the most cogent argument used for his election during the campaign, was his firm support of the several works of internal improvement. From these facts, Mr. P. for himself considered that we were bound both morally, and in honesty, to pay the debt of the State, principal and interest.

But another singular idea had been started in the course of the debate, in the shape of the query, 'Where does the Legislature obtain the authority to legislate away an individual's private property to pay the debt of the State?' This was very strange doctrine to be urged on this floor. Where he would ask, does the Legislature obtain authority to levy taxes at all! Are not all taxes levied upon the same principle, and derived from the same source, viz: the private property of individuals. And what right has the Legislature to lay taxes at all—even simply for the support of State Government. He maintained that the government was founded upon this principle of right, and no one of the minority would gainsay it, or the fact, that the right to tax in the present instance was founded upon the same principle. He therefore did not charge it as a doctrine of the minority, but conceived it to be a heterodoxy, that ought to be scouted from the walls of the House, and not for one moment entertained.

We have, too, another extraordinary doctrine started among us (alluding to remarks of Mr. Powder,) that taxes must be based upon the free will of the people—that if not based upon the free will of the people, they should not be endured or tolerated. Now, this is a twin sister to the doctrine above alluded to; and they should be bundled together. He thought it singular that any law should be supposed to be based upon the free will of those particular persons who were to be restrained or governed thereby. Why are pains and penalties attached to the violation of principles laid down in our several acts of Assembly. Are they not based upon the supposition, that they will not meet the free will of those upon whom it is to operate, and are they not intended to enforce their operation even in opposition to that free will. And he would ask even the gentleman who started the proposition, if those pains and penalties were based upon the free will of those who were to be bound by the provisions of the law.—Does the law wait for the free will of the criminal to come and put his neck into the noose, and be hanged; or is it to be supposed that his free will or consent would ever be given to such provisions. If the free will of the governed is to be waited for, why then indeed is our government a government of straw, and without strength. If the consent of those who are effected by the law is necessary, then away with all your laws and enactments and legislatures, and let us go out into glorious anarchy and confusion, each one exercising his own free will, and governed by his own untrameled wishes.

But again it has been asserted, that should this law pass, we will be without power to enforce its provisions. Why, Sir, I have been taught to look upon ours as a great and powerful government. I have been taught to consider it the strongest of all governments, because its powers originated with the very components of the country,—with the people themselves. I have been taught to respect it as the greatest result of the mind of man, as a proud example held up to the view of the world, of the ability of the people to govern themselves and to enforce their own enactments. And yet it is asserted that we cannot enforce our laws. Why then, I would ask, have we a Governor of the State.—What is the use of the Executive of our State, and why appoint an Executive of the U. States. What is the sense of placing men in those positions with a professed object in view, when they are devoid of means to enforce that object.

And, too, from the remarks of the gentleman from Carroll, it is to be inferred that our taxes are to be liquidated from our surplus cash;—that unless we have a little more money than is sufficient to supply ourselves with the common multiplicity of luxuries we enjoy, and which we could so easily do without, we cannot be expected to pay taxes at all. Now as for himself, Mr. P. asserted, that before this tax was laid, he never had any spare cash; he spent every year, as much as he made,—and that, too, in what he conceived to be the necessaries of life. Yet since then, he had always managed to pay his taxes, and yet found himself in the same place. He never has spare cash now, and yet he is never worse off than he was before the taxes were levied. The reason was plain. He considered himself as much bound to pay his taxes, as he did any other debt. It was in fact a debt, contracted on his part with the State of Maryland, and he thought himself as firmly bound to pay the debts which he owed the State, as those incurred with individuals, for any interest on his own personal account.

We are told also that the eight million bill of 1836 was passed under certain promises,—that the people were never to be called on to pay the debt—that the principle of the law had been violated, and that therefore the present tax to meet the interest on the loan, amounted to an imposition. True the bill was passed with certain provisions annexed;—that its operation was made to depend upon certain circumstances and contingencies; but the subsequent Legislature of the State wiped out those provisians, and made the bill, in its unprotected form, the law of the land. And who were the movers of the project by which those provisions were removed. Who started the proposition to make the law, notwithstanding the violation of those bounds, a binding contract. Not a member of the party to which I belong. Not one of the supporters of this bill, but a high and leading member of the party who now oppose this measure,—subsequently, and, too, for his instrumentality in this act, elected Governor of the State of Maryland. Yes, elected Governor of Maryland on the very ground of his support of the great measures of internal improvements, on which our State was at that time divided.

But it has been declared that the present tax is insufficient to meet the liabilities of the State,—that the present rate will not pay the interest on the public debt, and it is advised to lay a tax of one dollar in the hundred, and if the people of the State bear up under that, that then we will be able to pay our creditors their dues. Mr. P. thought that his friend from Harford, (Mr. Yellott,) had plainly demonstrated on yesterday, the sufficiency of the present rate of taxation, if it were properly and regularly collected; and he had no hesitation in declaring this proposition and assertion, a mere bugbear, raised to frighten the people of the State, and make them believe that they are unabled to pay their taxes. He had no faith in such matters as this.

Mr. P. denied the necessity for more taxes. If properly collected, the present tax would be found amply sufficient for its purpose. The Governor in his last message has told us that thirty one cents in the one hundred dollars, would be sufficient to meet the demands on the State, and that is but 6 1-4 cents more than is levied at present. The sincerity then of those who recommended a dollar in the hundred is evident.

Having thus waded through the argument of the gentleman from Carroll, he would say a few words in reply to the other gentlemen who have spoken on the subject. It had been asked by some, why we take so circuitous a route towards the collection of the tax.—Why do we not proceed immediately to the enforcement of its collection. And the gentleman from Washington (Mr. Weber) had asserted his favor of the principles proposed to be carried out by the bill, but opposed its provisions because he conceived it to be but a mere effort to mend and patch up the system of last year,—a system which had proved itself unavailing and useless. He would oppose any thing that tended merely to patch the enactments of last year, would resist any measure, the object of which was to give availability to the laws already passed. He would tear down this, and establish an entirely new and untried system. But Mr. P. denied that there was any connection between this law and the law of last session. They are totally distinct and unconnected in every particular. They are entirely different. For what did the law of last session provide? Merely for making the collection of the county charges dependent upon that of the State taxes. Now, so far from this bill endeavoring to patch that of the last year—so far from direct connection between their provisions, this bill entirely repeals the act of last session. We have been told by members from the delinquent counties, that if the collection of the two taxes were separated, they could effect the State collection. This bill meets them then on their own ground. It takes them at their word, and separates the two—and while it holds out to them all due lenity, at the same time—provides surely and certainly for the enforcement of collection. We are told by gentlemen that the bill is *wishy washy*; and will prove ineffectual; that it has no power to enforce its own provisions. Mr. P. had authority to the contrary, as much to be relied on as those who assert thus. He had heard two lawyers, gentlemen of the party opposed to his own, remark, that the machinery of this bill was perfect, and that it would be utterly impossible for its provisions to be escaped. He had submitted it, too, to the Attorney General of the State, a gentleman, who from his position was as able to judge as any, and he gave it as his opinion that a more effectual bill could not have been concocted. Mr. P. rapidly rehersed the provisions of the bill. He said that every possible contingency had been guarded against in its construction.

And apart from the legal force of the bill, it would wield a moral power, which would work a salutary and sanitary influence in our community. Suppose you send a receiver of voluntary contributions to the tax into Worcester county. Mr. P. ventured to assert that there were at least three fourths of the people of that county who were both willing and anxious to comply with the laws of the State; and were they to pay their taxes to one thus authorised and empowered to receive them, the remaining fourth, though unwilling, would be influenced by the example of the others.—They would as it were, be driven into compliance with the law by public opinion, and by the moral influence of the better and more respectable portion of their community.

They would be forced to pay,—indeed it would be made their interest to pay.

But some gentlemen had expressed their belief of the inability of the people to pay. Mr. P. could put no faith in such assertions. He could not conceive that a person owning ten thousand dollars, was unable to pay the small sum of $25. He was sure that an individual debt of this amount would be paid.

But what is this other and stronger system, of which we hear so much. Is it in print, or does it exist only in the imagination of gentlemen. By what other means are you to force the delinquent counties into a payment of their taxes, and to provide for the general collection of the tax. Some gentlemen seem to think that we come here to legislate merely for Worcester, Somerset and Calvert counties. They forget that other counties of the State have neglected to pay their taxes; they forget that nearly all the rest are falling behind in their payments, and that therefore there is necessity for the adoption of some general system to operate alike over the whole State. And he would enquire again, then, where is this stronger bill, so much prated about. Let gentlemen of the opposition bring in a better bill and he would go over to them. He would support the strongest measure that could be made, to bring about the contemplated result, no matter by whom it might be proposed. This was no party measure; it was above all party considerations and by whatever individual, a stronger measure might be introduced, he would be found foremost in its support.

Thanking the House for their indulgence, and asking pardon for troubling them so long, Mr. P. concluded.

The Cincinnati Chronicle states that Powers' statue of Eve is finished, and that it surpasses the expectations of those of his friends who expected most. It is to be exhibited in this country. Mr. Powers is now engaged on another great work.

RAMBLES

AMONG THE ENGLISH PEASANTRY.

The paper, by Judge Carleton, of Louisiana, entitled "A Recent Ramble among the Peasantry of England," is uncommonly interesting. It describes several visits made by the author to the wretched cottagers of that country—what a phrase to use in connexion with "Merry England," as she has been called from the time of the ballad makers downwards! The condition of the English peasantry is described with feeling, and with a picturesque effect that seems to result from a simple and faithful statement of what the writer saw.

A Visit to an English Cottage.—I entered a third cabin. Here the green earth smiled again, as did the modest furze and glossy holly, that felt the approach of winter. The floor was much like the first. Near the middle sat the mother, peeling potatoes, which she threw into a pot at her side, half filled with water. I introduced myself on every occasion, by saying that I came beyond the seas, and wished to inform my countrymen how the laborers lived in England. Sixpence brought forth willing answers to interrogatories, which I put without stint.

'How many children have you?' 'Eight.' 'What did they feed upon this morning?' 'Potatoes.' 'What will you give them for dinner?' 'These potatoes you see me peeling.' 'Nothing else?' 'No; nothing else.' 'Have you no meat, no butter for them?' She made no reply, fixed her eyes upon them, and sobbed aloud. But her countenance suddenly brightened into a smile, and she said, with a clear voice, 'Thank God, salt is cheap.' But her joy was a transient beam, for her eyes again overflowed as she showed me her eldest daughter, fourteen years of age, whom she made rise to her feet. Her tattered garments scarcely concealed her sex; it left her bare to the knees behind, while it dangled to the ground in front. She blushed deeply, for want had not extinguished the modesty of nature, as her mother drew aside the rags that covered her snowy skin. 'These,' said she, 'are all the clothes my child has; she cannot go to school in them, besides, she is obliged to stay at home to take care of the children.'—This was palpably true, for her wasted form tottered under a burden that would soon add another inmate to this abode of misery.

The other children were grouped near the eldest sister, sitting on the naked hearth. Their little hands and feet were red with cold; their features were set in melancholy; they were not playful, as became their innocent years, no, it has been truly said, that the children of the English poor know no childhood! Sorrow begins with life; they are disciplined to privation from the cradle. From the cradle did I say?—I saw no cradle, and I verily believe that such a luxury was never known by the child of an English laborer.

In the corner of the chimney was an old man, sitting on his haunches, putting fagots to the fire intended to boil the potatoes. "Who is that?" "It is old Mr.———; he has no home, and we let him stay with us." He was eighty-three years of age, and partook with the children his portion of potatoes and salt.

I asked one of the little girls, where was the cat?—The mother answered, they had none, "for a cat must eat." "Have you a dog?" No, we cannot keep a dog; besides he disturbs the game." "But you have a cock to crow for day?" "No, we have none."

I felt a sort of horror come over me at the absence of these animals, sacred to every household—the cat, the companion and pastime of little children; the dog, the well-tried trusty friend of man; the cock, whose joyous song hails the coming day—yet poverty, that bitter blightning curse, has expelled even these from the cottages of the English peasant.

"Can your husband read?" "Yes, he can read the easy parts of the bible." "Can you read?" "No, I never went to school."

"How many apartments are there in your house?—"Two, one below and another above." "May I go up stairs?" She was evidently unwilling; my guide gave me a discouraging look; I persevered, and ascended a dirty rickety flight of steps to a chamber, where the whole family slept; near a narrow, broken window, stood a wooden frame, on four legs, on which were laid traversed laths, that supported a bed of oat-chaff, sewed up in a dirty tattered sack, over which was spread a coarse woollen sheet, almost black; upon this lay two pillows of straw and a thick striped coverlet, worn into holes. Another sack of chaff lay on the floor, in a corner, over which was stretched a sort of blanket, torn to rags. Here slept all the children, except the two youngest, who lay with their parents. The fate of the old man at night was not made known to me, nor did I inquire.

The furniture of the apartment below consisted of a stool, on which the mother sat; a box occupied as a seat by the eldest daughter; two broken chairs, unsafe for either my guide or myself; fourteen or fifteen articles of crockery, of fractured plates, saucers and cups; a tea-pot; two or three small iron vessels for cooking, and a broad table, sustained by diagonal bars fastened with nails. On the wall, under a broken piece of plate glass, hung a white napkin fringed at the bottom, the only testimonial of neatness that poverty could afford. The whole chattle estate, including the apparel of man, wife and children, could not be sold for ten dollars.

Man's Love.—"And don't you think that men can love as well as women?"

Sarah laughed outright.

"What can you mean, Sarah?" asked Margaret.

"I mean," she replied, "that when a man finds his house in disorder, and wants somebody to put it to rights, he calls this love; when he is alone, too, and things don't go pleasantly, and he wants somebody to complain to and find fault with, and lay the blame upon, he calls this love. When no one cares for him, and he gets put down in society, and wants to bind himself for life to some being who will flatter him, and admire his very faults, this too he calls love. Man's love, indeed!"