Lettleton D. Meade

DORCHESTER AURORA.

"PRINCIPLES AND MEASURES, AND MEN BY THEIR PRINCIPLES."

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POETRY.

From Colburn's Monthly Magazine,

HIGH CONNEXIONS.

"——magno patre nata puella."
Hor. Ser. Lib. i. Sat. 2.

"—— of the noble blood of the Mac Tabs."
Poor Gentleman, Act. II, Scene 2.

Although the honey-mooon has pass'd,
My heart is still in raptures,
For I have had, methinks, the best
Of Matrimonial captures;—
My wife's not young, but then she boasts
The sweetest of complexions;
And though she's somewhat short herself,
She has such high connexions:

Of that provision people call
In worldly parlance 'dower,'
To say that I got much with her,
It is not in my power;
Oh, no! from fortune hunting free,
That vilest of infections,
I'm happy—as a man can be
Whose wife has high connexions.

We're rather poor, for I must state
In this my frank confession,
She has no lands, and I profess
That I have no profession;
But what of that, since I have got.
The wife of my affections—
And such a wife, for has she not
Such very high connexions?

Now summer's come, she wants, sweet soul!
To trim anew her bonnet;
It cannot be, although she sets
Her heart so much upon it;—
'My dear,' says she, 'our purse is low,
The notes make sad defections;'—
'My love,' says I, 'perhaps—but oh!
You've got such high connexions.'

And yet at times she talks so big,
It seems a sort of phrenzy,
Because my name is simply Twig,
And her's was Montmorency;
Her temper, too, in anger shrinks
From gentlest of corrections;
Yet who can wonder when one thinks
Of all her high connexions?

An invitation came to day,
To dine with Mr. Verney,
A most delightful man, although
A Common Pleas Attorney:
'I fear,' my wife said, 'I must make
To this a few objections;—
There, venison, true,—at home, a steak—
But then—my high connexions!'

There's Lady Flash, the Earl of Trumps,
And old Sir Abel Addle,—
Lord Tidley Winks, and Viscount Frumps,
And Lady Fiddlefaddle;—
Some others I could mention, too,
And give you their directions;
Why, bless your soul, these are but few
Of all her high connexions!

With one of them we lately staid
As long as we were able,
Though I at dinner daily got
Each drumstick on the table;
Nor would our attick chamber bear
The closest of inspections;—
But still, what honour to be there
Among her high connexions!

When I come home, (I'm often sent
To call on Lady Bridget)
I'm sure to find some beau up stairs,
Which puts me in a fidget;
But then she begs that I'll respect
Her harmless predilections:
Of course such things are 'quite correct'
In one with high connexions.

Alas! we often have a scene
About her dressing smarter;
Her milk of human kindness then
Becomes quite cream of tartar:
Yet who'll deny I've made for life
The wisest of elections?—
Oh! what it is to have a wife
Who has such high connexion?

A. C. A.

An old lady meeting a Cambridge man, asked him how her nephew behaved himself. "Truly, madam,' says he, 'he's a brave fellow, and sticks close to Catherine Hall,' (name of a college.) "I vow," said she, "I feared as much; he was always hankering after the girls from a boy.'

MESSAGE.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
ANNAPOLIS, December 27, 1837.

Gentlemen of the Senate, and of the House

We have abundant reason, upon the threshold of those public duties which the constitution has called you to discharge, to render thanks to the Author of all Good for the manifold blessings which he has vouchsafed to the people of our common country.—Although some of the productions of agricultural industry have the past season been scant, the abundance of others and the good prices of all have amply rewarded the toils of husbandry. Industry in all its other avocations, has also generally met its worthy hire. The blessings of good health have been dispensed to us with more than ordinary measure. The laws have been executed without interruption or complaint. All our rights, natural, civil and political, have been preserved inviolate; and, even in those calamities with which we have been visited, it becomes us to acknowledge that unerring paternal goodness, which, although its working are inscrutable, chastens, because it loves us. Let these considerations induce us to enter upon our duties with the determination to deserve a continuance of the favor of HIM who rules over the destinies of nations.

Many very weighty and important matters will command your deliberate attention, during your session. One such, however—the deranged condition of the currency or circulating medium of value—coming home as it does to the business and every day transactions of the whole community has, for several months past absorbed, and still continues to engage, the largest share of public attention; and, from its vast importance, and the magnitude and general diffusion of the evils and perplexities attending it, is entitled to primary considerations.

In the month of May last, as is well known to you all, the Banking institutions, generally, with but very few exceptions, throughout the country, suspended the payment of specie for their notes and other liabilities.—For a long time previous to the suspension, the greater part of the circulating medium of the country consisted of bank notes, which, for more than twenty years had, in all cases, been equivalent with and for many purposes of superior value to coin. It is a fact also well known, and boasted of by those who had brought it about that shortly before the suspension, there was more specie in the couny, and a larger proportion of it in circulation in the community, than there had ever been at any former period. In December last, it was exultingly proclaimed by the late President of the United States and his financial officers, that the currency of the country was in the most satisfactory state; and even so late as the fourth day of March last, upon retiring from office, he took credit to himself for his "humble efforts to improve it." His successor, too, on entering upon his duties, expressed his satisfaction with the measures of the retiring President, and proclaimed his intention to "follow generally in his footsteps." Under these circumstances, the revulsion and catastrophe of May last, although foretold by others, and, as we believe, the natural result of measures of the General Government, must have come upon the late and present Presidents and their supporters generally with overwhelming surprise. It is to be regretted that they seem generally not to have done by this fatal and lamentable termination of their uncalled for efforts to improve such a currency as they have destroyed.

Can any one believe that if the late United State Bank had been rechartered, the money of the United States continued to be deposited in that institution, the specie circular never been issued, and, in short, if the late administration had forborne to temper with, and, experiments upon the currency, that the banks would have suspended specie payments, or our circulating medium, generally, been at this time of less value than specie?

Statesmen should profit by the lessons of experience and its teachings were never more clear and decisive on any subject, than in favor of a United States Bank, as a regulator and preserver of a sound and uniform currency. We have had two such institutions each of twenty years existence, and during their whole term we had a sound and uniform currency—always equal to gold and silver, and for exchange operations more valuable. It was but a brief period after the first was put down that the currency became deranged and a large portion of the Banks suspension until the second and late United States Bank went into operation. The wholesome effects of that institution speedily caused a resumption of payments by all the solvent state banks and from thence until it was impossible to improve, and therefore, to say the least folly to meddle with.

Whatever may have prompted the late daministration to the adoption of the measures which have had such a disastrous result— Whether they were designed, as sometimes professed, to bring about an exclusive metallic currency—to put down all Banks—or, as some have believed, to establish a Treasury Bank under their management—or were adopted in a reckless spirit of hostility to an institution which they could not bring under their controul—is not necessary now to be enquired into. The first is utterly impracticable; not desirable, if it could be effected; and any serious effort to accomplish it, would prove most disastrous to the community generally. The second was not needed, when their measures were commenced, and was without their power to accomplish, if it had been necessary. The third they never avowed, and we trust, will never be adopted, directly or indirecly. The last, if their motive of action, it is presumed, no one would openly approve or justify.

We do not doubt that it is *possible*, to sustain a State Bank circulation, which would be promptly redeemed in specie, on demand, and which for local currency, would be all we could desire; but we think hat experience has proved conclusively that a National Institution, whose issues will have a general circulation, is indispensable to secure uniformity and stability in the various species of circulating media, of which the currency may be composed.

Soon after the suspension of specie payments, we were strong urged by officers and representatives of the Banks in Baltimore, and by many other citizens, to call a special session of the General Assembly, particularly with a view of repealing or suspending for a time the restriction which prohibited the Banks from issuing notes of less denomination than five dollars, and to the adoption of such other measures as might be deemed necessary to meet the extraordinary crisis. The main object presented to our consideration, although we believed the measure proposed would have been proper, yet did not appear to us of sufficient importance to justify the expense, and inconvenience to the members, at that season of the year, of an extra session of the General Assembly. And we believed that time and further developements were necessary to ascertain what other measures the public interest might require, in consequence of the suspension. We therefore, after mature deliberation, felt it our duty to decline making the proposed call.

Although we did not think that to authorise the Banks to issue notes of less denomination than five dollars would, even under the extraordinary crisis of May last, justify a special call of the General Assembly, yet we believe that the interests of the community, and the stability of the banks would be promoted by a repeal of the restriction which prohibit such issues.——We are aware that in the expression of this opinion we encounter an extensively prevailing prejudice, but, as we firmly believe and think we can demonstrate, great and most pernicious popular error. We think the position, that to withdraw the smaller notes of the Banks from circulation, and supply their place with specie, would improve the general currency, strengthen the Banks, and tend to sustain their credit and the circulation of their larger notes, is, in each and all its parts, entirely erroneous.

It seems to us very clear that the portion of specie in the country, which enters into general circulation, necessarily narrows, not "widens" as the popular phrase is, the specie basis of the Banks; and this, more especially, is the case where Bank notes are redeemed and withdrawn to make room for it.

A resort to the first rules in arithmetic will demonstrate beyond dispute, that, with any given amount of specie in the country, and of Bank notes, the larger portion of the specie in the Banks and the lesser in circulation, the greater would be the proportional means and ability of the Banks to redeem their issues and sustain their credit, at a time of pressure upon them, whether for foreign exportation or from distrust of their solvency—and vice versa.

To make this appear, we will suppose the whole amount of specie in the country to be $100 000, 000, and of bank notes $200, 000, 000; and we will then suppose the whole $300, 000, 000, to be divided in various proportions between the banks and the general circulation in the community.

Suppose the banks have in their vaults $90, 000, 000 of the specie, and 10, 000, 000 of their notes; there would be in circulation $10, 000, 000 of specie, and $190, 000, 000, of notes; in this case, and banks would have in circulation but little more than two dollars of their notes for each dollar of specie in their vaults—a situation which will be generally admitted to be sound and secure, and such as would enable them to sustain any probable demand upon them.

But let us suppose a reverse division of the specie and bank notes between the banks and the community, and see what would then be the situation of the banks. Suppose they had but $10, 000, 000, of the specie, and 90 000, 000, of their notes on hand, there would be in circulation $90, 000, 000, of specie and $110, 000, 000 of bank notes, viz: eleven dollars in bank notes in circulation for each dollar in specie in the banks: a situation which it is presumed would be generally considered unsafe and dangerous to their credit.

To show the contrast still further, suppose the banks to posses but $1, 000, 000 of specie and $99, 000, 000 in such case, there would be in circulation $99, 000, 000, of specie and $101, 000, 000 of notes, [illegible] in circculation for each dollar in the banks to meet their redemption; a situation which would not enable them to sustain themselves under even slight pressure or distrust, scarcely for a day.

But to meet and refute the popular error we are combatting, more directly—suppose the banks to have $50, 000, 000 of the specie and $50, 000, 000, of their notes on hand, and that there be in circulation $50, 000, 000, of specie and $150, 000, 000 of bank notes—in such case, the banks would have one dollar in specie for every three dollars of their notes in circulation: (not far from their ordinary situation) this would be quite a fair condition, and much better than many banks, when in undoubted credit, could exhibit. But suppose one sixth only, or $25, 000, 000 of their circulation to be in notes of the smaller denominations; that those notes be redeemed by the banks, and their place supplied with specie; the banks would then have but $25, 000, 000 of specie in their vaults to sustain a circulation of $125, 000, 000 of their notes. Again, suppose that one third of their circulation be in notes of the smaller denominations, it would require the whole amount of specie in the banks to redeem them and supply their place—leaving the banks entirely without specie, or constraining them to take out of circulation a part of their larger notes also, by curtailing their accommodations to the community. And, finally, suppose one half of their circulation—$75, 000, 000—be in notes of ten dollars and under, (and it is believed that such is ordinarily the case,) they could not take them out of circulation with the specie in their possession; and to enable them to do so, they would have to curtail their accommodations to the community twenty-five millions of dollars, at the least, and as much more as would enable them to retain a specie basis for their other issues. How then can it be urged, that withdrawing the smaller notes from circulation and supplying their place with specie from the banks, would improve the general currency, strengthen the banks, or tend to sustain their credit; and, above all, how can it be pretended, that to lessen the proportion of specie in their vaults to the amount of their notes in circulation, would "widen their specie basis?"

It seems to us a matter of surprise that an error so manifest as the position we think we have conclusively demonstrated to be unfounded, and the very reverse of truth should so long have prevailed, and been so generally either entertained or silently acquiesced in.

When, in addition to the foregoing demonstration, we take into consideration the fact which all, and particularly late experience, and the observation of every one has proved, that in times of pressure upon and distrust of the banks, nearly all that portion of specie in the hands of the community, ceases to circulate as currency, and thereby diminishes, to its extent, the circulating medium in time of greatest need, it seems to us impossible to resist the conclusion; that the less amount of specie in the country, in general circulation, beyond supplying necessary change, and the more of it in the banks, the greater would be the strength and ability of the banks to meet and overcome pressure upon them; and that the general interest and welfare would be best prompted by such a condition of the currency, and disposition of the specie which the country, in the natural course of trade, may at any time possess. While, therefore, we would rigidly restrict the banks, as to the amount of their issues and responsibilities of all kinds in proportion to their capital, specie and other means, and inforce the restriction under severe penalties, we would leave them free as to the denomination of their issues.

We think that when the banks are paying specie for all demands upon them, the community may safely be left to use or refuse a small note circulation, which necessity compels them, even in violation of Legislature enactments, which, however, we believe, are not law, to resort to, whenever bank notes of all denominations become irredeemable. We [illegible] recommend the repeal of the restrictions prohibiting the issue or circulation of notes of less denomination than five dollars, now imposed upon all the banks in the State but one.

The objection most commonly urged against the circulation of small notes, is that the larger portion of them is always in the hands of the poorer classes, and persons who have no immediate interest in, and know but little about the situation and credit of the banks. But this objection may easily be avoided; and perhaps it is due to the part of the community named, that their interests in the circulalion should be specially protected. This might be done by requiring the banks under all circumstances, to redeem their smaller issues with specie, under the penalty of absolute forfeiture of their characters. Other good effects would attend such a provision, as, in case of a suspension of payments generally, the small note of the banks would continue to circulate, in common with specie, to the exclusion of all irredeemable issues, of like denomination, and enable the community to obtain from the banks a supply of small change, and take away all inducement for hoarding such as might be in circulation.

We are, uncompromisingly, opposed to an irredeemable paper currency; and were not assured that the Banks in this State were forced to a suspension of specie payments, in common with those in other States, by a forced and unnatural state of things, brought about by measures of the General Government which they had not the power to prevent, nor in time to counteract, we should be disposed to recommend and pursue the most rigorous measures against them. But, under the full persuasion that they were reluctantly forced into that measure by the pressure thus brought upon them, and, above all, that the interests of the community were prompted by its adoption, under the circumstances then existing, we have been much gratified at the patient acquiescence of the public, in the unavoidable inconveniences and perplexities resulting from it. We have reason to believe that the Directors of the Banks in this State, have acted under a proper sense of their responsibilities and duties, with the steady purpose of returning, as speedily as possible, consistent with the interests of the community and their own safety and permanent credit, to the redemption of their engagements, and their acustomed mode of business. If our impressions of their conduct and the information we have received, be correct, they will at no very distant day be able to resume and maintain specie payments, let the course of the General Government towards them be what it may; although it is manifestly in the power of that Government, in the collection and disbursments of its large revenues, to do much in aid of their efforts, or to embarrass, retard and discredit them—by refusing to receive their issues.

And should, what is commonly denominated the Sub Treasury System, recommended by the Preident, be adopted, although it would not prevent the return of prudently conducted Banks to specie payments, for any great length of time, it would throw so much discredit upon them, and cause such a constant demand for their specie, that it is doubtful if they could maintain a sufficient circulation to meet the wants of the community, and justify the continuance of their operations. We have, however, great satisfaction in the assurance furnished by recent indications of public sentiment, in almost every quarter of the country, that we are in no danger of having the manifold evils of that system inflicted upon us, in continuation of experiments upon the currency which have proved so disastrous. And we think there is good grounds for hope that the time is not far distant when the good sense of the community will triumph over party attachments, and force the General Government to abandon its experiments, retrace its steps and return to the system of currency which experience has proved to be suited to the wants and general interests of the country.

You will shortly it is presumed, have statements of the condition of our Banks before you, and should there be any doubt that they are preparing for a return to specie payments, as soon as possible, consistent with the interests of the community, we hope you will institute a rigid scrutiny into their concerns and operations, and that further lenity or forbearance will not be extended to those who may be found not to deserve it.

After the foregoing was prepared, we recieved the communications and statements herewith transmitted, marked A B C D E and F, which we are gratified to find, confirms the favorable views which we had expressed, of the condition of the Banks in this State, and the prudence with which they have been conducted.

The policy heretofore so energetically pursued, in reference to internal improvement, cannot be too highly commended. There can be little doubt that after the main great works patronized by the State shall have been completed, they will be enduring monuments of the legislative wisdom that designed or sanctioned them, and inexhaustably fruitful sources of revenue and wealth to the State. This subject cannot be too often or too earnestly pressed upon the attention of the legislature. We must look to it as our main reliance, in competition with our neighboring sister States, for the trade of the great West, and for future wealth and prosperity. The State has already embarked, with an entightened spirit, in the commendable enterprise of improving her great internal resources and advantages of position: and will require but a few more years of patient & persisting effort to realize all the anticipated reaults of its consummation.

In our last annual communication, we stated that we had recently appointed commissioners to negotiate the loan of eight millions of dollars authorized by the act of the extra session of May 1836. One of the gentlemen appointed was in Europe at the time, and the others joined there last summer. No official report has, as yet, been received from the commissioners: but it is understood they were unsuccessful in their attempts to procure loan in Europe. A full report of the proceedings will, it is believed, be made at an early day, when it shall be laid, forthwith, before you. A letter from one of the commissioners, in anticipation of a joint report, is herewith transmitted marked H

The failure of the Commissioners to obtain, at this time the eight million loan in Europe has, by no means, lessened our confidence in the completion of the great works for whose benefit it is intended. The action of the Lesislature in the passage of internal improvement law affords ample evidence of their importance in the estimation of that body, which, it is believed, did, at the May session, only reflect the feelings and convictions of the people of the State upon the subject. Maryland, indeed, has no alternative, if she desires to keep pace with her sister states, but to prosecute to a successful issue the policy indicated in her last great internal improvement law of May 1836. Since then, the scheme of a Rail Road from Charleston to Cincinnatti has assumed the shape of a well organized system, and, to sustain it, the several States through which the Road must pass have all given their aid—and South Carolina now solicits for her commercial capital the trade of the West, through a longer channel than would be necessary to bring it to the emporium of Maryland.—Pennsylvania, too, since then, not satisfied with her already gi-