POETRY.

I ONLY FEAR THE EYES OF LOVE.

[WRITTEN FOR THE OLIVE BRANCH, BY F. BENJAMIN GAGE.]

O'er all things in the bounds of space,
Gifted with wondrous power and grace,
There's nought below, there's nought above,
So dangerous as the eyes of Love.

I fear no pestilential breath,
Nor in the battle shrink from death;
Of all below, of all above,
I only fear the eyes of Love.

There's nothing old, there's nothing new,
Nor wonderful, but love may do;
For e'en through gates of steel and brass
The wondrous eyes of Love will pass.

I cannot flee from Love away,
For love will go where'er I stray;
Go where I will, from sea to sea,
The eyes of Love will follow me.

Though many a country lies between,
Though Alpine mountains intervene,
Though ocean waves o'er distance roll,
The eye of Love will read my soul.

The eye of Love is every where,
Through all the bounds of earth and air,
From north to south, from east to west,
Where thought may roam, or foot may rest.

Though love should come and break my peace,
Twere vain in flight to seek release,
For Love will follow faster far,
Than bounding steed or rushing car,

Then shield me from Love's dang'rous spells
Good Angels! for of all that dwells
In earth below, or Heaven above,
I only fear the eyes of Love!

EXTRACT FROM THE MESSAGE OF GOV. HUNT.

THE position and ultimate destiny of the African race on this continent is a subject eminently worthy to engage the attention of the humane and benevolent. The highest motives of patriotism and religion prompt us to co-operate in all rational measures intended to improve their unfortunate condition. But it is of the first importance in considering a question of this magnitude, surrounded by so many embarrassments, that we should discard the passions and prejudices which are too ready to usurp the place of common sense; that the spirit of faction should yield to the higher sentiment of a sane and generous philosophy; and that in this, as in the ordinary concerns of life, we seek for a plan having some practical connection with the objects of our efforts. We are to inquire, not merely what may be desirable, but in view of the realities around us, how much is attainable, and what course of action will produce the most beneficial results? The colored race was brought to this continent almost as early as the white, and continued to be imported for nearly two hundred years. It is one of the most revolting features in the world's history, that during this entire period the most of the civilized nations participated in the slave trade. All of the thirteen colonies tolerated slavery within their borders.

The people of this State have furnished conclusive proofs of their aversion to slavery, and of their abiding conviction that it is a moral and political evil, by abolishing it at home, and by their uniform opposition to its extension over territory acquired by the arms and treasure of the nation.

In the Southern States of the Union, where the slaves form such a large part of the population, we cannot expect that the institution will disappear in a day, or in a generation. It has become too deeply rooted and too closely interwoven with their most important interests to yield to sudden or violent measures of reform. The progress of amelioration must, in the nature of things, be gradual. It must be the result of the voluntary action of the people more immediately concerned, experience having shown that we have more to hope from their own innate sense of justice and policy than from any interference that may be proposed by misdirected philanthropy, operating at a great distance from its object. The anomalous position of the free colored population, undoubtedly forms one of the most serious obstacles to the gradual liberation of the slaves. We cannot close our eyes to the fact, that although the free people of color enjoy a certain degree of liberty, they are commonly treated, both in the free and slave States, as an inferior race, and deprived of the social and political rights without which freedom is but an empty name. Even in our own State they are excluded from the most essential privileges of citizenship. Debarred from all participation in public employments, rejected from most of the institutions of learning and religion, governed by laws which they have no share in framing, having been denied the right of suffrage by a vast popular majority, shut out from social intercourse, and condemned to a life of servility and drudgery, their condition amongst us is deplorable in the extreme. Any great improvement of their condition under circumstances so calculated to crush the spirit of manhood, seems morally impossible.

The blighting effect of the inferiority to which they are subjected, is seen in the fact, that while every other class has rapidly increased, the colored population of this State has diminished from 50,027, in 1840, to 47,937, 1850. A result so remarkable naturally excites apprehensions that the African, like the Indian race, cannot permanently co-exist on the same soil with the whites, and that a separation is necessary to prevent their ultimate extinction. However unjust the pervading prejudice which effects the public sentiment toward the black race may appear, its existence and its unfavourable effect upon their welfare cannot be disputed. In several States, this antipathy is displayed in laws prohibiting the blacks from coming within their borders. The people of Indiana adopted a restriction of that character last year by an extraordinary majority. It is evident that every scheme for the elevation of the African to a position of equality & full citizenship in our country, must prove delusive until pride and the sense of superiority shall have been extirpated from the human heart. The instincts of nature, too powerful to be counteracted by the refinements of abstract reasoning, proclaim that the two races must sooner or later be separated.

The American Colonization Society presents the only organized agency which has contributed to accelerate this separation or produce practical results beneficial to the African race. This association was formed many years ago by benevolent citizens in different sections of the country, and has for its objects to rescue the free colored people of the United States from their social and political disadvantages, by placing them where they may enjoy the blessings of free government; to spread civilization and religion throughout the continent of Africa; to arrest and destroy the slave trade, to afford such owners as are willing to liberate their slaves, an asylum for their reception. For the accomplishment of these noble designs, a colony composed of free colored persons emigrating voluntarily from this country, has been established at Liberia on the western coast of Africa. For years the enterprise encountered many obstacles, but these have been overcome by persevering efforts. A careful examination has convinced me of the feasibility and immense advantage of the undertaking, and of its pre-eminent claims upon our support. Under the auspices of the Society, nearly 10,000 free colored persons have emigrated, many of them being slaves liberated on that condition. They have established a free republican government, and acquired, by a peaceful process, a large extent of country, embracing 200,000 people, and abounding in the elements of agricultural and commercial prosperity. They have shown themselves competent to make their own laws and administer their affairs with regularity and justice. Industry prospers, schools and churches have been established, and the people of this infant Republic, carrying with them the knowledge acquired in the scene of their former humiliation, are spreading Christianity and civilization over a portion of the earth which has been sunk for ages in heathen barbarism. The value of this consideration will be felt when it is remembered that the population of Africa is computed at 150,000,000, of whom a majority are in the most abject slavery. By the efforts of the new republic the slave trade has been suppressed along several hundred miles of coast, and the extension of the settlements will extirpate that detestable traffic. Thus we perceive that this great work of humanity may claim the double merit of redeeming another continent from degradation, while it improves the condition of our own. It needs no prophetic vision to foresee that one of the great designs of a mysterious Providence is to be fulfilled by restoring the oppressed sons of Africa to their native soil after centuries of bondage.

A cause so beneficient, identified with the lasting welfare of two of the great races of mankind, rises high above the party contests of the day, and appeals with resistless force to the justice and humanity of the whole American people. I hope to see it sustained by the liberal action of the national government, seconded by contributions from several of the States. The employment of government steamers to transport colored emigrants from this country, would soon obviate the necessity for a naval squadron on the coast of Africa, which is now maintained there by the United States, at great expense and waste of life, for the suppression of the slave traffic. It may be objected to the claims of the Colonization Society that its operations are gradual, and that the consummation of its purposes will require a long series of years. But we should reflect that it is impossible to remove an evil of such magnitude by any human means within the period allotted to a single generation. It is not to be denied that the efforts of the association have secured the liberation of several thousand slaves, a result more practical and beneficial than has been produced by any other organization. Until some portion of this continent or of the West India Islands shall be set apart for the exclusive habitation of the colored race, African colonization must be regarded as the only effective auxiliary of voluntary emancipation.

A growing desire to emigrate is manifested by the black population, and many masters have declared their readiness to free their slaves when means can be found for their removal. Some of the States have made considerable appropriations to promote the object, and an increasing interest has been evinced to others. New York ought not to be behind her neighbors in the performance of a duty so important to her own welfare, and so beneficial to a large portion of the human family, now held in melancholy debasement. It is a work in which Christians and patriots of all parties and in all sections can unite their efforts without involving the country in political or geographical dissensions. I submit the whole subject to your enlightened consideration, in the firm belief that upon a full examination of its merits you will deem it in accordance with justice and policy, and an enlightened public sentiment, to manifest your approval of the cause by a liberal appropriation for the furtherance of its benevolent designs.

AFRICAN COLONIZATION.

[From the Baltimore American.]

FOR centuries—from the earliest period known to history, indeed—the great body of the African continent has been a *terra incognita*—an unknown region—shut out from the rest of the world, and secluded, as it were, within impassable barriers. Egypt and the Barbary States—the latter being known as the Numidia, the Lybia, the Mauritania of the Romans, familiarized to history by the crimes and exploits of Jugurtha, and as being the theatre of the opening greatness of the two powerful rivals Marius and Sylla—those portions of Africa bordering on the Mediterranean and those only, have been included in the annals of human knowledge and transactions. The bold enterprises of modern commerce, which have dared so much and penetrated so far, have failed in their attempts upon Africa. The interior has never been reached in any manner calculated to open or to establish intercourse. It is for colonization to accomplish what commercial enterprise has not succeeded in achieving. A foothold is now secured upon that vast continent, and a gateway is opened through which the unknown recesses of the interior may be visited. Nor is the interesting nature of this contemplation lessened when we behold in these colonists on this African coast the descendants of the native Africans returned from a bondage which was to them a school of discipline, and which has qualified them to be the ministers and heralds of civilization to their race, now and for centuries consigned to a most degrading servitude at home. Nowhere has the blacks improved so much as in the United States; under the relations of service which bound him to a master from whom he could learn. Every year of his residence here has been a year of progress. The whole race has thrived in the midst of a civilized community, in which they held an humble yet a harmonious position, making a profitable exchange of their labor for instruction and protection.

When, in the order of events, this relation is to be changed, how admirably is manifested the wise overruling of Providence in directing the footsteps of the emancipated blacks to to the land of their forefathers, bearing with them the elements of culture and the rudiments of religion—the best of missionaries, the most efficient of teachers! The climate of Africa, fatal to the white man, is salubrious to the sons of the sable race; it is like a wall of fire to keep the domineering Caucasian from intruding upon a land which Nature seems to hold reserved for one special portion of the human family.

The commerce of Africa, now in its infancy, is destined, we doubt not, to great extension; and with commerce and its extension the growth and progress of Colonization will go hand in hand. Each will aid the other. The project of a line of steamers to run between our southern ports and the western coast of Africa, as proposed by Mr. Stanton in the last Congress, will not be suffered to die away, we may be sure. The cause of Colonization requires the establishment of such a line, and the cause is important enough now, and strong enough, to make its requisitions heeded. It can speak for itself, and claim to be heard. It holds forth the problem of slavery in this country, and avows its ability to solve it—and its declarations on this point are words of truth and soberness, and as such they are believed.

A TRANSPLANTED REPUBLIC.

To inoculate a nation like France with republicanism is a hazardous experiment. But to transplant an organized republic, in its germ, to expand itself on a foreign shore, is no impossibility. This thing was done substantially, when the Plymouth colony came to this country with a written civil compact of their own. The thing is now in sure progress in Liberia. Though much is said of that successful experiment, its full importance has not begun to be realised.

The steady progress of that colony peacefully extending itself among the barbarous nations around it, not by conquests or violence, but by absorbing them and making them parts of itself; and these put at once into a process of civilization, contrasts favorably with the condition of the British colonies on the same continent. The policy of the British Government in colonizing Africa has been selfish, not designed to elevate the nations and teach them self-government, but to make them fit instruments and sources of British commerce. Hence, physical force and the terror of British arms have been the main instruments employed by them for civilization. And the result is seen in the terrible effusion of blood, now in progress in the Cape Colony. And the proper tendency of each policy is now seen in the present actual condition of each colony. Upon the prospects of the one rest only clouds and darkness, and upon the other is rising the sun of a glorious morning. Never did an infant nation appear more like a cradled giant. The promise of future greatness—of greatness in expanding civilization of a high order—was not so fair and sure to our nation, even after our war of independence was finished, as is that of Liberia to-day. And sober reason clearly discovers that that nation is to be to the African continent, what this nation is to the American. There are many arrangements of Providence all pointing to this result. Even the geographical position of the colony is favorable for a great and powerful nation. Africa embraces in its circumference about one-fourth of the land in the world. But much of this, covered with desert sands, is as uninhabitable as the sea. And the habitable parts appear on the surface of it, as the islands of a vast archipelago. And Liberia, taken in connection with that portion of territory, that will in its progress naturally come under its power, is virtually an island. In what may properly be called the Liberia region, we have a country bounded west by the Atlantic Ocean, south by the Gulf of Guinea, and north and east by the great interior deserts. Length from south to north eight hundred miles, width east and west 1,800 miles, area 1280,000 square miles.

This for all purposes of population is an island, except that it can be approached only on two sides by navigation. Here is room for a nation to extend itself over a fertile soil, and with the best advantages for a free and unlimited commerce, to extend itself to any reasonable length and breadth, and yet all the while enjoy a natural protection against any formidable hostile invasion from the interior. For it is no easy thing, to carry a war over thousands of miles of sandy deserts.

Such is the place which God has reserved for the nation, to which he seems to have assigned the task of civilizing and regenerating Africa. The establishment of such a colony on that dark continent, bearing with them the transcript of our own constitution and institutions, together with ideas and habits of mind formed to the conduct of civil affairs under them—and what is more important, the Christianity that gives vitality and force to a free government—was the introduction of an order of events wholly new to Africa. What England has done was an approximation towards this. All honor to the Christian philanthropists of England who gave the Gospel to so many of the natives under the British rule. But it was reserved to the American Colonization Society, to give to Africa a model of a nation—a germ of a free and Christian empire, such as is destined to send forth armies of missionaries, and also civilize the heathen by absorption of them into itself. We have been wont to talk of the "manifest destiny" of the United States. But is such a destiny for Liberia any less manifest?

Like all great enterprises, for which God has in reserve large success, this encountered determined and perservering opposition. But it has outlived it. And opposition now only makes itself ridiculous. For it is seen to be the work of God, and not to be overthrown.

☞ There comes a time when all that we behold is but a repetition of that we have already seen, and we seem only to live by habit. This it is which renders the old so indifferent to all things.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

XII. Newspapers
B. Liberia Herald

February 1842(XI,4)--February 18,1857(n.s. VII,4)

1852

NEW SERIES NO 2