

# THE SIGNAL OF LIBERTY.

THE INVOLABILITY OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS IS THE ONLY SECURITY TO PUBLIC LIBERTY.

ANN ARBOR, MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 1846.

VOL. 5, NO. 10.  
WHOLE NO. 218.

T. FOSTER,  
G. BECKLEY, } Editors.

## THE SIGNAL OF LIBERTY

Will be published every Monday morning, in Ann Arbor, Michigan, by FOSTER & DELL.

FOR THE MICHIGAN STATE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

### TERMS.

ONE DOLLAR a year, in advance; if not paid, in advance, TWO DOLLARS will be INvariably required.

Old subscribers can have their papers at One Dollar a year, by forwarding that amount, and paying arrears.

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For each line of breviter, (the smallest type,) the first insertion, 3 cents.

For each subsequent insertion, 2 cents.

For three months, 7 cents.

For six months, 10 cents.

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Orders by mail will be promptly attended to. Legal Advertising by the folio.

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SIGNAL OF LIBERTY: ANN ARBOR, MICH.,

## POETRY.

### A PARENTAL ODE TO MY SON,

AGED THREE YEARS AND FIVE MONTHS.

By THOMAS HOOD.

Thou happy, happy elf!

(But stop—first let me kiss away that tear)

Thou tiny image of myself!

(My love, he's poking peas in his ear)

Thou merry laughing spirit!

With spirit's feather light,

Untouched by sorrow, and unscathed by sin,

(Good heavens! the child is swallowing a pin!)

Thou little trickster Puck!

With antic toys so cunningly bestuck,

Light as the singing bird that wings the air

(The door! the door! he'll tumble down the stair!)

Thou darling of thy sire!

(Why, Jane, he'll set his pinafore fire!)

The imp of mirth and joy!

In love's dear chain so strong and bright a link,

Thou idol of thy parents (Dart the boy!

There goes my ink!)

Thou cherub—but of earth;

Fit playfellow for Pops by moonlight pale,

In harmless sport and mirth,

(That dog will bite him if he pulls his tail!)

Thou human humming bee, extracting honey

From every blossom in the world that blows,

Singing in youth's Elysium ever sunny,

(Another tumble—that's his precious nose!)

Thy father's pride and hope!

(He'll break the mirror with that skipping rope!)

With pure heart newly stamped from nature's mint,

(Where can he learn that squint!)

Thou young domestic dove!

(He'll have that jug off with another shove!)

Dear nursing of the hymenal nest!

(Are those torn clothes his best!)

Little epitome of man!

(He'll climb upon the table, that's his plan!)

Touched with the beautiful tints of dawning life,

(He's got a knife!)

Thou enviable being!

No storms, no clouds, in thy blue sky fore-seeing,

Play on, play on,

My elfin John!

Toss the light ball—bestride the stick,

(I knew so many cakes would make him sick,)

With faculties buoyant as the thistle-down,

Prompting the feet grotesque, and antic brisk

With many a lamblike frisk,

(He's got the scissors, snipping at your gown!)

Thou pretty opening rose!

(Go to your mother, child, and wipe your nose!)

Balmy, and breathing music like the South,

(He really brings my heart into my mouth!)

Fresh as the morn, and brilliant as its star,

(I wish that window had an iron bar!)

Bold as the hawk, gentle as the dove,

(I'll tell you what, my love,

I cannot write unless he's sent above!)

### THE SHOEMAKER.

By J. G. WHITTIER.

Ho! workers of the old time styled

The gentle Craft of Leather!

Young brothers of the ancient guild,

Stand forth once more together!

Call out again your long array

In the old, merry manner;

Once more on gay St. Crispin's day

Fling out your blazoned banner!

Rap, rap! upon the well-worn stone

How falls the polished hammer!

Rap, rap! the measured sound has grown

A quick and merry clamor.

Now shape the sole; now deftly curl

The glossy ramp around it;

And bless the while the bright-eyed girl

Whose gentle fingers bound it!

For you along the Spanish Main

A hundred keels are plunging;

For you the Lidian on the plain

His lasso-coil is throwing;

For you deep gleens with hemlock dark

The woodman's fire is lighting;

For you upon the oak's grey bark

The woodman's axe is smiting.

For you from Carolina's pine

The resin gum is stealing;

For you the dark-eyed Florentine

Her silken skin is reeling;

For you the dizzy goatherd roams

His rugged Alpine ledges;

For you round all her shepherd homes

Bloom England's thorny hedges!

The foremost still by day or night

On moated mound or heath,

Where'er the need of trampled right

Brought toiling men together,

Where the free burghers from the wall

Defied the mail-clad master,

Then yours, at Freedom's trumpet call,

No craftsman rallied faster!

Let foplings sneer, let fools deride,

Ye heed no idle scoffer,

Free hands and hearts are still our pride,

And duty done, your honor.

Ye dare to trust for honest fame

The jury time empannels.

And leave to Truth each noble name

Which glorifies your annals.

Thy songs, Hans Sach, are living yet,

In strong and hearty German.

And Bloomfield's lay and Gifford's wit,

And that rare good sense of Sherman;

Still from his book, a mystic acer,

The soul of Behmen teaches,

And England's priestcraft shakes to hear

Of Fox's leathern breeches.

The Foot is yours; where'er it falls

It troods your well-wrought leather,

On earthen floor, in marble halls,

On carpet, or on heather.

Still there the sweetest charm is found

Of matron gloves or vestal's!

As Hebe's foot bore nectar round

Among the old celestials!

Rap, rap! your stout and bluff brogan,

With footstep slow and weary,

May wander where the sky's blue span

Shuts down upon the prairie.

Your slippers shine on Beauty's foot,

By Saratoga's fountain.

Or lead, like snow-flakes falling mute,

The dance on Catskill mountain!

The red brick to the mason's hand,

The brown earth to the tiller's;

The shoe in yours shall wealth command

Like fairy Cinderella's!

As they who stummed the household maid,

Beheld the crown upon her,

So all shall see your toil repaid

With health and home and honor!

Then let the toast be freely quaffed

In water cool and brimming;

"All honor to the good old Craft,

Its merry men and women!"

Call out again your long array

In the old time's pleasant manner;

Once more on gay St. Crispin's day

Fling out your blazoned banner!

## MISCELLANY.

### MR. F. WEBSTER'S SECOND LECTURE ON CHINA.

Mr. Fletcher Webster delivered his second and concluding lecture on China, at Tremont Temple, on Wednesday evening.

He said, having neglected, at his first lecture, to speak of Dr. Parker, to whom he only referred in a few words,

and Dr. Parker being a Massachusetts man, he would, in as brief a manner as possible, answer the question, who is Dr. Parker?

He is a Surgeon and Missionary, employed by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

Mr. Webster had frequently seen him acting in both capacities, and in both was he entitled to the esteem and gratitude of all who knew him.

He is the best Chinese scholar in China, speaks the dialect of the Canton and Nankin provinces—the latter is the Mandarin or learned dialect.

He is Superintendent of the Hospital at Canton, and has performed surgical operations on the most distinguished men of the Empire, from the borders of Russia to the provinces of Canton.

He is a man highly esteemed, and better known than any other foreigner in China.

Mr. Webster said that the Legation could have hardly got along without his counsel and aid.

Mr. Webster then resumed the subject of the municipal government of China, and said that while the government, in its police department, was prompt and vigorous, the thieves, on the other hand, were expert and daring, and put into requisition all the skill of the police.

The members of the legation, as soon as they were established at Macao, were warned against burglars.

These gentry, when they enter a house, strip off their clothes and oil their bodies, put sharp knives in their long hair, the only part by which they can be seized to cut the fingers of those attempting to arrest them.

They never enter a dark room, thus reversing the custom of our thieves, who never enter a light one.

Indeed every thing is reversed in China, and being on the other side of the world from us, why should it not be so?

Their night is our day—their west our east—two friends, when they meet, shake hands at each other, a safe custom surely where cutaneous diseases prevail to a great extent, as in China.

They mourn in white—they insist that the needle points south—they place their saucers on their cups—they are perfectly certain that the sun goes round the earth, and they know that the earth is flat and square—they punish the innocent for the guilty—and they reward the parent for the virtues of the child, and why should not the habits of their thieves be peculiar?

One of the gentlemen of the legation fell asleep in his room at Macao, leaving the window open.

While he slept, some adroit knaves ascended to the window, by the means of a bamboo pole, placed against the side of the house.

One of them seized the sword and pistols of the gentleman, which were placed near his bed, while another probably kept watch—and the rest stripped the room of every thing which it contained, clothes, curiosities, &c.

Had the gentleman been willing to incur the responsibility of having the innocent punished with the guilty, he might have recovered his property.

When a foreigner hires a house, some one presents himself as steward or com-

prador, who is generally a person of

some little wealth, and offers security for his ability and honor.

This comprador hires all the servants, takes the keys and assumes the sole charge of all the property, the owner not having the slightest responsibility in the case whatever.

The steward holds all the servants responsible to him.

And in the case of a loss through that mischievous thief, Mr. Nobody, he compels the servants to make up the loss by a general subscription.

The comprador was responsible to the gentleman of the legation, for his loss, and had the latter been disposed to make complaint at the proper quarter, of the robbery committed upon him, the servants, all, innocent and guilty, would have been bamboozed till the guilty were discovered.

By this system, one great object, much sought after by the lawgivers of every country, is obtained, viz: the certainty of punishment—for every crime some one is punished.

There is an inevitable connection between crime and punishment; and as the amount of rain is in proportion to evaporation, so is punishment to crime, with this difference in the cases, that punishment, like rain, in China falls on the just and unjust.

The Chinese code of laws is very voluminous—there is nothing which men can do or suffer, that is not provided for—all the rites and ceremonies of religious worship are directed by law—so are all the modes of social intercourse, the most ordinary civilities of life, the manner of salutations to a brother, a parent, or between friends.

Even the style of courtship is prescribed by law, though I am not quite sure, said Mr. Webster, that the tariff is strictly observed, in this matter, and am rather inclined to believe that a contraband sigh and glance are sometimes indulged in.

Even the Mandarin regulates the season of the year and when he puts on his summer or winter cap, sport or winter it is in his district.

There are nine degrees of official rank, distinguished by the button worn upon the top of the cap and by the peacock's feather.

The highest is that of Kwang, which corresponds with Duke, and confers the right to wear the red button, and a two-eyed peacock's feather.

All these degrees of rank are bestowed as the rewards of personal service or merit, and confer an honor upon descendants.

The general affairs of the Empire are managed by several boards at Peking; these are the boards of rites and ceremonies; of finance and revenue; of war; of works; (of this board Keying is a member) of foreign affairs and dependent states; and of justice and punishment.

There are two councils, one of which form the Emperor's Cabinet; and above all these is a board of censors.

There is another instrument of government, which is a great gong in front of the Emperor's palace, which any one may strike to demand an audience of the Emperor, if he has a grievance to complain of, for which he can find redress, in no other way.

In the Chinese code of laws respect for parents and the worship of ancestors, are made the first of duties and the foremost of religious and political obligations.

Filial duties are made the themes of their romances and the subjects of their nursery tales.

The Chinese reward the parent for the virtues of the child—if dead, monuments are erected to his memory on the ground that he must have been a good father who has so good a son.

Sons frequently offer themselves for punishment in place of their parent.

The father holds a higher claim than the wife, and in danger the former will be protected, while the latter is left to her fate.

Days are expressly set apart to visit the tombs of ancestors.

They go in families and offer sacrifices and strew flowers over their graves.

When these rites are ended they partake of a family feast, seated in enclosures around the tombs; cover the tables with pieces of colored paper, which represent various fruits and viands, and which are burned, to carry up food for their deceased ancestors.

And then, on retiring from these sacred resorts, little flags of colored paper are put up in various spots, and the whole hill-side is covered with them.

Mr. Webster said that however we might condemn the extent to which this sentiment is carried, it is in itself highly commendable.

During the months of March, April and May, the legation remained at Macao, studying the language, and waiting intelligence of Keying.

At last a letter arrived from him, dated 1500 miles to the West, saying that he had been detained by want of water in the canal, and would be in Macao, in five minutes.

The five minutes, according to the computation of time by the legation, lasted 20 days.

At last Keying arrived at Macao, took up his residence in the

temple, about two miles from the city, and announced his intention of paying an official visit, on the next day after his arrival, at 11 o'clock.

The Chinese are very particular in matters of etiquette.

Their cards are no little pieces of paste-board, but good sized sheets of paper.

An English gentleman once said that he had got enough to paper a room.

They use colored paper of every description, envelopes of all sizes, from a pillow case to a purse, a seal always, never a wafer, and inscribe on the envelope the names of the writer of the letter as well as the person to whom it is addressed.

The relative height of the names with their titles placed in parallel columns, shows the relative rank of the two persons, the rank corresponding with the length of space occupied by the name.

On one occasion, a letter was sent to Mr. Cushing by Keying, the names on which were not equal.

It was not received but returned—an explanation was offered to Keying, who was afterwards very particular that the names should be of equal height.

Keying's name being much longer than Mr. Cushing's, there was some difficulty in making them of the same height.

This was done by Keying in writing his own name in small characters, and Mr. Cushing's in characters large enough for a guide post.

Thirty minutes before Keying arrived, a messenger came bringing the cards of the Commissioner and suite.

Shortly after he appeared, and with him Chang, Wang, and Too Ling, &c. Of Wang, the Lieut. Governor of the two Kwang Provinces, Mr. Webster spoke in exalted terms; he said he was a gentleman of as polished manners, and of as easy address as you would find in any of the saloons of the United States.

He was remarkably handsome, and well formed. Chang was a scholar, and a plain man—wore spectacles, with glasses as large as a dollar, set in black horn rings.

When the Commissioner drew near, the three guns were fired, the marines drawn up in the hall presented arms to receive him.

Keying was a tall dignified looking man about sixty years of age.

His face expresses talent and decision, and he has long been one of the most eminent men in an empire of three hundred millions.

After a little common conversation a collation was provided, and the guests departed.

Mr. Webster next spoke of the dress of the Chinese.

The Mandarins in full dress wear long robes of rich heavy silk, embroidered with gold and covered by a splendid riding coat.

A girdle passes around the waist fastened with a buckle of precious stones, and long boots whitened, reach to the knees.

Around the neck is a string of beads of stone in winter, and of perfumed wood in summer.

A cap of delicate straw or velvet is worn. A precious stone forms the button and a pearl is worn in front.

The richest dress they saw worn was on the stage in the personation of the heroes and sovereigns of the Empire.

Keying and suite were dressed in the plainest manner, wearing only the peacock feathers and button.

The actors are all itinerant. There are no permanent theatres, and there are no changes of scenes.

No women appear on the stage, their parts being represented by boys.

They all speak in falsetto. Their plays are historical tragedies and low and disgusting comedies.

They have an extensive literature, and their poetry abounds in tropes and figures.

They are very fond of putting one thing for another—thus small feet are called "golden lilies," and butterflies are emblems of love and wooers—thus a fair one, Se-soli, says in a novel, "I will drop the screen to shield me from the influence of the moon and prevent the butterflies from entering my chamber."

Another specimen of a different kind: The Imperial troops put the enemy to flight; 500,000 of the enemy lay dead in the morning; blood flowed from the hills as a stream, and mustering the Imperial troops, which had dispersed in the pursuit, they immediately commenced cooking, for they were very hungry."

Another. A youth exchanges vows with a maiden, but his relentless sire requires him to marry some other golden lily.

He and his first love meet in secret in the garden.

PIRATES DEFENDING THEMSELVES WITH THE PEN.

The South Carolina publishes an almost interminable letter of Ex-Governor Hammond to Mr. Clarkson, in defence of slavery, and intimates that more are to come, by saying:

"The triumphant vindication of our people from the foul aspersions and vile slanders of the abolitionists of the North and elsewhere, which these letters afford, entitles their author to the thanks and good wishes of his fellow-citizens—and, we might add, fellow sufferers."

"So they do suffer. That is hopeful.—ex-Governor Hammond says he has abundance of leisure. Doubtless. So have swindlers generally, when they are successful. He honors Clarkson. He does not propose to defend the African slave-trade. Then he goes on to palliate it, and compliments Clarkson with having spent his life's labor in vain. He would not exactly defend slavery in the abstract—don't like to meddle with abstractions at all—thinks there are no general truths, thinks "the wisdom of ages has concurred in the justice and expediency of establishing rights by prescriptive use, however tortious in their origin they may have been." You Clarkson, said he, hold land which was wrested by violence from the vanquished Briton, the northern abolitionist holds by the same tenure from the red man; both of you would think it insane to question your rights, therefore times does "consecrate wrong"—therefore my negroes, by whatsoever means obtained, are my property, as your land is yours.—Pretty good reasoning for a pirate, who, of course, can see no material difference between a man and a clod, between the vanquished Briton's children and the vanquished Briton's hunting ground. He finds positive authority for slavery in the holy Scriptures; if he did not, he would emancipate. In the tenth commandment, for instance, we are commanded not to covet our neighbor's man servant nor his maid servant; hence our neighbor has a property in his man servant and maid servant recognised by the Almighty, and which he may dispose of at auction to the highest bidder. The abolitionists, who have undertaken to explain the words "bondman," &c., to mean something short of chattels personal, are guilty of open blasphemy; and ex-Governor Hammond, of South Carolina, echoing sentiments that have gone from Andover and Princeton, pays the following beautiful compliment to Christ and his apostles:—

"It is vain to look to Christ or any of his apostles to justify such blasphemous perversions of the word of God. Although slavery in its most revolting form [so it seems slavery has revolting forms! Wonderful coxswain] was every where visible around them, no visionary notions of piety or philanthropy ever tempted them to gainsay the law, even to mitigate the cruel severity of the existing system. On the contrary, regarding slavery as an established as well as inevitable condition of human society, they never hinted at such a thing as its termination on earth, any more than that "the poor may cease out of the land," which God affirms to Moses shall never be; and they exhort "all servants under the yoke" to "account their masters as worthy of all honor;" "to obey them in all things according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men please, but in singleness of heart, fearing God;" "not only the good and gentle, but also the toward;" "for what glory is it, if when ye are buffeted for your faults ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well and suffer for it ye take it patiently, this is acceptable of God." St. Paul actually apprehended a runaway slave and sent him to his master! Instead of deriving from the Gospel any sanction for the work you have undertaken, it would be difficult to imagine sentiments and conduct more strikingly in contrast than those of the apostles and the abolitionists.

It is impossible, therefore, to suppose that slavery is contrary to the will of God. It is equally absurd to say that American slavery differs in form or principle from that of the chosen people. We accept the Bible terms as the definition of our slavery, and its precepts as the guide of our conduct. We desire nothing more. Even the right to "buffet," which is esteemed so shocking, finds its express licence in the Gospel. I Peter ii. 20.—Nay, what is more, God directs the Hebrews to "bore holes in the ears of their brothers" to mark them, when under certain circumstances they became perpetual slaves. Ex. xxi. 6.

Some time or other we will look at the social and political relations of slavery as vindicated by this ex-governor, but not ex-buccaneer. Are not some of our D. D.'s proud of such a true yoke fellow on the biblical argument?—Emancipator.

The remains of Commodore J. D. Elliott were clad in a plain dress uniform, which, from the breast down, was hid from view by a small flag which had formerly belonged to his barge, when in the Mediterranean, on which appeared the following inscription:—"The flag consecrated at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; Jerusalem, in Palestine, 1837.—J. D. E." This was interred with him, according to his request.

NARRATIVE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

We continue our extracts from the thrilling Narrative. The following picture of the brutal treatment and forlorn situation of the author's poor old grandmother is so vividly drawn, that he whose eye does not moisten in contemplating it must possess extraordinary command over his feelings.—Liberty.

Very soon after my return to Baltimore, my mistress, Lucretia, died leaving her husband and one child, Ananda; and in a very short time after her death, Master Andrew died.—Now all the property of my old master, slaves included, was in the hands of strangers;—strangers who had had nothing to do with accumulating it. Not a slave was left free. All returned slaves from the youngest to the oldest. If any one thing in my experience, more than another, served to deepen my conviction of the infernal character of slavery, and to fill me with unutterable loathing of slaveholders; it was base ingratitude to my poor old grandmother. She had served my old master faithfully from youth to old age. She had been the source of all his wealth; she had peopled his plantation with slaves; she had become a great grandmother in his service. She had reared him in infancy, attended him in childhood, served him through life, and at his death wiped from his brow the cold death sweat, and closed his eyes for ever. She was nevertheless left a slave—a slave for life—in the hands of strangers; and in their hands she saw her children, her grand children, and her great-grand-children, divided like so many sheep, without being graided with the small privilege of a single word, as to their or her own destiny. And, to cap the climax of their base ingratitude and selfish barbarity, my grandmother, who was now very old, having outlived my old master and all his children, having seen the beginning and end of all of them, and her present owners finding she was of but little value, her frame already racked with the pains of old age, and complete helplessness fast stealing over her once active limbs, they took her to the woods, built her a little hut, put up a little mud chimney, and then made her welcome to the privilege of supporting herself there in perfect loneliness; thus virtually turning her out to die! If my poor old grandmother now lives, she lives to suffer in utter loneliness; she lives to remember and mourn over the loss of children, the loss of grandchildren, and the loss of great-grandchildren. They are, in the language of the slave's poet, Whittier,—

"Gone, gone, sold and gone  
To the rice swamp dank and lone,  
Where the slave-whip ceaseless swings,  
Where the noisome insect stings,  
Where the fever-demon strows  
Poison with the falling dews,  
Where the sickly sunbeams glare  
Through the hot and misty air:—  
Gone, gone, sold and gone  
To the rice swamp dank and lone,  
From Virginia hills and water—  
Wee is me, my stolen daughters!"

The search is desolate. The children, the unconscious children, who once sang and danced in her presence, are gone. She gropes her way, in the darkness of age, for a drink of water. Instead of the voices of her children, she hears by day the moans of the dove, and by night the screams of the hideous owl. All is gloom. "The grave is at the door. And now, when weighed down by the pains and aches of old age, when the head inclines to the feet, when the beginning and ending of human existence meet, and helpless infancy and painful old age combine together—at this time this most needful time, the time for the exercises of that tenderness and affection which children only can exercise towards a declining parent—my poor old grandmother, the devoted mother of twelve children, is left all alone, in yonder little hut, before a few dim embers. She stands—she sits—she staggers—she falls—she groans—she dies—and there are none of her children or grandchildren present, to wipe from her wrinkled brow the cold sweat of death, or to place beneath the sod her fall en remains? Will not a righteous God visit for these things?"

NEW YORK SCHOOL SYSTEM.  
The capital of the School Fund is \$2,000,000, 41, being an increase of \$97,710 06 since last year. The revenue of the fund for the year was \$278,458 87, which, with the balance in 1844, makes the whole means of the year \$307,478 33. The distribution to the common schools is \$275,000, to which have been added the sums raised in the counties and cities for that purpose, showing an aggregate for the year, including the district libraries, of \$786,000. Of this amount the sum paid for teachers' wages, has been \$629,856 94, which, with the amount contributed on rate bills, gives the large aggregate of \$1,087,934 72 paid for teachers' wages.

The school district libraries contain 1,145,250 volumes, of which 106,854 have been added during the year. There are 11,018 organized school districts in the State, of which 10,812 have made reports to the Superintendent. The whole number of children instructed in the common schools during the year was 763,045.—Philo.

CENTRAL RAILROAD.—Ground was first broken for the Vermont Central railroad at one o'clock on Monday the 14th ult. near Windsor. It was done in due form by the Hon. Charles Paine, President of the Company, in presence of a large concourse of citizens of Windsor and the vicinity, with a few appropriate remarks, which were enthusiastically responded to by the cheers of the crowd, and by the firing of a cannon, and the merry ringing of bells. The spot selected was at the "Hour Glass," about a mile above the village, where the contractor has commenced operations.—Vt. Chron.

SIGNAL OF LIBERTY.

ANN ARBOR, MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 1846.

One Dollar a Year in Advance.

POLITICIANS NOT REFORMERS.

All the whig papers are out in full cry against the Legislature for not reducing their pay from three to two dollars a day. We referred some weeks since to an article in the Detroit Advertiser, in which an argument was made to show that two dollars a day was fourteen dollars a week; that four dollars a week would board them and pay incidental expenses, and that the net surplus of Ten Dollars a week was enough compensation for their time, and a greater sum than most of them would earn on their farms, by their personal labor, during the short days of winter. To this we fully agree.

As we said, all the Whig papers blame the Legislators for paying themselves so extravagantly; but with only a single and honorable exception, they are perfectly silent on paying Members of Congress Fifty six dollars a week at Washington, and more than Five Hundred dollars a week for travelling to that city. Why this careful and profound silence, when every whig editor knows that our Five Members of Congress receive more pay than the whole Seventy Members of the Legislature? If they condemn one abuse, why not the other also? If the smaller matter be worthy of such constant, persevering reproof, should not the larger abuse receive notice?

The explanation of this seeming inconsistency is easily made. The smaller and more recently established whig presses are afraid to take an independent stand of their own, lest thereby they might injure their pecuniary prospects, or the interests of the Whig party, on which their prosperity depends. Hence, with scarcely an exception in all important positions, they are guided by the leading Whig papers. These, like the Detroit Advertiser for instance, are governed by the leading politicians, and will not come out for any reforms that stand much in the way of the interests of that class of men. Thus the Advertiser is disposed to make capital out of a reduction of the pay of State Legislators, who are chiefly working men, while the exorbitant compensation of Members of Congress is not at all referred to.—That paper is so far under the influence of the leading Whig politicians of Detroit that it dare not come out heartily and earnestly for a reduction of pay of members to Congress from eight to four dollars a day, and from Nine Hundred to Ninety dollars for travelling fees. To do so would be at once to alienate the favor of prominent Whig gentlemen, like Senators Porter and Woodbridge, and Hon. J. M. Howard, as well as of all other whigs who may have any hope, however remote, of ever representing the State in Congress. A diminution of the pay of members might be a curtailment of emoluments that would hereafter accrue to them. All this class, it will be seen, have an interest, in this respect, not only separate from that of the producers who earn the money they receive, but directly opposed to it. It is the interest of the laborer to pay his Representative no higher price than will secure the best talents and integrity, while it is the interest of the office holder to get all he can.

This principle holds good in reference to office holders and office expectants, without regard to party. It is quite unreasonable to expect reforms to originate with this class of men. Where is the Democrat who would not be astonished, should he read in his papers that Senator Cass or Mr. McClelland had made a powerful speech in Congress in favor of reducing the pay of members one half? No one expects any such thing of them. And why? Because, as they live upon the earnings of the producing classes, they have an interest in this respect directly opposite to that of the great mass they represent.

Hence it may fairly be presumed, that unless checked by strong demonstrations of public opinion, the members of Congress will go on appropriating more and more of the public money to their own use, as fast as they dare. And they will grow more and more shameless in it the longer they practice their peculations.—Every abuse, by continual practice comes to be regarded as a legitimate usage.—Thus the practice of voting Books to the members has now become systematized, and they are voted and drawn as regularly as their pay. In this way the compensation of all the members has been increased one third by the process; but then this additional expense comes out of their laboring constituents. Six hundred dollars worth of Books to each member from Michigan would, indeed, cost at least three Thousand hard days work of the people of the State; but what care the members for that?

New devices for drawing money from the Treasury for the use of the members are discovered, and when once the precedent has been set, it is never forgotten. Thus, by a decision of Vice President Dallas last spring, at the extra session of the Senate, all the Senators were allowed from One Hundred to two Thousand dollars each for travelling home between

the fourth and fifth days of March, and yet two thirds of them never stirred from their rooms. A similar decision was made in 1841, and by 1840 it is probable that the allowance will be made, as a matter of course, without any question of its propriety. Under the last decision, Senator Woodbridge was authorized to take Nine Hundred dollars from the public treasury, without rendering, or pretending to render, any actual services to the public as even a formal remuneration.—We presume that the Senator took the amount awarded to him, in common with others. No one expects a Senator—especially a veteran office holder—to even think of doing otherwise. Nor do we lay it to the charge of his party: for we have not the least particle of doubt but Senator Cass will do likewise the very first opportunity. It is expected of all the Senators.

So also the precedent has been set that if a member of Congress be sick at the adjournment of that body, he may draw from the Treasury Eight dollars a day till he gets able to travel. After a few more examples of this kind, the precedent will become an established rule. Other abuses of a similar nature might be named. The amount asked to be appropriated for Pensions for 1847 exceeds two and a half millions of dollars. The President of the United States urges a large increase of the Navy, while in the year 1845, according to the Naval Register, 28 out of the 68 Captains in the Navy had nothing to do, but were "waiting orders" at a salary of \$97,500. The Army and Navy officers are trying to fasten on this Republic the monarchical system of half pay, so that after a few years of service, the greater part of which, perhaps, may consist in "waiting orders" they can all retire as gentlemen for life, supported at the public expense. This state of things, we anticipate, will go on, from bad to worse.

But the reader asks, is there no remedy for these abuses? Why do not the people rise in their might, and hurl such a set of men from power? To this it may be replied, first, that they will not hurl these men from office, because the people are governed by these office holders through the party press, and the Press will conceal and smooth over their iniquities; and second, if these office holders were dispossessed, others of a similar character would fill their places, so that the people, unless they exercised great vigilance would gain but little by the change.

But the reader asks, do you pretend to say that there are no men of real integrity and patriotism in the nation? We say no such thing. We know that there are multitudes of such men; but they are not the ones who get office! Most of them, however intelligent, are comparatively poor, honest, obscure individuals, attending to their own business, paying their debts, and asking no favors of any man, and when they have occasion to speak or write for the public, they reprove public vices and follies, however popular. Will such men attain to the control of this nation?

But assume that good men could be elected, how long would it be certain that they would remain true to the interests of the working classes? Just so long and just so far as their personal interests were identified with these classes; and no farther. After a man gets up several degrees in wealth, popularity, and fame, he forgets his old associates, and makes new intimacies among the wealthy and the great; and after a while, as we have before stated, his interests as a consumer and office-holder become directly opposed to those of the working classes as producers. Hence, without any marked change of moral character, he will generally be found on the side of high Salaries, large Fees and Emoluments of every kind, and for Monopolies and special Privileges.—Had the "Mill Boy of the Slashes," always remained so poor as to be obliged to go to mill on horseback, he would have bitterly opposed the proposition advocated by himself many years afterwards, when he had become Speaker of the House, for greatly enlarging the pay of Members of Congress. His circumstances and his interests had changed. He was then, as Speaker, receiving twice as much pay as the members, yet he declared he had not been able to meet his expenses. The members of the aristocratic circles in political life, when once placed above all fear of want, have little sympathy for the toiling millions through whose plodding industry they live. This is the general rule, but here and there are individual exceptions of a highly honorable character, like that of Dr. Franklin and some others.

But the rule holds good, not only with politicians, but with all the professions of life. Just as far as a man gets beyond all connection with the mass of the people, just so far does he cease to be one of them and to labor for their best interests. Take the Clergy for instance. Among the multitudes of Doctors of Divinity, how many can you find who are forward and active in unpopular reforms? They move in a different circle of beings.—They can condemn dancing, but not Man-stealing; can pass resolutions against selling church pews, but have not a word to say against selling church members; can discuss with vast earnestness for the week together the validity of Popish baptism,

while the infernal laws which shut out the Word of Life from the souls of millions of benighted Americans ho receive not the slightest rebuke!

But cannot any valuable political reforms be effected? Undoubtedly they can; but they will not be originated by professional politicians. The mass of the people can have any reform they please by determining to have it, and by supporting for office those individuals only of their own number who will effect it. But much patience and perseverance are requisite, as each improvement of the laws must be wrung out of the Legislators by the hardest pressure. The real friends of reform are not careful enough whom they vote for. When they are preparing to go to the polls, they let the "Old Hunkers"—the real Demagogues, of both parties, though their party caucuses, nominate men directly opposed to the reforms they have in view, and they walk up to the ballot-box and elect individuals to office who are the sworn enemies of these very reforms they have been laboring for years to accomplish! They will not effect much in this way.

THE DEBT OF TEXAS.

The National Intelligencer says that nineteenth twentieths of the unredeemed Texas bonds and scrip is owned in the United States. The Houston (Texas) Telegraph informs us that the people of Texas care little about the redemption of the Scrip as very few of them own any large amount of it. The Texan Editor says:

"We have ever been opposed to repudiation in any form; but we cannot induce any person to expect that our Government will ever redeem these notes at par. It has not the means, and it is not probable that it will have the means for many years. The only resource the holders of these bonds and notes have for their payment is the public lands. The law allowing these lands to be applied to the redemption of these notes at the rate of \$2 an acre has been repealed, and they are only now received at the land-office in payment of fees, &c. It is possible that the United States Government will assume our public debt, after annexation, in exchange for our unappropriated public lands; and then it would be required to redeem these notes. It is probable that the speculators who have recently been engaged in purchasing Texas bonds and notes, look to an event of this kind for their redemption."

THE ABUNDANCE OF CIVILIZATION.

The following extracts from the Message of Gov. Wright, of New York, show what a vast accumulation of human comforts is made by the arts of civilization and good government. To appreciate the result fully, we ought to have a census of the effects of the red men who inhabited the State in 1645. The people of New York have abundance to eat, drink, and wear; whence then originates the complaint of "hard times?"

"The statistics of the productions of agriculture and manufactures are very full, and cannot fail to possess great interest. The improved land, in the state averages a trifle more than four and a half acres each soul, and there is produced from it, of wheat, corn, rye and buckwheat, bread stuffs proper, according to our classification, a fraction less than thirteen and one-third bushels to each individual of the population; of barley and oats, a fraction less than eleven and one-third bushels; of beans and peas, about three-fourths of a bushel; and of potatoes and turnips, they being the only articles given of the root crops, a fraction more than nine and a half bushels. The milk cows are more than one to three persons, and the butter and cheese, together, average more than forty pounds, to each person. The neat cattle are very nearly one to each soul, and the hogs more than one to two persons.—The wool and flax produced are a little less than six and a half pounds to a person, and the cloth manufactured, in families and in factories, is more than seventeen yards to each soul."

"The members of the Legislature are not agreed as to the course to be pursued in revising the laws—whether to go through with the whole at the present session, or to call a session next November for the express purpose of revising them. The letter writers from Detroit are prejudicing the people against the code, because it raises the salaries of the State officers, imposes specific taxes, as \$1 50 on distilleries, 2 1/2 per cent on the capital of brokers, forbids a man to sell a barrel of pork or flour out of the county without branding, &c. &c. We do not approve of such provisions as are here stated; but it is obvious that no accurate judgment can be formed of the statutes till they can be seen. The revision should not be made in haste; for we had better not change the old statutes at all unless we can change for the better."

"It is generally agreed by the Washington letter writers that the twelve months notice to England to quit Oregon will pass the House. Its passage by the Senate is doubtful. Some of the Senators are in favor of leaving the giving of the notice to the discretion of the President. The war speech of Mr. Adams produced a great sensation in Washington, and greatly animated the war party."

"Cassius M. Clay is on a visit to the North. He recently addressed a large audience in New York City. We have not seen the report of his discourse."

Virginia has furnished a Secretary of State for the nation 21 out of 56 years: New York, two years.

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY PRESS.

The U. S. Journal, the organ of the Young Democracy at Washington, thus hits off the "Old Hunker" organ. One would think the Editor had been reading in the Wolverine papers!

We look at hundreds of newspapers every week; most of them are the most scrupulous advocates for Democracy and "the party" of which any idea could be formed; but they take especial care not to allow a solitary democratic principle to find admission into their columns. They allow the most flagrant derelictions from duty, from justice and from principle, on the part of our leaders, to pass by without notice, remonstrance, or rebuke; to call them to an account for their high-handed wrong doing, might injure the party—so these party tools are as dumb as a tombstone. There is not one democratic paper in fifty which dares to speak the honest, plain, unvarnished truth, regardless of consequences; a great majority of them depend upon some would-be great man's favor, or Executive patronage, which "buys up presses like cattle in the market," at a far less price than that paid for such bond-men by the late United States Bank—and they dare not utter a word except such as their leaders approve.—There is less genuine independence of the press in the (nominally) free United States, than is exercised in any other country in the civilized world. We possess uncontrolled freedom—nominally; and yet exercise no more independence than does the Southern slave. He is corporally free—he is mentally free—to do precisely as his master bids him! And this is the boasted freedom of the American press. The slave exercises no freedom of thought; he has no opinion of his own; but assimilates all his views, habits and opinions, as nearly as possible, to those of his master; so also most unfortunately do a great majority of those who control the columns of the American press. They are the mere echoes of the opinions of others—they dare not express one of their own. They are the puppets who dance as the wires are pulled by the master spirits behind the curtain."

POSTAGE.

The Postmaster General proposes to return to the old method of charging by sheets and not by weight, complaining at the same time that some persons make up a bundle of letters, paying postage in a lump, and thereby saving a good deal.—Does he not know that this grievance, as he considers it, existed in a still greater extent under the old law, which unreasonably mixed the principle of weight and single sheets; for you remember that the postage for more than four sheets was charged by weight. There was therefore a man in Boston who regularly made up a mail for the New York packets, charging for these letters less than the existing single postage, and making, nevertheless, a handsome profit by paying postage according to weight for the whole bundle of letters. What does the Department contract and pay for? For weight, and weight alone it has in turn a right to charge for? The Postmaster General does not seem to be acquainted with the fact that all nations, aye, even Austria and Russia, have abolished the troublesome, mean, and pestering principle of charging by sheets, with all its fumbling and peeping into letters, and overcharging and opening at the post office, and its injustice of charging for a cover. Yes, all nations have abolished it, and find no inconvenience. If an half ounce is too much for a single letter, take a third or a quarter of an ounce, as they do in France, but to recommend to us of all nations, the recurrence of an obsolete principle ought to be stamped by every paper as it deserves—an act of folly.—Charleston Pa.

CONGRESSIONAL PRESUMPTION.—The Hon. Mr. Woodworth, a Representative from the county of Dutchess, in presenting a resolution proposing to equalize the distribution of Government patronage among the States, has done a very important thing. What if Virginia does take twice as many offices of the Army and Navy as New York, don't we furnish six times as many soldiers and sailors? What if the South has two-thirds of the offices, have we not got two-thirds of the voters? And besides, Mr. Woodworth forgets that the South has "Extra Allowances" of offices for their slaves. Three votes are imputed to the South for each of its five slaves. And as the slaves cannot hold the offices themselves, the slaveholder, "ardent as a Southern clime can make him," consents to bear these burthens!—The idea of equalizing these things, therefore, is preposterous. Mr. Woodworth must not think of it. The South has a prescriptive right to two-thirds of the Offices, beside the privilege of threatening to dissolve the Union as often as a new edition of "dough-faces" is wanted.—Ath. Ec. Journal.

"It will be seen that Mr. George A. Coe, a Whig, has been admitted as a member of the Senate. This admission was obtained by counting certain votes for him which were rejected by the Inspectors. These votes were written Geo. A. Coe and George Coe. The Senate have determined, in substance that they were meant for Mr. Coe, and therefore gave him a seat. We think the precedent in counting the votes for "George Coe" is a bad one, as it permits the inspectors to go behind the face of the ballot, and inquire into the intention of the voters, thus opening the door for endless appeals. The strict construction principle by which no votes could be counted but such as were correctly written, when once established, would preclude all controversy."

LETTER FROM J. G. BIRNEY.

DETROIT, JAN. 21, 1846.

GENTLEMEN.—I send you the correspondence between Mr. Oliver and myself, which I wish you, and all others who may choose to do so, to publish with this note. I will not dispute with Mr. Oliver, who is a member of the Loco-foco party about his putting the word "preference," into my mouth, when speaking of his "REPUBLICAN nominee," for the Presidency. It is not unnatural that he should have done so. And I suppose, I should have got at similar answer from a leader of the whig party, had I addressed him, as I have done Mr. Oliver, as to what I said concerning his "REPUBLICAN nominee."

Preference between Mr. Polk and Mr. Clay never once entered my mind. I should have looked on the support of either, as a desertion of the very party which was recommending me, as an abandonment of the cause of liberty, and as almost tantamount to supporting Nicholas, the Czar of half-civilized Russia, who is the holder of fourteen or fifteen millions of slaves. I viewed Mr. Polk and Mr. Clay—as I have for a long time, any slave-holder, as evil to the country. The former is, already, proving himself, what I always intended to represent him. If I committed any error at all, regarding Mr. Polk, it was underrating his power of mischief and overrating the power of resistance of the whig party. On the whig party he had, chiefly, to operate, in the Senate, in his Texas scheme. On that party, we were told, we might rely—whatever course its chief might take, in relation to Texas. As to the Loco-foco leaders—Mr. Polk had but small trouble with them. Such of them as were not prepared for him beforehand remembered he was the Giver of Office. The power of giving office, was with them, generally, decisive.

Respectfully yours,  
JAMES G. BIRNEY.

LOWER STAGSAY, MICH. Aug. 1845.

William M. Oliver, Esq.

Sir:—In the New York Tribune newspaper of the 16th ult. is the following statement (editorial) respecting myself:

"In the cars we heard of him engaged in confidential whistlings with Loco Foco wireworkers."

Similar statements, slightly varying in their terms, but substantially the same, and referring to their origin to the same occasion, appeared generally in the Whig press on the eve of the late Presidential election. The intent with which these statements were fabricated and put in circulation is too obvious for any remark shewing its nature: It was, totally to break up the confidence that the Liberty party were reposing in me, as their Presidential candidate, with the expectation—a vain and silly one, to be sure—that thereby the party itself would be broken up, and that, in its dispersed condition, it might, in great part, be enlisted under the Whig banner.

The only foundation for this story, so far as I have learned, is the conversation that took place between you and me, on my way from Rochester to Albany, the next day after the Whig meeting held at the former place, early in October. The cars were filled, as I supposed, with Whigs returning from the meeting. The gentlemen with whom I conversed, during the greater part of the day, and almost exclusively—for the other passengers were, personally, strangers to me,—were Gen. Outrom or Utica, and Mr. Little of Onsego county, both Whigs. You were pointed out to me, by one or both of those gentlemen, as belonging to the party referred to in the quotation from the Tribune; and, if I remember rightly, we were introduced to each other by one of the same gentlemen, some twenty or thirty minutes before you were to leave the cars. Of the last fact, however, I am not certain.

As soon after the election as I could procure the necessary evidence, I published an elaborate refutation of various libellous charges set afloat against me by the Whig press, to deny and diminish me down, as one wanting even in common honesty. One of these charges was attempted to be supported by a *Forgery* of the most absolute character—one in which the official names of several persons were forged, including the affixing of their pretended seals to the forged instrument. This forging was most cunningly adjusted to the object in view, and was more simultaneously and extensively circulated and vouched for, by the unscrupulous part of the Whig press, than any other infamous trick that has ever been resorted to,—in this country, at least—for compassing party ends, in opposition to the public will. No attempt has been made by the Whig party to relieve themselves before the public of the odium of this transaction; and, so far have they been, even up to this time, from offering the least reparation for the wrong done to me individually, that their papers are again putting forth the libels of last October, (1844) with an effrontery that can reasonably be accounted for, only on the supposition, that they have not even read my refutation of them.

In that refutation I did not omit to contradict the story about our "confidential whistlings;" and in such terms, that I supposed no respectable journal would repeat it, without at least bringing forward some evidence to counteract my denial. But in this, it seems, I mistook; for the Tribune with, as it would appear, the same mischievous intent, which actuated the original fabricator and propagator, has republished once and again this long ago refuted falsehood, without adding a particle of evidence, or even a name to support him.

May I then, sir, ask of you, with a view to set myself right before the public in this matter, an answer to this letter,—in which you will state the circumstances under which we became acquainted; the subjects on which we conversed, and the opinions expressed, so far as you can recall them; whether there was any thing said by me that a Whig might not have been admitted to hear, as well as a Democrat, and whether there was any thing communicated on either side, that was of the slightest nature confidential, or that would in the slightest manner authorize the statement of the Tribune?

Expecting an early reply, I remain, Sir,  
Your obt. serv't.  
JAMES G. BIRNEY.

PENNS YAN, Dec. 8th, 1845.

Hon. J. G. Birney.  
Dear Sir:—I am in the receipt of your favor

of the 1st Aug. last, and should have written you at an earlier date, had it not been for a desire first to have seen D. H. Little, Esq., of Cherry Valley, through whose politeness I had the pleasure of an introduction to you.

The number of convicts in the Ohio State Prison is 464. Last year they earned \$18,000 more than the expenses of the Prison.

A bill for the abolition of Capital Punishment has been introduced into the Legislature of Rhode Island. After some discussion, it will not differ.

We are indebted to the politeness of Mr. Platt, Secretary of the Senate, for Legislative documents.

FOREIGN NEWS. ENGLAND.—The packet ship Oxford has arrived at New York, bringing London papers to the 6th December.

Additional batteries are being erected at Sheerness, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Pembroke, and other places on the coasts of the Island.

The London Times of the 6th Dec., has the following: "The decision of the cabinet is no longer a secret, Parliament, it is confidently reported, is to be summoned for the first week in January, and the Royal speech will, it is added, recommend an immediate consideration of the Corn Laws preparatory to their total repeal."

All our readers are anxious to know what the Legislature is doing. We can answer in half a dozen words—trying to reduce the pay of their successors.

MURDER AND ARSON. ABRIAN, Jan. 19th, 1846. About six o'clock this evening the alarm of fire was sounded in our village.

State Legislative. All our readers are anxious to know what the Legislature is doing. We can answer in half a dozen words—trying to reduce the pay of their successors.

Commercial. ANN ARBOR, JAN 24, 1846. A fall of snow has made the Sleighing here first rate.

OUR ADVERTISERS. Under this head, we propose to continue the names, business, and place, of all who advertise in the Signal, free of charge, during the time their advertisements continue in the paper.

Commercial. ANN ARBOR, JAN 24, 1846. A fall of snow has made the Sleighing here first rate.

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