

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

We rarely take up an exchange but we thank Heaven for the liberty of the press. Sure it is our penitentiaries and prisons, would be populated with hordes of the craft were we cramped under a monarchical government. All might not be so fortunate, as a firm in a well-known and warm rebel region who "confessed" to having three editors—one local, one political, and one to go in jail to answer the demands of justice.

'Tis a convenience beyond question, and though not altogether as pleasant as some other vocations in life we know of, yet there are always obliging dispositions in the world, and doubtless the applications would exceed the demand.

Freedom of speech, as well as freedom in action, is a necessity of our existence, and it is no marvel that during an exciting canvass long buried bitternesses should be resurrected.

A political campaign is the crucible in which a candidate's character is tried, and after the fitful fever is over, if anything is left, if he is not quite picked to pieces, he must be a better man for having passed the ordeal. True it is he will know all that is bad of himself to be known, and to set about a reformation is the next step to such knowledge.

Know thyself is a wise maxim of an old sage. And so we hope that this great excitement all over our State will not be productive only of ill. The weak points on both sides have been assailed most mercilessly, and may we not hope that each, seeing their errors, will set about correcting them. A reaction must take place, each elevation has its corresponding depression, the fall will be equal to the height gained.

This Centennial year will be one long to be remembered in our borders. The cry of hard times has echoed all over our land, but from the North comes tidings that the crisis is reached—is over, and that a better day is coming; but we hesitate to take up the refrain, for can it be so with us. Think of the drained millions of Southern money heaped into centennial coffers, though far be it from us to censure since to exhibit human progress in Art and Industry has been the end and aim of the World's Great Fair. The individual perhaps needed the instruction he there gained, and much we hope will be done to promote the progress of human happiness, comfort, and intelligence, but taking a collective view of the matter we shudder at the consequences. Let us then trace the depression which will necessarily follow these two causes to its true source. We must endeavor to combat the inertia that will follow in the wake of excitement, nor suffer ourselves in the demands and efforts for a better Government, to forget our allegiance to the cause of Philanthropy.

HOW TO DO IT.

Perhaps you think our original genius, Edward Everett Hale, has exhausted this theme in his deservedly popular work; but sometimes the question comes to us less favored mortals with no less force than to him; but without his happy faculty for worming out of difficult things. We secretly begrudge the old roman, his oracle, and murmur at a civilization that has abolished the convenience; for then did we

err the flattering unction would still be ours, that "we were not to blame," it was not our fault, and Oh! how refreshing it is to saddle our faults on some one else, amour propre is supreme and nothing proves it more conclusive than this.

"I would not do it," "I don't approve it," are phrases that often pass judgment on the conduct of a fellow sinner. Perhaps you would not, but is it not barely possible that what you would do, judged by the absolute standard of rights might, prove equidistant from the mark?

Put yourself in his place and you might long to be out of it. Sometimes our course lies through a narrower channel than is bounded by the Pillars of Hercules,—a position must be taken, to fall back is impossible, stand still we can't, march forward we must, then hark! to the hue and cry that salutes us if we find ourselves stranded on either extreme, (and who will say that the mean is easily found?) there we may tarry unless a merciful Providence helps us off as a just recompense of reward, they say, and for what? A groping after the truth? And christian charity, where is it? Verily it is a rarity. Oh! for the day when we will cease to sit in judgment on the short comings of others; when the beam in our own eyes will obscure the mote in our brothers, but that will herald in the Millennium.

DO YOU EVER THINK OF IT!

How we are molding some one's character, shaping some one's course for life. Ah! me, that hasty word with its impatient tone, the indifferent manner when, perhaps, our sympathy was but too much needed, has left its impression on the plastic clay for time, yes, and eternity too. Who shall say but that some poor shipwreck might have gained the harbor with flying sails had we but bid it God speed? Are we not too willing to measure our own progress by the stationary state of those we have left behind? Some class-mate perhaps, started even with us in the race, but life's discipline has proven too severe, the lines have fallen to him in hard places, and he has ceased to struggle on and fallen out of the ranks. Did we then lend a helping hand or were we but too much engrossed with self, or worse, self-congratulatory on our superiority? A seeming failure is often a success, and God knows best how to judge the weary and heavy laden. Happy we, if the awful sentence, "Ye did it not to these," salutes us not when we stand before the Great White Throne to give an account of the deeds done in the body.

TO WHOM?

Those "calm mild days" that Bryant so beautifully sings of, have come; but we fail to enjoy the present in the outlook to the future. The time has been when we loved this season, it lent an additional charm to the favorite passages in our favorite authors, and cast its halo over all our duties and pleasures. It is not so now. Around us now are bare-foot, thinly-clad orphan children, making mute appeals for a warmer garb, and we must say them, "Nay," for want of the means to provide. Step by step the winter cold and bleak is coming up to meet them, and whom have they to look to for protection against its storms?

LOST OPPORTUNITIES.

One of the saddest chapters of the Christian's biography is the unwritten chapter of his lost opportunities; privileges and helps and inspirations and comforts he might have enjoyed, and through some delinquency failed of. He fails, in his late and hurried rising, to read a morning portion of God's Word, some faithful warning, some comforting promise, some helpful truth, he might have carried with him through the day. Through the same eagerness to get to his worldly tasks, he misses a visit to the closet of prayer, and his Saviour's benediction of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. He misses, through the day, by timidity or pre-occupation, occasions for witnesses for Christ, and of the reacting strength and comfort. He misses the prayer-meeting through weariness, or the call of a friend, or the charm of some fascinating book, or the attraction of some bill of fare in earthly entertainments; and so does not enter with his brethren under the portal over which is written, "there am I in the midst of you." So he misses the Sabbath of instruction and all its quickening influence; so he misses of the feast, the Master of which testifies, "My flesh is meat indeed."

Oh, these lost opportunities; charged against us on the remembering books, weakening all our spiritual forces, and robbing us of treasures inestimable for our spiritual life! Watch and pray against such losses! Be avaricious of these sacred and priceless privileges. Let no reproach stand against your name of such woeful delinquency!—*The Pacific.*

CURIOUS FACTS ABOUT WORDS.

Marsh tells us that the number of English words not yet obsolete, but found in good authors, or in approved usage by correct speakers, including the nomenclature of science and the arts, does not probably fall short of one hundred thousand. A large portion of these words, however, do not enter into the living speech, the common language of daily and hourly thought. Some celebrated English American orators have been able, upon occasions, to summon at their command one-half of this vast array of words, although they habitually content themselves with a much less imposing display of verbal force. Few writers or speakers use as many as ten thousand words; ordinary persons of fair intelligence do not go above three or four thousand. If a scholar were to be required to name, without examination, the authors whose English vocabulary was the largest, he would probably specify the all-embracing Shakespeare and the all-knowing Milton; and yet, in all the works of the great dramatist there occur not more than fifteen thousand words, in the poems of Milton not above eight thousand. The Old Testament uses but 5,642 words. The whole number of Egyptian hieroglyphic symbols does not exceed eight hundred, and the entire Italian operative vocabulary is said to be scarcely more extensive.—*Ed. Reporter.*

Mr. Moody said, in preaching on "Christ as a deliverer," I remember preaching on this subject and walking away, I said to a Scotchman, "I didn't finish the subject."

"Ah, man! you didn't expect to finish, did ye? It'll take all eternity to finish telling what Christ has done for man."

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.

No man now standing on an eminence of influence and power, and doing a great work, has arrived at his position by going up in an elevator. He took the stairway step by step. He climbed the rocks, often with bleeding hands. He prepared himself for the work he is now doing. He never accomplished an inch of his elevation by standing at the foot of the stairway with his mouth open and longing. There is no "royal road" to anything good—not even to wealth. It goes as it comes. There is no element of permanence in it. The man who reaches his money in an elevator does not know how to enjoy it; so it is not wealth to him. To get a high position without climbing to it; to win wealth without earning it, to do fine work without the discipline necessary to its performance, to be famous, or ornamental, without preliminary cost, seems to be the universal desire of the young. The children would begin where their fathers left off.

What exactly is the secret of success in life? It is to do without finching and with utter faithfulness the duty that stands next to one. When a man has mastered the duties around him he is ready for those of a higher grade, and he naturally takes one step upward. When he has mastered the duties of the new grade, he goes on climbing. There are no surprises to the men who arrive at eminence legitimately. It is as entirely natural that he should be there, as at the foot of the stairs. There are heights above him, and he remains humble and simple.

Preachments are of little avail, perhaps, but when one comes in contact with so many men and women who put yearning for earning, and longing for laboring, he is tempted to say to them: "Stop looking up and look around you!" Do the work that first comes to your hand, and do it well. Take no upward step until you come to it naturally, and have won the power to hold it. The top in this little world is not so very high, and patient climbing will bring you to it.

ANCESTRY OF THE PEN.

The earliest mode of writing was on bricks, tiles, oyster-shells, stones, ivory, bark and leaves of trees; and from the latter the term "leaves of a book" is probably derived. Copper and brass plates were very early in use; and a bill on copper was some years since discovered in India, bearing date one hundred years B. C.

Leather was also used, as well as wooden tablets. Then the papyrus came into vogue, and about the eighth century the papyrus was superseded by parchment. Paper, however, is of great antiquity, especially among the Chinese; but the first paper mill in England was built in 1586 by a German, at Dartford, in Kent. Nevertheless, it was nearly a century and a half—namely, in 1713—before Thomas Watkins, a stationer, brought paper making to anything like perfection.

The first approach to a pen was the stylus, a kind of iron bodkin; but the Romans forbade its use on account of its frequent and even fatal use in quarrels, and then it was made of bone. Subsequently, reeds, pointed and split, like pens of the present day, were used.

SELF-SACRIFICING.

This is a true story. The happy circumstances occurred the other evening. He escorted her to and from church, and upon arriving at her home their discussion of the sermon and the extreme heat suggested an invitation, readily accepted by Charles, that they step into the house and partake of a cooling glass of lemonade. She led him to the dining-room, and there found naughty brother Ben about to squeeze the last lemon in the house for his own individual benefit! Calling him aside she induced Ben by means of sundry threats and promises, to dissect that lemon and make Charlie and herself a glass. A self-sacrificing thought struck her! "No, Ben," said she, "put the juice of the whole lemon into Charlie's glass and bring me a glass of water. He won't notice it—there is no light in the parlor!"

Ben was making one good strong lemonade, as directed, when Charlie quietly slipped out and remarked: "I say Ben! put the juice of the entire lemon in your sister's glass and bring me some ice water—there is no light in the parlor and she won't notice it!"

Ben's forte is in obeying orders. With a merry twinkle in his eye he drank the lemonade, then carried them each a glass of water, which they drank with much apparent relish, asking each other, between the sips, "if it was sweet enough!" And naughty brother Ben, with the taste of that lemonade in his mouth, stood out in the hall and laughed till his sides ached, to hear them assure each other that it was "just right! so palatable and refreshing!"

MR. CHOATE AND THE AMBITIOUS PLOWBOY.

A great many boys mistake their calling, but all such are not fortunate enough to find it out in as good season as this one did.

It is said that Rufus Choate, the great lawyer, was once in New Hampshire making a plea, when a boy, the son of a farmer, resolved to leave the plough and become a lawyer like Rufus Choate. He accordingly went to Boston, called on Mr. Choate, and said to him, "I heard your plea up in town, and I have a desire to become a lawyer like you. Will you teach me how?"

"As well as I can," said the great lawyer. "Come in and sit down."

Taking down a copy of Blackstone, he said, "Read this until I come back, and I will see how you get on."

The poor boy began. An hour passed. His back ached, his head and legs ached. He knew not how to study. Every moment became a torture. He wanted air. Another hour passed, and Mr. Choate came and asked, "How do you get on?"

"Get on! Why, do you have to read such stuff as this?"

"Yes."

"How much of it?"

"All there is on these shelves, and more," looking about the great library.

"How long will it take?"

"Well, it has taken me more than twentyfive years."

"How much do you get?"

"My board and clothes."

"Is that all?"

"Well, that is about all I have gained as yet."

"Then," said the boy, "I will go back to ploughing. The work is not near so hard, and it pays better."