

# SOUTHERN CITIZEN.

WHAT DO WE LIVE FOR, BUT TO IMPROVE OURSELVES AND BE USEFUL TO ONE ANOTHER?

VOLUME III.

ASHEBORO', (N. C.) FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1839.

NUMBER 14.

**PUBLISHED WEEKLY:**  
BY  
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**TERMS.**

Two Dollars per annum, in advance, or Three Dollars, if not paid within three months from the date of the first number received. No subscription to be discontinued till all arrears are paid; unless at the discretion of the Editor. A failure to order a discontinuance before the expiration of the subscription year, is equivalent to a new engagement. All Letters, Communications, &c. to come post paid.

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**THOUGHTS FOR THOSE WHO THINK.**

*From a Manuscript volume of Lectures, by the Rev. W. Colton, United States Navy.*

The vanity of those distinctions on which mankind pride themselves will be sufficiently apparent, if we consider the three places in which all men must meet on the same level: at the foot of the cross, in the grave, and at the judgment-bar.

A politician, who has no resources of his own, always connects himself with some great temporary excitement; just as a hungry shark rushes along in the wake of a ship, to pick up the damaged provisions, amputated limbs, and even old shoes, that may be thrown overboard.

The gloom of *Caesar* flowed from the maladies of his nature—that of *Young* from the maladies of his ambition. The former was a victim against his will, and sought to veil his sorrows even from the few; the latter threw himself on the rack, and called on the world to witness his agony.

Lawyers find their fees in the faults of our nature; just as wood-peckers get their worms out of the rotten parts of trees.

The pulpit has its amateurs, and the fiddle also: and they both perform occasionally for the amusement of mankind.

There is no dissimulation so impene- trable as that which apparently leaves nothing to penetrate. It is art without artifice, concealment without disguise, and frankness without sincerity. He who can successfully practise these may escape exposure here, but must inevitably be detected in that day when the heart will be required to give up its secrets, and the grave surrender its dead.

The crown and property of the soul is its immortality; without this, instructive nature might almost sport with its pretensions, but with it an angel scarcely stoops to envy.

Those habits which dignify or dishonor manhood obtain their shape and complexion during our earlier years. The fruits of summer and autumn vegetation in the spring, and the harvest of old age germinates in youth.

The patronizing air with which some men pipe to every great movement in the community is often extremely ludicrous. The vast objects on which they bestow their gratuitous favors, so far from lifting them into their own element, and making them partakers of their sublimity and grandeur, only have the effect to dwarf them the more, to render their insignificance still more palpable, and expose their vanity to the mirth of mankind. They resemble one who should fiddle, on the desert of Sahara, to the towering columns of sand, whirling in their sirocco walk.

The piety of the humble and obscure is less imposing, but it is more vital, as

it is more simple, than that which emanates from unapproachable superiority. The mountain torrent may dash downward magnificently to the plain, and roll on in splendor to the ocean; but it is the little streamlet, winding around in the valley, and revealing here and there the traces of its brightness and purity, that fertilizes and refreshes the earth.

The effect of mystery is much the same, however *high or humble* its source. Hence it is, that a soldier guarding a monarch, and a boy in charge of a balloon, are alike full of the parade and circumstance of office.

Ignorance is often the source of the most intrepid action and the most implicit faith; since there are none so fearless as those who have not light enough to see their danger; and none so confident as they who have not sufficient knowledge to discover their own errors.

If the charge of perfect stupidity is ever just, it is applicable to that man who is in a state of suspense; for even error, strenuously supported, would at least raise him above our pity and contempt.

Some men ascribe all their unhappiness to the narrowness of their means; but place them in the immediate enjoyment of all that enters within the circle of their present hopes and desires, and they will no sooner have entered on the enrapturing possession, than new hopes and desires will begin to manifest themselves. You cannot place a man in such a situation that he will not look above it and beyond it; give him the whole of this world, and, like the hero of *Macedon*, he will inquire for another.

He who has struck his colors to the power of an evil habit has surrendered himself to an enemy, bound by no articles of faith, and from whom he can expect only the vilest treatment.

Death may remove from us the great and good, but the force of their actions still remains. The bow is broken, but the arrow is sped, and will do its office.

**From the Hillsborough Recorder. TEXAS.**

Extracts from a letter from John Scott, Esq. formerly of this town, to a gentleman in this place, dated City of Houston, Texas, March 10, 1839.

An emigrant should not stop short of Texas. Thousands from the richest parts of the valley of the Mississippi are pouring into this new republic. A farmer may grow rich here upon one fourth of the labor it takes to support his family in Orange. If they move at all let them come to Texas. The best geographical account of the country, is one lately published in New York by a Mr. Newall. Probably Turner & Hughes of Raleigh, may have it for sale. I recommend it to the perusal of every one who thinks of Texas. It is a small volume.

The late Congress appointed five commissioners to locate the seat of government. It will be on the Colorado, or a little east of it, in a fertile, well watered, and delightful country, as healthy as any part of the globe.

By coming next fall each head of a family will secure 640 acres of bounty land, and each single man 320 acres, provided they arrive before the first day of January, 1840, at which time the law expires.

The late Congress passed a law to establish a line of military forts, from Red River to Rio Grande, a distance of six hundred miles, over a delightful and salubrious and fertile region of country, to protect the frontier settlements. Each fort is to contain a square of land, of five miles each way, laid off into sections of 160 acres each. A bounty of one section is to be given to every able bodied settler, who will locate himself, and open a farm and keep it up for three years, within either boundary of the forts. This added to the 640 acres will make 800 acres of land, the bounty for settling in one of the choicest portions of the earth!

I have appended here-into a copy of the emigrant law above spoken of; also the act exempting from execution certain property therein named; also the prices at the Houston market. Corn you see, is four dollars! This exorbitant price is owing solely to the demand created by the constant influx of emigrants.

Families who come to Texas by land, should cross the Mississippi river somewhere between Natchez and Vicksburg, and enter Texas on the Red River side. It will be the shortest and most direct route to the new city of Austin.

Houston was commenced in March, 1837, when the first house was built; now its population is about 5,000 souls. The hardy sons of "the old North state" muster strong here; more so, perhaps, than from any other state of the union. Memucan Hunt, formerly of Granville, is now Secretary of the Navy.

An Act entitled an act to extend to the late emigrants, or those who may emigrate within a specified time, a donation of land.

**Sec. 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Republic of Texas in Congress assembled,** That every person who emigrated to this republic since the first day of October Anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and thirty seven, or who may emigrate to this republic by the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and forty, who is a free white person and the head of a family, and who actually resides within the government with his or her family, shall be entitled to a conditional grant of six hundred and forty acres of land by paying the fees of office and surveying. The conditions of the said grant shall be; that both grantee and his or her family shall remain and reside permanently within this republic, and do and perform any and all duties required of other citizens for the term of three years, after which time he or his legal representatives shall receive from the government and unconditional deed for said grant of land, provided that no sale of said claim to land by the individual entitled to the same of this government shall be valid in law and binding upon the person selling the same until an unconditional deed shall be obtained by the grantee for said land; and in no case whatever shall a grant of that description be made unless it be satisfactorily proven that all the conditions and provisions of the law have been complied with; and all single free white male persons of the age of seventeen and upwards who have emigrated to this republic since the first day of October one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven, or who may emigrate to this republic by the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and forty, shall be entitled to three hundred and twenty acres of land, and all laws and parts of laws contrary to the meaning and provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

**Sec. 2. Be it further enacted,** That all permanent resident citizens of Texas who have or may arrive to the age required of emigrants by the above section of this act shall be entitled to the same quantity of land as emigrants upon the same conditions that emigrants are.

**Sec. 3. Be it further enacted,** That all officers and soldiers who were engaged in the service of Texas previous to the first March one thousand eight hundred and thirty seven whose families are now here or may arrive here by the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and forty, shall be entitled to the same quantity of land that they would have been if their families had emigrated to the country with them.

An Act entitled an act to exempt certain property therein named from execution.

**Sec. 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Republic of Texas in Congress assembled,** That from and after the passage of this Act, there shall be reserved to every citizen or head of a family in this Republic, free and independent of a writ of *seire-facias*, or other execution issuing from any court or competent jurisdiction whatever, fifty acres of land or one town lot, including his or her homestead, and improvements not exceeding five hundred dollars in value, all house hold and kitchen furniture (provided it does not exceed in value two hundred dollars,) all implements of husbandry, (provided they shall not exceed fifty dollars in value,) all tools, apparatus and books belonging

to the trade or profession of any citizen, five milch cows, one yoke of work oxen or one horse, twenty hogs, and one year's provisions; and that all laws and parts of laws contravening or opposing the provisions of this Act, be and the same are hereby repealed. *Provided,* The passage of this Act shall not interfere with contracts between parties heretofore made.

**Extracts from the Prices Current, Houston Market.**

- Flour, \$21 to 23 per barrel.
- Hams, 27 to 40; middlings 28 to 30.
- Lard, 30 to 33 per lb.
- Butter, 45 to 100
- Corn, \$4 per bushel.
- Oats, \$3.50 to 4.00 per bushel.
- Salt per sack, \$8.50 to 9.00.
- Nails, 25 per lb.
- Candles, tallow, 75 per lb.
- Molasses, \$2.00 to 2.50 per gal.
- Potatoes, \$10 per barrel.

**From the New York Express.**  
**LETTER FROM MAJOR DOWNING.**  
*Washington, April 2, 1839.*

*To Squire Biddle:* I got your letter telling me you had quit the Bank, and intended, if you could possibly so manage matters, to go to farming. I know this has always been your notion, and that you would do so as soon as you see all things clear ahead; and a man who has been ciphering so hard as you have for over twenty years for the public, now I think has some right to go and dig his own potatoes and hoe his own corn, and take a little comfort in his own way. But somehow I feel, Squire, a little womblecropt, just as I did when the General left and went to the Hermitage; and tho' you have left as good a man to manage the Bank as the General has to manage the Government, I hope you will keep an eye on matters and things, and give as much of your advice in matters you understand to Mr. Dunlap and his cabinet, as the Gindoes to Mr. Van Buren and his cabinet. The fact is, you and the General, I always thought was made of pretty much the same kind of grit, and both on you considerably overwork'd yourselves, tho' the General got the best pay.

I used to tell the General—says I, "General, you are too good natured by half; you not only do Government work, but you dip into pretty much all kind of work, that no other President ever thought on; and the fact is, the General did carry matters so far, or let other people carry him so far, that there was few things going he was not mixed up with, till it got so at last that almost every old lady about the country would't set a hen without writing or calling on the General to ask him which was the most lucky number of eggs to put in the nest, 11 eggs or 13 eggs; and it almost wore him to skin and bone. I believe you was the only man that was able to out work the General; and if it hadn't ben that you was a leetle younger than he was, he'd made a tooth-pick on you as he did of pretty much all the rest of creation. But, as I said before, I am considerable womblecropt at your leaving public life—for now that the General has gone to home, and you too, I feel somewhat cut out. Mr. Van Buren don't seem to want my services no how, and I don't complain of that—I did expect to get a chance "Down East," but he selected General Scott—a man that outrank'd me all hal-low, as he does pretty much every man now-a-days.

However, General Scott didn't forget me, and said if there was any fighting to be done among the Loggers, he knew who he could count on, and looked me trait in the face; and I sat down and writ a letter mark'd "*confidential*" to the "2d Brigade," and told 'em to stand firm and obey no orders but General Scott's—that it was a *National matter*, and he was a *National officer*; and when he said "Shoulder hoo," then to march and follow him to *Houlton* or *Halifax*, or any other place beginning with H—if he chose to lead; and in that way they would not only have a *Fairfield*, but would be sure of a *Winfield*, and that was more important.

In this matter of fighting, there is one thing I always keep my eye on, and I found General Scott in the same way of

thinking; and that is, to depend less on folks who say they are ready to shed the last drop of their blood, than on folks who are ready to shed the first drop. Give a man eight dollars a day to make speeches in Congress, with the right of free postage, and you hear enuf of "last drop" matters; but when it comes to camp duty, and raw beef and stale bread, and bagnet work, then the "first drop" folks have to stand the racket at eight dollars a month. I tell'd the General—says I, "General, I suppose you would about as leave fight as eat, for that's your nature—but for my part, seeing as how things are getting on remarkably smart all over the country, and the spring of the year, too, and the new improvements every day, and the green leaves and the grass, and the little children, all sporting, and the canals and railroads all about half made, and the cotton crops just about beginning, and the banks all jest getting into specie payments, and every thing looking about slick; to say nothing about the steamboats crossing the Ocean every week—it does seem to me that a war won't help matters no how."

"I know that, Major," says he—"war is a great calamity, and there aint only one thing worse," says he, "What's that," says I, "National dishonor," says he—straitening up pretty nigh like an Aroostook pine. "Go ahead, you critter," says I, "and if there is any chopping to be done Down East, let me know." Well, you see what has ben done, and all I've got to say about it is, that when you come to think that a man nigh upon seven feet high, and as strait as a bean pole, and all grit from one end to t'other, is willing to work like a beaver at all pints—South and Southwest, North and Northeast, and *Downeast*, to keep an honorable peace, and watching like a Linx to see that the nation's honor is no way sailed—I do think tho' a war would give me a considerable boost up in the world in military rank, *the man* who keeps the peace is, according to the Good Book, entitled to a *blessing*—especially if war is his trade.

There is one thing I think Mr. Van Buren deserves great credit for, and that is in commanding the sarvices of such a man as General Scott to manage all matters of this natur; and there is only one thing more I think is wanting, and that the people are entitled to; and that is, some one to manage the money matters of the country as well. I go on the principle that if a man does rite in using the best plough he can get on his farm, and sowing the best grain—jest so the President does rite in dealing into the sarvice of the country the best the country has—the people are entitled to it—and if Party folks grumble, they should take it out in grumbling. Look what "Party" has done already for some years back—"scratch ploughing and smutty crops"—but enough of this.

I thank you for your kind invitation to stop and eat Peaches with you when they get ripe; and, as I remember you have got some capital early apple trees on your farm, I'll stop and take a bite on my way to the North, and a chance at the peaches when I return back, just by way of reminding you of old times in the bank—for just so sure you remember, when you tell'd folks you thought Peaches would be ripe in September, they would be down upon you for a nip of early Apples in June, and then fetch up on the Peaches afterwards.

The fact is, Squire, I am desparately afraid, now that you and the General have both backed out and gone to get some quiet and rest, that a good many on us will have cause to feel that *good times* have gone by—only with this difference, that the General's extra work came from his notion of "rewarding friends and punishing enemies," and you went on the principle of feeding both—and one was about as hard work as t'other.

As Amos Kindle haint got a post of fice nigh your farm, I send this letter to the New York Express, to print and send out, and I suppose you'll get it somehow that way beat.

Your friend in old times, and times present, and times to come,

J. DOWNING, Major,  
Downingville Militia, 2d Brigade