

The Highland Messenger.

LIFE IS ONLY TO BE VALUED AS IT IS USEFULLY EMPLOYED.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

METAPHYSICS.

Do you think Aristotle, when he says reason is related to—*Vicar of Wakefield*. The old hermit Prague, that never saw a link, very wittily said to a niece of his, "that that is, is." Most people who possess the hermit's happy ignorance, are of the same opinion; but, when to say, an acquaintance with pen and ink, and things of that sort, is very apt to reverse this opinion. No sooner do we begin to study metaphysics, than we find, as if by magic, we have been mistaken, supposing that "Master Parson is really Master Parson."

"For my part, have a high opinion of metaphysical studies, think the science a very useful one, because it teaches people what their bodies they are. The objection is, they are disposed to lay the truth sufficiently to heart, but continue to give themselves airs, just as if some things were really some folks. Old Doctor, the minister of Humkinville, here I lived in my youth, was one of the metaphysical divines of the old school, and would cavil upon the ninth part of a hair about entities and quiddities, nominalism, and realism, free will and necessity, with which sort of learning he used to stuff his sermons, and around his learned hearers, the lumpkins. They never doubted that it was all true, but were apt to say, with the old woman in *Moliere*:

Paple si bien que j'en'entend goutte.

I remember a conversation that happened at my grandfather's, in which the Doctor had some difficulty in making his metaphysics "all as clear as preaching." There was my grandfather, *ridiculous* my grandfather; Uncle Tim, who was the greatest standard raising onions in our part of the country, but "not knowing metaphysics, and no notion of the true reason of his not being said;" my aunt Judy, Keturah Titterwell, who could knit stockings like all post, but could not syllogize; Malachi Muggs, our hired man, that drove the oxen, and Isaac Thrasher, the district schoolmaster, who had dropped in to warm his fingers and get a drink of cider. Something was under discussion, and my grandfather could make nothing of it; but the Doctor said it was "metaphysically true."

"Pray, Doctor," said Uncle Tim, "tell me something about metaphysics; I have often heard of that science, but never for my life could find out what it was."

"Metaphysics," said the Doctor, "is the science of abstractions."

"I'm no wiser for that explanation," said Uncle Tim.

"It treats," said the Doctor, "of matters most profound and sublime, a little difficult perhaps for a common intellect or an un-schooled capacity to fathom, but not the less important, on that account, to all living beings."

"What does it teach?" asked the school-master.

"It is not applied so much to the operation of teaching," answered the Doctor, "as that of inquiring; and the chief inquiry is, whether things are or whether they are not."

"I don't understand the question," said Uncle Tim, taking the pipe out of his mouth.

"For example, whether this earth on which we tread," said the Doctor, giving a heavy stamp on the floor, and setting his foot slap on the cat's tail, "whether this earth does really exist, or whether it does not exist."

"That is a point of considerable consequence to settle," said my grandfather.

"Especially," said the school-master, "to the holders of real estate."

"Now the earth," continued the Doctor, "may exist."

"Who the dogs doubted that?" asked Uncle Tim.

"A great many men," said the Doctor, "and some very learned ones."

Uncle Tim stared a moment, and then began to fill up his pipe, whistling the tune of High Betty Martin, while the Doctor went on.

"The earth, I say may exist, although Bishop Barkley has proved beyond all possible gaining or denial, that it does not exist. The case is clear; the only difficulty is, to know whether we shall believe it or not."

"And how," asked Uncle Tim, "is all this to be found out?"

"By digging down to the first principles," said the Doctor.

"Ay," interrupted Malachi, "there is nothing equal to the spade and pickaxe."

"That is true," said my grandfather, going in Malachi's way, "is by digging for the foundation that we shall find out whether the world exists or not; for, if we dig to the bottom of the earth and find a foundation, why then we are sure of it. But if we find no foundation, it is clear that the world stands upon nothing, or, in other words, that it does not stand at all; therefore, it stands to reason"

"I beg your pardon," interrupted the Doctor, "but you totally mistake me; I use the word *digging* metaphorically, meaning the profoundest cogitation and research into the nature of things. That is the way in which we may ascertain whether things are, or whether they are not."

"But if a man can't believe his eyes," said Uncle Tim, "what signifies talking about it?"

"Our eyes," said the Doctor, are nothing at all but the inlets of sensation, and when we see a thing, all we are aware of is, that we have a sensation of it; we are not sure that the thing exists. We are sure of nothing that we see with our eyes."

"Not without spectacles," said Aunt Judy.

"Plato, for instance, maintains that the sensation of any object is produced by a perpetual succession of copies, images, or counterfeits streaming off from the object to the organs of sensation. Descartes, too, has explained the matter upon the principle of whirligigs."

"But does the world exist?" asked the school-master.

"A good deal may be said on both sides," replied the Doctor, "though the ablest heads are for no existence."

"In common cases," said Uncle Tim, "those who utter nonsense are considered blockheads."

"But in metaphysics," said the Doctor, "the case is different."

"Now all this is hocus pocus to me," said Aunt Judy, suspending her knitting work, and scratching her forehead with one of the needles. "I don't understand a bit more of the business than I did at first."

"I'll be bound there is many a learned professor," said Uncle Tim, "could say the same after spinning a long yarn of metaphysics."

"The Doctor did not admire this gibe at his favorite science," said the school-master, "but he said; 'this thing or that thing may be dubious, but what then? Doubt is the beginning of wisdom.'"

"No doubt of that," said my grandfather, beginning to poke the fire, "but when a man has got through his doubting, what does he begin to build upon in the metaphysical way?"

"Why, he begins by taking something for granted," said the Doctor.

"But is that a sure way of going to work?"

"'Tis the only thing he can do," replied the Doctor, after a pause, and rubbing his forehead as if he was not altogether satisfied that his foundation was not a solid one. My grandfather might have poised him with another question, but he poked the fire and let him go on.

"Metaphysics, to speak exactly"—

"Ah," interrupted the school-master, "bring it down to vulgar fractions, and then we shall understand it."

"'Tis the consideration of immateriality, or the mere spirit and essence of things."

"Come, come," said Aunt Judy, taking a pinch of snuff, "now I see into it."

"Thus, man is considered, not in his corporeality, but in his essence or capability of being; for a man metaphysically, or to metaphysical purposes, hath two natures, that of spirituality and that of corporeality, which may be considered separate."

"What man?" asked Uncle Tim.

"Why any man; Malachi there, for example, I may consider him as Malachi spiritual, or Malachi corporeal."

"That is true," said Malachi, "for when I was in the militia, they made me a sixteen corporal, and I carried grog to the drummer."

"That is another affair," said the Doctor, in continuation, "we speak of man in his essence; we speak also of the essence of locality, the essence of duration"

"And essence of peppermint," said Aunt Judy.

"Poo!" said the Doctor, "the essence I mean is quite a different concern."

"Something too fine to be dribbled through the worm of a still," said my grandfather.

"Then I am all in the dark again," rejoined Aunt Judy.

"By the spirit and essence of things I mean things in the abstract."

"And what becomes of a thing when it gets into the abstract?" asked Uncle Tim.

"Why, it becomes an abstraction."

"There we are again," said Uncle Tim; "but what the deuce is an abstraction?"

"It's a thing that has no matter; that is, it cannot be felt, seen, heard, smelt or tasted; it has no substance or solidity; it is neither large nor small, hot nor cold, long nor short."

"Then what is the long and the short of it?" said the school-master.

"Abstraction," replied the Doctor.

"I suppose, for instance," said Malachi, "that I had a pitch fork"—

"Ay," said the Doctor, "consider a pitchfork in general; that is, neither this one nor that one, nor any particular one but a pitchfork, or pitchforks, divested of their materiality—these are things in the abstract."

"They are things in the hay-mow," said Malachi.

"Pray," said Uncle Tim, "have there been many such things discovered?"

"Discovered!" exclaimed the Doctor, "why all things, whether in heaven or upon the earth, or in the water under the earth, whether small or great, visible or invisible, animate or inanimate; whether the eye can see, or the ear can hear, or the nose can

smell, or the fingers touch; finally, whatever exists or is imaginable in *rerum natura*, past or present, or to come—all may be abstractions."

"Indeed!" said Uncle Tim, "pray what do you make of the abstraction of a red cow?"

"A red cow," said the Doctor, "considered metaphysically, or as an abstraction, an animal possessing neither hide nor horns, bones nor flesh, but is the mere type, color, and fantastical semblance of these parts of a quadruped. It has a shape without any substance, and no color at all, for its redness is the mere counterfeit or imitation of such. As it lacks the positive, so it is also deficient in the accidental properties of all the animals of its tribe, for it has no locomotion, stability, or endurance, neither goes to pasture, gives milk, chews the cud, nor performs any other function of horned beasts, but is a mere creature of the brain, begotten by a freak of the fancy, and nourished by a conceit of the imagination."

"A dog's foot!" exclaimed Aunt Judy, "all the metaphysics under the sun would not make a pound of butter."

"That's a fact!" said Uncle Tim.

The veteran Gen. Gaines is out in a long letter, addressed to Gov. Cannon of this State, and published in the *St. Louis Era*, in favor of the claims of his old comrade in arms, Gen. Harrison, for the Presidency. We desire to republish the entire letter, if we can find room in season. Meantime, we extract two or three of the closing paragraphs:—*Nash, Whig*.

"I have often been asked my opinion as to the talents of Harrison as a statesman. I reply that many of his letters are to be found in almost every reading room in the city or country, and as I am sure he wrote for himself every thing that appears in his own production; hence, with his public acts, will speak for him, and do him justice—Harrison, however, compared with either of the Presidents for the last twenty-three years, may be considered equal to the two first, and superior to the two last, in all the essential characteristics of a statesman; and I prefer him because he is more likely to follow the footsteps of Washington—the only one of all our great Executive chiefs who proved himself to be the President of the United States; and never—never—the President of a party."

I come now to my last reason why I wish Gen. Harrison to be elected President of the United States. I believe that he will not treat any man, nor any thing protected by the law of the land, as a monster; and I believe that he will consider the evil properties of the late Bank of the United States, as necessary and proper for regulating the currency, collecting and disbursing the revenue, and providing for the national defence, therefore as strictly constitutional as it is now admitted to be constitutional for Congress to pass laws authorizing the employment of steam power to facilitate the movement of our vessels up the Mississippi river, or to expedite our military and naval operations against an invading foe. What do I say?—That Congress may constitutionally pass laws authorizing the employment of steam power to hasten the movement of our private and public military and Naval ships and boats up the Mississippi river, or up the St. Lawrence or any other river? I have known some few of the votaries of the spirit of party who would deny the Constitutional right of Congress to pass such law, and I have no doubt but a board could be got up at the Federal city, who would endeavor to put me wrong upon this point, by saying that the word Steam-power is no where to be found in the Constitution. I can but reply that steam-power is necessary and proper to enable us to move as rapidly as an enemy can move; and the Constitution expressly gives Congress power "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers vested by this constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any department or office thereof." And as the constitution authorizes Congress to declare war, and authorizes the President to command the Army and Navy and to repel invasion, we cannot in the present state of the world, prepare for the full and perfect protection of the country without steam power, nor without a national Bank.

I am often asked why I have always so strenuously opposed the evil spirit of party? The history of the French Revolution will answer the question. It is not true that I have ever opposed that difference of opinion which has every where prevailed among the virtuous and wise, in the free discussion of subjects depending upon well tested principles; such, for example, as those which animated our fathers of the Revolution. My opposition is continued to that evil spirit of party which my old friend Jackson, in his best days, denounced as

"A monster, of such hideous mien, That, to be hated, needs but to be seen, Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face, We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

That evil spirit of party which sanctifies all sorts of crimes for the sake of the party. That evil spirit of party which buys and sells, presses and men who call themselves free, but prove to be slaves and pirates—who combine in covering with the blackest detraction, such men as James Madison, De Witt Clinton, Hugh L. White, Peter B. Porter, and William H. Harrison.

EDMOND P. GAINES.

"I'll vote for an honest man."—A sound-hearted old Democrat in every respect, says the *Roxbury* (Mass.) Patriot, dropped into a store in that town the other day, and was immediately accosted by a Locofoco with—

"Well, Mr. B. they say you have turned Whig."

"I know they do," replied Mr. B. "I never said so."

"No! I heard you did."

"It is not true. I only said I meant to vote for an honest man next November."

This answer was a sufficient confirmation of the report, and Mr. B. was quietly passed over to the Whig ranks.

THE CONNECTICUT METEOR.—A gentleman who has just returned from Stratford, Conn., states that in the southern part of Trumbull, three miles from where he was, a fragment of stone fell to the earth, of the size of a peck measure. This stone fell in a private path, plunging along for some distance, and scattering the grass all the way. No other fragments had as yet been found. It is conjectured that the explosion of the body of which this was a part, caused the "earthquake" of the 16th ult.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.—The Philadelphia Inquirer states that the manuscript of the original Declaration of Independence, in the hand-writing of Jefferson, with the interlinations of Franklin and other members, is in possession of the American philosophical society of this city, and may be seen at their hall.

MR. GRAHAM'S SPEECH.

SPEECH OF Mr. GRAHAM, of North Carolina, On the Sub-Treasury Bill, delivered in the House of Representatives, June 30th, 1840.

MR. SPEAKER: I appear in this debate, neither as the advocate of executive experiments, nor of banks that have suspended specie payment. I desire good money for the government, and money equally good for the people. The subject under discussion involves very important consequences; it embraces the whole revenue of the Government, and affects the whole currency of the country. It is a delicate, difficult, and deep question: touching the pockets and pocket-books, the prices and property, of fifteen millions of individuals. The magnitude of the great interests and the happiness of the great number of persons involved, should induce us to reflect and consider well the nature and consequences of this measure. We are asked, by the President, to throw away the experience of half a century, and to discard the opinions and laws of the purest patriots and wisest statesmen, who have administered this Government since the revolution.

Sir, I am distrustful of too many experiments—when you try an experiment on a dog or cat, or some insignificant animal, I have no objection; but when you seriously propose an experiment upon all the money and property and happiness of fifteen millions of People, I require strong arguments and convincing reasons to satisfy my mind that it should be adopted and tried.

Let us examine and analyze this new financial scheme.

The Sub-treasury proposes two things. 1st. No bank notes shall, after a certain day, be received, kept, or paid out by the United States—but that all money collected from the tax-paying people, shall be paid in gold and silver coin only, and nothing else.

2d. That all banks be discontinued and prohibited from becoming the fiscal agents and depositories of the public money; and that hereafter all public money shall be collected, kept, transferred, and disbursed; by officers appointed by the President, responsible to him, and removable at his pleasure.

In short, that the United States shall be a hard money government in all its financial affairs; and that the President shall appoint all those who keep and handle the public money.

I cannot support this measure, and oppose it because, in my judgement, it is impracticable; the metallic money is too scarce.

It will monopolize and take nearly one half of all the gold and silver coin from the people, and give exclusive privileges to the President and his federal officers and agents.

It will operate injuriously upon all the banks and bank notes in circulation, which now constitute the principal and actual currency of the people, the States, and the territories.

It will wantonly impair and destroy credit and confidence.

It will unjustly interfere with the relations and contracts between debtors and creditors, making, by operation of law, the creditors richer, and the debtors poorer—without any merit of the first, or any fault of the last; and thereby the rich will be made richer, and the poor poorer.

It will diminish and reduce the price of wages, of produce, of property, and of all articles of trade and merchandise made in our own country; while foreign goods will retain their present prices, and thereby we shall be obliged to sell low and buy high.

It will give two currencies—the better one for the President and federal officers, holders, and the baser for the people and tax-payers.

It will be unsafe.

It will be dangerous to liberty, and give kingly powers to the President, and destroy the checks and balances of the constitution.

I will endeavor to demonstrate the propositions, and prove the objections I have made to this bill.

IMPRATICABLE.

Let us first enquire in relation to the ways and means, and ascertain, if it be practicable, where, when, and how, shall we procure and command a sufficient abundance of the precious metal, to answer and supply the financial funds, and necessary demands for the use of the Government? Mr. Speaker, I live in the gold region in North Carolina, and have the honor to represent one of the richest gold mining districts in the United States. I feel a deep solicitude for the prosperity of gold mines, and the profits of gold mines; and, therefore, the first term I had a seat in Congress, (in 1833-'34) I introduced a resolution to establish a branch of the Mint to coin gold in North Carolina. During that term, Congress passed a law to erect branch mints in North Carolina and Georgia, in the heart and centre of the gold region, to encourage and stimulate the miners to work hard, dig deep, and convert our native gold into American coin, that it might circulate in our own country, and prevent its exportation to foreign countries. The same Congress authorized the erection of another branch mint at New Orleans, to enable our Government and citizens to procure and command all the bullion, or bars of gold and silver they could from foreign countries, and convert that also into our constitutional coin. At the same time Congress passed a law, fixing the value of

certain foreign coins, and declaring the same a legal tender. Now, sir, I have been a faithful fellow-laborer in all the legislation of Congress, since I first took my seat, to develop the rich resources, and valuable treasures of our own mines, and to convert our native precious metals into coin; and I have also cordially co-operated in trying to command all we could from foreign countries.

Well, sir, you perceive my inclination, my location, and my duty, all prompted and conspired to stimulate me to seek and find all the gold and silver we could command for currency and circulation. Now, after laboring and legislating diligently to get all we can find, and keep all we can command, how much have we got? After digging and washing the *deposit mines*; after carefully searching all the *vein mines* at home, and deriving all the specie we can obtain from foreign nations; then, what is the whole aggregate amount of gold and silver coin in the United States? After all our toil and trouble, we have about seventy or eighty millions of dollars in specie. Many able financiers say less—no well informed man says more—though all admit we are indebted to Europeans for ten or fifteen millions of specie, which is *borrowed money*. However, to illustrate my argument, and test the principle of this bill, I will take the whole amount of specie in this country at eighty millions of dollars. Now, what is the number of the whole population of the United States and her territories? All will agree at least fifteen millions, and I take that number. Thus we have eighty millions of dollars to be divided among fifteen millions of people. I hope no one, who is a republican in principle and practice, will object to an equal division, equal rights, equal laws, and equal money. But, sir, in all courts of justice and equity, we are required to be just before we are

generous. Let us divide our debts before we receive our distributive shares, and take our proportion of any common fund. The annual expenditure of the General Government is a debt, and charge on this eighty millions—so we must learn subtraction before we work equal division. What is the aggregate amount of the annual expenditures of the Federal Government? During the three years of President Van Buren's administration, the expenditures have been upwards of thirty-seven millions of dollars every year, (and indeed, during the year 1838, they were more than thirty-nine millions.)

These charges and expenditures are extravagantly high, and look like giving one-half of a man's estate to manage the other—but the account has been so footed up and paid. I know the friends of the administration say, they are going to reduce these extravagant expenditures—but, after so many promises, and so few performances, I would rather see them tell of that. To explain my views, I will reduce the annual tax and public expenditure down to thirty-five millions, which is two millions less than it has been in any one of the last three years.

Put down eighty and subtract thirty-five from it, and forty-five will be the sum remaining for division among fifteen millions of people. How often will fifteen go into forty-five, by fair division? Three times exactly, and no more. Mr. Speaker, I have, by facts and figures, been trying to test and analyze the Sub-treasury system, and see its practical operation and general bearing—and after counting more specie than there is in the country; after reducing the public expenses less than they have been during any one year of Mr. Van Buren's administration; and after estimating our population at a less number than the probability still there are but three dollars in hard money left and allowed to each individual in the United States. Three dollars only is a small sum to support any human being for one year!! Eighty millions of money is, in my judgment, not enough for the necessary purposes of the Government and the people. It is not enough, in times of trial and peril, for the Government alone.

At the close of the last war, which terminated in 1815, this nation had incurred a public debt amounting to about one hundred and thirty millions of dollars, when there was not more than about twenty millions of specie in the United States. To have paid that large debt with that little sum of specie would have been impossible. But it has been satisfied and extinguished by the use and payment of bank notes. The friends of liberty in our revolution never could have conquered the British, and achieved our glorious independence, by collecting and disbursing hard money only to sustain the cause of freedom. Our pure patriots of 1776 could not have successfully contended and continued their noble struggle for seven months, (instead of seven years,) by the exclusive use of the metallic currency. We have now no foreign war; still, patriotism and self-security admonish and warn us, in peace to prepare for war; and the very fact that we are ready and prepared, may save us from many bloody wars. Money is the sineas of war; and you can no more defend the liberties of the republic without money, than you can without men and munitions of war. It is the duty of the Government to be always ready for any event or conflict. If our country were again engaged in a beligerent contest with some powerful foreign foe, where would the President and the advocates of this measure find the necessary ways and means to defend the nation with hard money alone? Would they tell our

gallant officers and soldiers, you must not fight and defend the country, unless you get hard money; and that, it is unconstitutional to receive any kind of paper currency? Or, would they tell the people, the constitution is made of India rubber, and that it is unconstitutional to take paper currency in time of peace, but that it is constitutional in time of war? Suppose our fathers in the revolution, and in the last war, had refused to fight the battles of liberty until and unless they were paid in silver dollars and gold coin; then the American eagle never would, nor could, have conquered the British lion, and this free country would yet have remained colonies dependent on old England. Suppose, during the first or last war, some paper-hating and hard money-loving statesman had seriously proposed to Congress to conduct and carry on the war by the use and medium of specie only; how many advocates would he have found? None, in the republican ranks. Such a man would have been marked and set down as the enemy of liberty, who was plotting treason against this republic. Such a man would not have been called a whig, because it was impossible to collect from the people specie enough to pay the army and navy and civil list. The adoption of such a policy would substantially and virtually have struck our flag, and surrendered our country, to the government of a king. In the days that tried men's souls, the question was, will you have liberty and credit, or tyranny and no credit? When a great question of liberty was involved, our lofty patriots did not stop to count the cost, or to weigh dollars and cents in golden scales. No, indeed. If they had stopped fighting when the hard money gave out, and had not been permitted to use credit, a foreign tyrant's hoofs would even now be walking rough-shod over the rights of freemen.

Let us again return to facts and figures, and ascertain the people's portion of the specie currency, and see how it will affect and operate upon the business, trade, and industry of the country. After the payment of the public taxes, and annual demands of the General Government, (in time of peace, mind you,) we saved and retained, out of eighty millions, three dollars in silver or specie to each individual in the United States. Does any reasonable man, not blinded by party prejudice, seriously believe three dollars, and no more, will answer and transact the business of any individual? Will civilized freemen be content and satisfied with that small sum of money? I answer for my constituents and myself, no, never. It will not buy food, or clothing, for one person. It will not even pay taxes. It will afford no money to sustain and facilitate trade and commerce.

Where are we to procure funds to purchase the necessities and comforts of life, salt, iron, sugar, coffee, and many other articles? How is the capital and currency to be obtained, to purchase the cotton of the planter, the grain of the farmer, the wares of the manufacturer, and the goods of the merchant? Sir, I am opposed to retrograding and returning back to a semi-savage state of society, living on black broth, wearing rude undressed skins, and using metal money as the only currency. Such notions are too anti-deluvian, too far behind the improvements of the age. We want more currency; our share of eighty millions (without giving a dollar to support Government,) is still too little; far less than the necessary wants and just business of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce require and demand. To whom shall the people look, if they do not look to Government, for a good currency? In every civilized country, it is the duty and high prerogative of Government to fix the standard value of money, and to control and regulate the currency. Two of the great objects for which Government was instituted are, to furnish a uniform, sound currency to the people in the transaction of their lawful business, and to prevent imposition and speculation by the circulation of a depreciated currency. We have tried to introduce gold and silver into more general circulation, still there is a great scarcity, and not enough to answer the purposes of the Government and the people. Now what is to be done? I will not wage war against a wise Providence, because the precious metals are so scarce and hard to find, and because we cannot fill the pockets of every body with gold and silver.

Mr. Speaker, I hold these propositions—that Government is a trust to be administered, and not a property to be enjoyed; that the trustees are in duty bound to administer it for the general benefit of the many, and not for the particular interest of the few; that we are bound to do something for the people, as well as for ourselves; that we are bound to furnish a good currency to assist the just operations of Government, and to aid the people in their lawful trade and business; and that they are entitled to the same kind of money with ourselves, whatever that may be. That no other invidious distinction between officeholders and taxpayers should be tolerated. Let the Government make, or cause to be made, a sufficiency of good money, and use no more of it than is absolutely needful, and let the remainder of the very same kind of money stay in the pockets of the people to swell and fill the channels of trade and commerce, and whenever we should become involved in war, then the pockets of the people would freely and fully supply the treasury of the nation, just as the arms of freemen would defend the country. Is there a member here who is