

# Highland Messenger.

"Life is only to be valued as it is usefully employed."

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

### Mr. Sparks's Third Lecture.

[From the New York Express.]

**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.**—The University Chapel was filled at an early hour last evening with a brilliant and fashionable audience and were obliged to leave from the impossibility of getting a seat. Of the lecture itself, of course, it is superfluous to speak in terms of praise.

Mr. Sparks said it had long been a subject of curious inquiry at what time the idea originated of declaring the colonies independent. Mr. Chambers asserts that the subject was had in contemplation many years before the Revolution, and even so far back as the first settlement of the colonies; but while the lecturer would not call in question the honesty of Mr. Chambers's history, he considered that Mr. C.'s prejudices, and his opposition to the interest of the colonies, unfitted him to be an impartial judge. Mr. Sparks cited conversations and letters of Dr. Franklin and James Otis, while in England, in which they stated distinctly that the colonies had no other intention of severing their connection with the mother country, and indignantly repelled the accusation that such was their ultimate object. It is impossible to show, (said Mr. S.) from any document or conversation whatever, that the idea of independence was contemplated before the passage of the Stamp Act. After that period the acts of the British Government were of such a nature as led the colonies to think that they might at length be driven to take this course. But down to the last hour, the leaders in the movements which were making in the colonies did not hold out the idea of ultimate independence to the People. Even so late as 1775, no letter or other document can be found which declared independence to be expedient or proper. A redress of grievances was all that was demanded, and to this alone they seemed to bend their efforts. Whatever might have been the secret feeling of the leading spirits of the day on this subject, it was obviously wise policy to abstain from any avowal of intention to dissolve the connection of the colonies with Great Britain; and under the circumstances in which they were placed, and the many wrongs they suffered, it is a singular fact that it was their intention, they kept it so long confined to their own bosoms. We seek in vain, from the date of the Stamp Act to the battle of Lexington, for any thing which indicated final independence to be their purpose.

In 1774 a pamphlet appeared in England written by John Carter in which he strongly urged Parliament to declare the American colonies free and independent; as he argued, it was impossible to retain them in allegiance to the British Crown. In fact, such was the conclusion of many shrewd men in the mother country. Dr. Tucker also published a pamphlet, in which he proposed a line of action to the colonies; but being a man of much warmth of temper, and becoming irritated on finding that the colonies differed from him in the view he took of the subject; he at length proposed to Parliament to cut off the colonies from their connection, and force them to be independent, as they were unworthy to be subjects of the Crown.

Joshua Quincy, who was in London in 1774, writes that in conversations he had with Dr. Franklin at that time, he found Franklin warmly in favor of independence, and strongly desirous that the colonies should take decisive measures for that object. At the first Continental Congress the subject was not touched or alluded to. About this time a British officer wrote to Washington, complaining that the people were beginning to turn their minds to such a purpose. Washington replied that no such design was contemplated, but still the people would not consent to give up their valued rights, or submit to oppressive acts of the British ministry, let the consequences be what they would.

Mr. Jay, John Adams, Jefferson, and Madison all declared that the colonies did not desire independence. Some there were, doubtless, who looked to a final appeal to arms; but generally the desire was to bring about a redress of grievances, to obtain satisfaction for the many wrongs they had suffered, and to produce a change in the policy of the British ministry, and this they hoped to accomplish without a resort to measures which should bring the two countries into actual collision, and result in a dismemberment of their connection. But subsequent events—the rejection of their petitions, and the scornful and haughty manner in which all their overtures were treated—at length opened their eyes. They became convinced that but one alternative

was left them, unless they could not consent to give all for which they were contending, and quietly submit themselves as humble vassals of the King, under a bondage which their rebellion would render tenfold more galling than before.

Congress wisely abstained from taking the lead in the matter allowing the people themselves to take the first action upon the subject. General Greene, a proud name in American history, took a bold and decisive stand, and openly and strongly urged the colonies to declare themselves independent of the British Government.

The first public manifestation by the people on this subject was in Mecklenburg county, North Carolina. After the battle of Lexington, a few patriotic spirits in the county were in the habit of meeting together to discuss the condition of public affairs; and at one of their meetings at the courthouse a series of resolutions were drawn up and signed by twenty-five, declaring that these colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent. These resolutions, however, were passed from public notice; and when, a year afterwards, they were mentioned to Jefferson, he professed never to have heard of them, and strongly censured their spirit and object. This caused considerable feeling among the people of North Carolina, and a committee of the Legislature was appointed to inquire into the conduct of Mr. Jefferson in the matter.

In 1775, Thomas Paine published his Essays entitled Common Sense, which had a great circulation; and exercised an important influence upon the minds of the people. The clearness, simplicity, and powerful reasoning of these Essays rendered them very popular. He urged expediency and necessity of a declaration of independence, and (said the lecturer) the author of Common Sense is allowed to have rendered important service to this country in impressing the necessity of the measure so powerfully and successfully upon the minds of the people.

The first legislative movement was on the 7th of April, 1776, in the Legislature of North Carolina, when that body recommended the consideration of the subject of independence to their delegates in Congress. A month after, the Legislature of Virginia instructed their delegates to vote for a declaration of the independence of the colonies. To Virginia, therefore, may be given the honor of having taken the first step; for, while the Mecklenburg resolutions were in fact a declaration of independence, and the resolutions of the subject, the Virginia delegates were instructed distinctly to vote for such a measure as the legally recognised representatives of that colony.

No order was taken on the Virginia resolutions in Congress until June, when Richard Henry Lee moved that Congress do declare the colonies free and independent. The motion was discussed, but action upon it postponed to wait instructions from the different colonies. In the meantime a committee was appointed to draft a declaration, of which Mr. Jefferson was chairman. On the 8th and 10th June the subject was again discussed. The arguments brought up against the measure were wholly on the ground of expediency at that time. They all agreed that such a step must eventually be taken, but some were of opinion that the whole People were not yet prepared for it—that some of the colonies might disagree with it, and that to press it at once would result in division and disaster. The friends of immediate action argued that a declaration only stated a fact—that in itself considered, it was but a mere form—that it was in vain to look for entire unanimity of opinion or feeling upon the subject and that no foreign nation on friendly terms with England would render the colonies any assistance while they were in the attitude of rebellion against that country, or until they had formally absolved their allegiance to her. The discussion was not at all upon the merits of the case but merely as to the expediency of a declaration at that time.

On the 28th of June, Mr. Jefferson reported his draught; on the 1st of July the Virginia resolutions were passed. About a quarter part of the original draught was stricken out, and as amended it was passed by a unanimous vote, with one exception, Mr. John Dickinson, of Pennsylvania.— Singular enough while Mr. Dickinson had contributed as much as any other man to the declaration, he declined voting for it, though he was ever afterwards a warm and efficient advocate of the interests of his country. On the 4th of July 1776, the colonies were solemnly declared free and independent. The New York delegation did not vote at the time, they being without instructions, as the Legislature were not in session. They signed the declaration on the 15th of July. A portion of the Pennsylvania delegation declined voting probably because of the course taken by Mr. Dickinson. The name of Mr. Clinton and Mr. Livingston, of the New York delegation, do not appear on the declaration, although the latter was on the committee which draughted it. This arose from the fact of their absence at the time.—Mr. Clinton being an officer of the army, and absent on duty, and Mr. Livingston was called home by business at the courts.

Among the paragraphs stricken out from the original draught was one censuring the importation of slaves, and reflecting upon the course of the British in that particular. This paragraph was understood to be left out mainly through the influence of the delegates from South Carolina and Georgia.

After the declaration was signed, a copy was sent to each of the Colonies, to be read publicly to the People. The reading was generally accompanied with the ringing of bells and the firing of cannon. The Continental Army was then in New York, and Washington ordered the declaration to be read on parade, where it was received with marked demonstrations of approbation.

On the 2d of August the declaration was engrossed on parchment and signed, which is the copy in the Department of State, and from which the common fac similes are taken.

In concluding his lecture, of which we have above given a brief outline of the prominent points, Mr. Sparks said that it seemed to be specially ordered by Providence that the declaration should be made in just the right time. A few days after, the British Commissioners arrived with offers of reconciliation, and had the measure been displayed, it is impossible to tell what might have been the result. When we consider, too, the series of disasters which for a long time clouded our prospects, the thousand obstacles which presented themselves on every side and the natural feelings which arose at being placed in deadly conflict with their once beloved father-land, it will be readily seen how important was the fact that, by the act of declaring their independence, the States had gone too far to retract, if they had been disposed so to do. The declaration had also an important influence by inducing the States to fill up their quotas of the army, and in healing the jealousies and divisions which had crept in among them.

Mr. Sparks concluded with a few brief remarks upon the applause with which the declaration was received by the philanthropists and patriots of Europe.

**AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.**—This name will at once recall to you Charlemagne, whose capital and burying place it was. We have just returned from La Chapelle, which so conveniently distinguishes this from the other Aix in Europe. Otho built the present church on the site of Charlemagne's chapel, preserving its original octagonal form, which Charlemagne, intending it for his own tomb, adopted from the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem. We stood under the centre of the dome, on a large marble slab, inscribed "Carolo Magno;" and over our heads hung a massive chandelier the gift of *Federic Barbossa*. How these material things conjured back from the dead these mighty chieftains!

The vault must have been a startling sight when Otho opened it and found the Emperor, not in the usual supine posture, but seated on his throne in his imperial robes, with the crown on his flaxen hair, his sceptre in his hand, the good sword *joyeuse* at his side, the Gospels on his knee, the pilgrim's pouch, which, living, he always wore, still at the girdle, and precious jewels sparkling amid decay and ashes. The sacristan showed us his skull—the palace of the soul!—enclosed in a silver case. His lofty soul has, I trust, now a fitter place. There are shown also, several relics found in his tomb, which touch a chord of general sympathy; his hunting horn, a relic of the true cross, and a locket containing the Virgin's hair, which he wore in death, as he had always worn in life.

The church is said to be the oldest in Germany. The choir, built in 1256, is more modern. Its painted windows are so exquisite in their form they affect you like a living beauty. There is a fete to-day. The "grander reliques," which are shown once in seven years, are exhibiting, and the town is thronged with peasantry. They were literally packed on the little place before the Cathedral. A priest was in a very high gally with attendants, displaying the relics. This church is rich in these apocryphal treasures. The priest held up one thing after another, the Virgin's chemise, the swaddling-clothes, &c., against a black surface, and at each holy thing down-sunk the mass upon their knees. There were exceptions to this devout action; travellers who, like us, were staring, and talking, and making discord with the deep responses, and there were a few persons pushing their way through the crowd hawking little books in German and French, describing the relics; and selling beads that had been blessed by the priest. If not holy, the relics have a historical interest that makes them well worth seeing. They were presented to Charlemagne by a patriarch of Jerusalem, and by a Persian king.

The baths of Aix were enjoyed by the Romans. We went to one in the centre of the town; where a brazen lion spouts out the mineral water and where there is a very handsome building with a colonnade and refreshment rooms. We would have gladly lingered here for a few days instead of these very few hours; but, like all all other country people, we seem always urged by some demon on—on.

**CHARITY.**—An illiterate personage, who had always volunteered to go round with his hat, was suspected of sparring his own pocket. Overhearing one day a hint to that effect, he made the following speech: "Other gentlemen puts down what they think proper, and so do I. Charity's a private concern, and what I gives is nothing to nobody."

**A Sharp Question.**—"Does Christianity consist in a vivid perception of the faults, and an obtuse blindness to the merits, of those who differ from us?" asks the Edinburgh Review.

The following "Private" Letter from a young English Officer in China to his brother in England, is humorous enough to have been written by Thomas Hood.

**Dear Tom.**—Every thing is going on gloriously—the British arms are triumphant, and we now only require the Emperor of China's consent to our taking possession of his territory, which, I am sorry to say there is at present no likelihood of obtaining.— However, there is little doubt if we be not all swept off by ague and cholera, that we shall be able to maintain our present position a few months longer. Our situation here would be very comfortable if we had any thing to eat but beef and worse biscuit; these, however, are but trifling inconveniences, and, though we have no fresh meat, we have plenty of fish in the river. One of our men caught a fine one the other day, which was bought and cooked by the officers' mess, by which means we were all nearly destroyed. The fish unfortunately happened to be of a poisonous nature, in consequence of which a general order was issued the next day, bidding the troops to catch or eat any more fish. The country around the factory is beautiful; but we deem it prudent to keep within the walls, as the Chinese are very expert at picking up the stragglers, whom they usually strangle. Beyond this we cannot complain of our situation; fowls are extremely abundant, but I have not seen any, the inhabitants having carried them up the country along with their cattle and provisions of every description. The water here is so brackish that it is almost impossible to drink it; there are, however, some wells of delicious water in the neighborhood, which would be a real treasure to us if the Chinese had not poisoned them. The weather is extremely hot, and the advantage of the river for bathing would be very great, if it were not so full of sharks. I have much more to relate of our present cheering prospects and enviable condition, but a ship is on the point of sailing for England, so must conclude in haste. Ever, dear Tom, yours, &c.

### Hoosier customer.

The Picayune gives a queer account of an uncouth looking Hoosier who went into an ironmonger's store in Charles street, whistling, on somewhat a low key, "Yankee Doodle," and seeming as independent as an eagle in his eyrie.

He threw his eye along down the well arranged store, as a captain of militia would look along the lines of a training day, and then addressed the clerk with the well comb'd hair, who stood impatient to know what the hoosier wanted, that he might at once supply him, and return to the perusal of James' last novel.

"Stranger, you go it rayther extensive here, in the saw, hatchet and ectetera business."

"Rather," said the clerk, assuming a bland tone, but wishing the hoosier on board of his flat boat, "do any thing for you, sir?"

"Well, I guess you can, young feller," said the hoosier, "you seem to be a right nice kind of a man. Why, your hair is just as greasy and as glossy as your eye not nothing but bar meat, you reason-looking critter you. Why, on air don't you make a clearing on your chin!" (the clerk wore an imperial.) Out west we never leave any stump standing that we don't cut down."

"Sir," said the clerk, peevishly, "do you wish to buy any thing?"

"Haint you got locks?" said the hoosier, perfectly composed.

"Yes," said the clerk, "we have locks of every description, padlocks, spring locks, patent locks, and double shooting locks."

**An exciting Picture.**  
Mr. Vickers, a returned drunkard, of Baltimore, in the course of a recent speech, related the incident which we subjoin.— We wish it could be read by every hard drinker in the country, for it appears to us to convey an admonition which even the most insensible must feel.

You cannot think, said Mr. Vickers, how soon a man's circumstances become changed when once he has signed the pledge. I will tell you of a man whom I knew in Baltimore. He was not worth a cent a day, and his family was supported by his hard working wife. He had heard of the Washington Society, and he had determined to join. But how should he get his quarter of a dollar, which was required for the initiation fee. He went to his wife, and told her he wanted a quarter of a dollar. "What for!" "No matter," said he. "I want it and must have it." She gave it to him knowing it would be no use to withhold it, any supposing he meant to buy rum with it. He went to the Washington Society on a Monday night and joined. The next day he went to work at his trade, which was a good one, and he could make money fast. He came home sober every night, and on Saturday received his wages, and bought a barrel of flour, a ham, some groceries, and so on; and got them on a dray and sent them home. The drayman drove up to the door and told his wife that the barrel of flour and groceries were for her. She told him there was some mistake in it—it did not belong there; for she had never had a barrel since they had been married—always had to buy their flour by the sixpence worth; the flour certainly could not be for her.— While they were talking the husband came up, and said she, "Husband, here's a man says this barrel of flour and these groceries are all for us." "So they are, and I have bought them all with the twenty-five cents you gave me last Monday night. I joined the Washington Temperance Society with that twenty-five cents; we shall have flour by the barrel after this instead of by the sixpence worth, or the eleven penny bit's worth."

What, said Mr. Vickers, do you think were the feelings of that wife and mother. She had before had to sit up all night, sometimes, sewing to earn enough to maintain herself and children. What had the pledge done for her? It had given her a husband; it had given her children a father. The pledge had saved him. We watch over one another, and we know how to pity the poor drunkard. Ah! yes, and save him too.— *Phil. Sat. Chron.*

[From the Boston Journal.]

### Exchange.

There are many persons in the community, especially among the gentler sex, who know but little of the nature of Exchange operations. They are aware that money is transmitted from one part of the country to another, by means of Bills of Exchange—but the precise nature of the operation, or the mode of establishing the rate of Exchange, is still a mystery in their eyes.— Since President Tyler's *retouch* a great deal has been said in relation to Exchange—curiosity has been roused, and a wish to solve the mystery has been excited. With a view to gratify this laudable curiosity, we now lay before our readers the following explanation of Exchange, written by that practical man, William Cobbett:

"What is that thing called Exchange? One man draws a bill on another man; a third man buys this bill of the first, and sends to the second for payment. That which the second man pays to, or takes from, the first man, over and above, or less than, the amount of the bill, is what is called the exchange, and when he gives neither more nor less than the amount of the bill, the exchange is what is called *at par*, just as our money is, when we get twenty shillings in exchange for a sovereign."

Let us take an illustration and let it be *athome* where the money has the same name in places.—Sharpshins, a Bristol man, draws a bill on a Londoner for a hundred pounds that the Londoner owes him.— Another man, whose name shall be Broadbrim, who owes a hundred pounds in London, comes to him, and buys this bill. Now, if there be few persons in Bristol who have any thing due to them in London, and who can draw upon London, and a great many persons at Bristol who want to transmit money to London; and as a bill is a much more convenient thing than a bag of gold, to send to London, Sharpshins says to Broadbrim, I will not let you have my hundred pound bill unless you give something over, which Broadbrim will do in order to get the bill, which is a most safe and convenient mode of conveying money. Then, that which Broadbrim gives for the bill, over and above the hundred pounds, is called the rate of exchange; and this exchange is said to be in favor of London, because a bill on London will fetch more money than the sum that it is drawn for. But, when the contrary is the case; when there are many persons who want to sell bills on London, and few persons in Bristol who want to buy such bills, then Sharpshins must sell his hundred pound bill for less than a hundred pounds, else Broadbrim will not have it, seeing there are so many persons who want to sell bills on London; and now the exchange is in favor of Bristol; seeing that a Bristol man can pay a London debt of 100 pounds with less than a 100 pounds; seeing that the London people owe the Bristol ones more than those of Bristol owe those of London. Sometimes the dealings and debts between the two places are so, that each owes as much to the other as this other owes

to it. Then the one hundred pound bill will sell for a hundred pounds and no more. And then the exchange is said to be at par or on a parallel.

It is the same with regard to two nations, but here comes in the circumstance of different denominations of money, to account or reckon by. Ours is pound sterling, the French have their franc, the Italians have their florin, the Spanish their dollars, the Dutch some beastly thing that does not now occur to me. Let us take the French franc; 25 francs (leaving out the fraction) are equal in intrinsic value to an English pound. Therefore, if I owe a man in France £100, I must send him a bill of 2,500 francs, if the exchange be at par; but, as in the Bristol and London case above stated I may have to give more, or to give less, than £100 for a bill of 2,500 francs, according as the rate of exchange varies, to the other, affects as we have seen above, the rate of exchange."

### The moment after death.

"It is a serious thing to die." To leave this world never to return, to part forever with all earth, to exchange time for eternity, and the probationary opportunities of the present, for the settled and unchanging destiny of the unending future; to pass from the warm precincts of life, to the cold chambers of death, is appalling, even in thought, to human nature. When the thought is permitted to stand clearly before the mind, it strikes the living with solemnity and awe. But the dying man—what an amazing change does he experience in that moment, when the soul is unclothed from its mortal tabernacle, and looks abroad to that mighty journey upon which it has been compelled to enter! Just now he was here. Time and opportunity were his. Friends were around him. The light of the sun was in his eyes. But the moment after death finds him gone. Time and opportunity are his no more. No more can he look upon friends below, and exchange with them the sweet charities of life, engage in his business, or administer to his wants or soothe his spirit. The light of the sun has faded away from his eyes forever; and other scenes have burst upon his view. His first step is taken upon that new and untried way, whose mysteries are hidden from every living eye, and whose length is the duration of unending periods; and the days he travels onward in his course, are measured by the revolutions of ages. He looks for the first time upon eternal scenes. He experiences for the first time the realities of the world, which to living men, is to come. The moment after death! What wondrous secrets will it disclose? To what amazing realities will it introduce the soul? What unpeopled interests will it decide? To what glorious or fearful destiny will it carry the undying spirit? How then will the great God appear? What fresh disclosure of his Being, and majesty, and power, and truth and justice will he make? What displays of his glory unseen by mortal men, will then be exhibited? How will Christ appear? What views of the way of salvation, the Saviour's blood, will then be had? What views of the work of the Holy Spirit in here striving with sinners to bring them to repentance and to Christ; and in renewing the souls of God's people? How will then the sin of neglecting the Gospel and religion, and grieving the Holy Spirit appear? These questions we cannot answer now; but we shall fully know them all the moment after death. They are questions to be pondered now—to be experienced then. Reader, are you prepared to experience with safety the wonders and events of the moment after death? If to witness the death of others, if to stand by in the sad hour when they give up the ghost and are gone, strike awe into the hearts of the living, what must be the reality to the soul which has just past the amazing and mysterious change? The soul of him who has truly repented of his sin and believed with the heart unto righteousness, whatever may be the peculiar nature of its sensations the moment after death, is unquestionably safe and happy. But who shall tell the sensations of him who dies unprepared to meet his God, where in a moment he finds himself in a world of spirits; not hearing of eternity but in it? Not asking, is there a God? but trembling in his awful presence. Perhaps while living he despised the Saviour; and stood firm against the thought of eternity. Perhaps he triumphed over the warnings of the Bible and remained unmoved at death. But where is he? and what his confidence the moment after death? God and eternity and his soul can tell.—*Chronicle of the Church.*

AN INTERESTING FACT FOR RUNSELLERS.

The following fact is stated in a letter from a gentleman in New Hampshire, to the editor of the *Temperance Journal*—

A wretched mother, who had become addicted to the use of strong drink, returned one day from the store with her jug of rum, and found her children crying for food.— She commanded silence, but a little boy, about four years old, continued to cry the more.— She said, with an oath, she would still him—look him up and throw him on the bed, and then took her bottle and poured a quantity of rum down his throat. He struggled, rolled up his eyes, and died. The clergyman who attended the funeral, declared publicly, at the tomb, that from all he knew, the mother killed the child.— Facts like these, it seems to me, should be told in every rum-seller's ear, that he may no longer affect ignorance of the results of his business.