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For the Patriot.

### THE WANDERING JEW.

That is a strange fancy about the Wandering Jew. The reader knows the story—that a certain Jew, who insulted the Saviour at his crucifixion, was condemned to tarry on earth until the last day. Condemned to life until the consummation of time, he has been wandering over the earth for eighteen centuries; his sympathies long out-lived, and all his remorseful memories ever torturing his heart; generation after generation passing away behind him—he sees our ages waste; and will continue to live on and on, through the hopeless future, until the last years of the world have rolled their weary round; desiring in vain the quiet sleep of the forgotten dead;—a joyless, friendless, solitary sufferer to the end!—There can hardly be a more awful, mysterious, pitiable creation of fancy, than this of the Wandering Jew.

Professor Hoffman, of Philadelphia, lately delivered a lecture on the subject of the Wandering Jew. He gave a chronological detail of this singular legend. We avail ourselves of the facts obtained by his research.

There is perhaps no nation now existing without some notion of the Wandering Jew—that is, of some mysterious personage who had been wandering over the earth for eighteen centuries, condemned so to do for some crime. The Professor supposed the legend was founded upon that passage in John's Gospel, where Jesus said of the beloved disciple, addressing himself to Peter, "if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" [A very absurd foundation, we think, when the story makes no pretence that the Wanderer was a disciple of Jesus at all; but on the contrary condemned for his bitter persecution of the Lord. We may here remark the conflict of the whole story with the character of the meek forgiving Jesus, and the principles of the religion which he taught.]

The first explicit statement of the appearance of this personage is in the works of Matthew Paris, written about the year 1215. He states that at a great convocation of the dignitaries of the church at St. Alban's, England, a learned and venerable prelate, who had come from afar, said he had seen and spoken with Cartaphilus, the Wandering Jew. Cartaphilus had told him that he had been an officer in Pontius Pilate's corps—was present when Jesus was carrying his heavy cross to the place of crucifixion—that he fiercely exclaimed, "Go faster, Jesus—go faster!" when our Lord replied, "I shall indeed go; but thou shalt tarry till I come!" The learned prelate said that the Jew had once been called Josephus—that he had been baptized into the Christian faith, but that baptism had no effect upon him. Cartaphilus had informed him that every hundred years he sunk into a kind of sleep, a lethargy, from which he arose with his youth renewed.

We next hear of him in the chronicles of the 14th century, when he was said to have had an interview with Cornelius Agrippa, who was much devoted to the occult sciences—magic, astrology, &c. The lecturer imagines him entering the study of Agrippa—a tall form, of noble mien; but with youth and age so strangely blended in his countenance and figure, as had never before been seen by mortal man; his body vigorous, yet yielding to the weight of years; his costume rich, yet inscribed with mystic characters and symbolic figures; his face pale and care-worn; his eyes shining with an unnatural lustre. He spoke of his life and the experience of ages, and had learnt that it was better to die. He desired to look in Agrippa's magic mirror, where might be seen the far distant and long dead—to see Rebecca, only daughter of Prince Ezra. He saw, and was enraptured at the sight. It was 1450 years since his daughter died. The alarmed Agrippa asked, "Who art thou?" when the stranger directed his attention to a painting in the study, representing the Saviour hearing the cross, and one who smote him. Agrippa looking at the picture of the man, and at his living guest, he saw that the likeness was perfect. "Look—'tis I!" and Cartaphilus rushed from the house.

Seven years after, it is recorded, the Wandering Jew appeared in a church at Hamburg, on Easter Sunday—an old man in a tattered dress, and called himself Ahasuerus. He listened to the sermon; and conversing with the students, told them that he had been a cordwainer, and that he was of Arabian origin—that he did join the crowd of Pilate, but that he smote Jesus from excitement, and begged their prayers for his death.

Then at Strasburg, in 1592—then at Brabant, in 1575. On these occasions he was meanly clad, but a man of marvellous knowledge, under a different name, and speaking German and other languages. A poetic chronicle of that day described his person and travels, and showed that he had no rest, and a wish to die. He was said to have been next seen in Estance, in 1804, where a learned clergyman saw him coming to mass.

A synopsis of this lecture is in the Philadelphia Saturday Courier of Oct. 4.

He recited tales of the Saviour's sufferings, and drew tears from the audience. For twenty years France was much disturbed by the appearance of this mysterious personage. There are also recorded other appearances, in many cities of Europe, during the 18th century.

The Germans and French had always spoken of the Wandering Jew in a kindly manner—but the Spaniards spoke of him with horror. The former always represented him as philosophic, learned, kind and benevolent. In Spain, he was said to appear with a long stigma, in the form of a flaming cross upon his forehead, which consumed his brain, which grew as fast as it was consumed. This was a fable, in harmony with other fables of that country.

Such are the points of Prof. H.'s curious history of this legend.

Men of fancy have frequently drawn upon this story to enrich their writings. It affords materials for the imagination in exhaustless abundance. It is the foundation of several literary compositions, of various note and merit. The celebrated French novelist, Eugene Sue, has written a work entitled *The Wandering Jew*, which is now in course of republication in this country; but of its character or merits we know nothing, not having had an opportunity to see it.

Mr. Robert Tyler availed himself of this legend for the subject of his poem of "Ahasuerus"—a work of greater merit, in our humble estimation, than the author's countrymen have been willing to acknowledge. It was published in a period of high political excitement, and when public feeling was peculiarly embittered against his father; consequently the appearance of "Ahasuerus" was met with no little ridicule, as being but another mark of the vanity of the President's son.—But as personal prejudices wear away, more favorable judgment may be expected of the literary public; if the work should have the fortune to be still remembered among the multitude of books. The author mentions that he lays no claims to originality in the conception of his poem; and we may mention that he appears to have written without any well-digested plan. It is rather a work of fragments. But there are passages of uncommonly powerful description. He not only places his scenes before you, and delineates their important points with a sensible distinctness, but likewise describes the workings of mastering passion in the human soul with a skill to produce thrilling effect. We have marked some passages, by which the reader shall judge whether our opinion be correct. We present first some extracts touching the Crucifixion:

"Pale rose the morn o'er Calvary's fatal mound,  
A sign of mourning seem'd to fill the sky,  
Yet rather felt than seen; a gloom, a cloud,  
An incubus of night, sat on men's souls."

"Lo! bending 'neath the burden of the cross,  
Through the dark crowd the patient Sufferer comes,  
The cruel thorns upon his gory brow,  
The foam of thirst upon his whiten'd lip,  
Swaying from side to side, with straining nerves,  
Beneath a weight that bows him to the dust."

"They seize him, bind him, nail him to the cross,  
Forth from his hands life's ebbing torrent flows;  
His quivering feet are agonized with pain;  
The dew of death start on his clammy brow;  
And amid the shouts of that mad multitude,  
While hisses, sneers, and fiendish jests and cries  
Appall'd the very air that caught the sounds,  
The Son of Man drinks full his cup of wo."

And now the poet introduces the Jew, "Ahasuerus," with the characteristics of strong unquenchable passion and wicked hardness of soul, worthy the legend which makes him capable of enduring existence through so many wasting centuries:

"Behold that Jew in sacerdotal robes:  
Dark curses dye his livid lips with rage,  
How bold his daring eye! His granite front  
Looks like a mound o'er which a storm-cloud lowers.  
His brazen arms might lift the city's gates:  
His firm, full lips speak of audacious thoughts;  
Audacious thoughts that owned no moral sense,  
That sought the eternal secrets of the world,  
And finding nought but dust and ashes there  
(For fruit nor flower the eye of sin can see),  
He in his heart the chain that bound him cursed,  
Cursed in his heart his impotence of will,  
Cursed in his heart the virtues of his race,  
Cursed in his heart the God who gave him life,  
Cursed in his heart the very life he own'd;  
And mid the poisons of his venom soul  
Nursed thoughts of hate and malice to mankind,  
And if, perchance, the spirit of pure love  
Touch'd his fair hairy wing his blasted soul;  
If through his mind once coursed a gentle thought,  
Imparting joy to those dark chambers there;  
If light, and all the beauties of this world,  
Sometimes did win a mildness to his eyes,  
He truly cursed himself with fiendish sneer,  
And loathed the world that dared to yield him joy.  
His mien, his port, proud Satan's halls might grace;  
E'en Beelzebub, in wonder lost, had gazed;  
Erect his form, clenched 'twas his sinewy hand,  
In which he held a dagger red with blood;  
Red, too, his hand with sacrificial life,  
Rapine, and blood, and lust, and courage high,  
That would have war'd 'with God's own thunderbolt,  
Gleam'd in the channels of his iron face.  
When others felt remorse, he felt delight;  
When others felt despair, he gladness felt;  
When others fear'd to go, with bounding step  
And savage cry, like some ferocious beast  
Made mad by thirst, who snuffs the cooling spring  
That moistens the scale and hot desert sands,  
He rushes headlong on his vengeful way,  
Nor pauses there, though thousands press his face,  
And now, when Christ turn'd to the crowd his face,  
His bleeding face, where pallid Death had trac'd"

That awful seal which marks our mortal clay  
While Dissolution cuts the thread of life;  
Which they beheld that agony itself  
Call'd forth no curse or murmur from his lips,  
An awe crept o'er the restless multitude,  
The tumult still'd, and Fear and Pity then  
Touch'd their stern hearts with a relenting sigh,  
And many whisper'd, 'This is surely God!  
Not so the Jew: on to the mount he came,  
On to the cross, with flashing, glowing eye;  
Revenge lay like a serpent on his lip,  
And Hate was written on his cruel brow;  
And on his forehead boid a frown lay coil'd,  
Dark as the malice of his cruel heart.  
Smiling in scorn, he raised on high his hand,  
And smote the fainting Saviour's ashy cheek,  
Then spat upon him with a fiendish ire.  
A flush of agony pass'd o'er Christ's face,  
And they who nearest stood heard these low words,  
'Ahasuerus, tarry till I come!'"

We hear no more of "Ahasuerus" in the poet's pages until the last day. In what caves and mountains he hid himself—through what countries, cities and scenes he passed—with what various people he conversed in his long, long pilgrimage—all is left to the fancy.

We subjoin some passages from his description of the decay and death of nature:

"Gone now was Nature's glory from the world;  
Gone now her happy youth—her beauty gone!  
No more sat Joy upon her verdant throne;  
No more Light's rosy smile was seen at morn,  
Playing o'er dewy hill or sparkling stream."

"Now sickly pale, and now eclipsed in gloom,  
The huge, round, watery Sun look'd faintly down  
Through the thick atmosphere, that, low'ring, lay  
Stagnant and still, without wave or breath.  
His feeble rays, robb'd of all grateful warmth,  
Cool as the slimy worms that crawl in graves,  
Uncherish'd fell upon the lap of Earth."

"The forest trees uprear'd their branchless heads  
Amid the breathless winds, and naked stood,  
Spectral and bleach'd, fast crumbling into dust."  
"Creless and surges the untravell'd seas,  
No longer moved by tide or lifting breeze,  
Slept dark and stagnant on their unwash'd sands.  
The thick and inky element stood still,  
No more to sing in triumph to the gale,  
No more to bear swift o'er its briny foam  
The white-wing'd bird, the eagle of the sea;  
In the wide basin of the unfathom'd deep  
Waveless and black the bitter waters rest."

"Rivers which roll'd their tides in morning light,  
Shouting deep joy with a tumultuous song,  
Or sleeping 'neath the moonbeam's gentle ray,  
To the soft lullaby of evening's winds;  
Those pleasant waters are no more, are dead,  
No more the breezes seek their sedgy banks;  
Dead are the sources of the rippling wave."

All that could die had long forever gone down into the tomb, leaving no sign; "yet one sad heart on earth still throbb'd with wo." The unwilling witness of the hapless end of Life and slow decay of Matter, the LAST MAN "now lived alone in all his quenched pain."

"On a huge rock that rear'd its hoary crest,  
Close by the ebbless margin of the sea,  
Worn by his curse, and weary with old age,  
Furrow'd with care, Ahasuerus stood."

Existing thus amid the ruins of nature, memory of his crime brood fresh and strange anguish to his soul: "he knew himself;" the spirit of prayer came upon him; he sank upon the earth, and raised eagerly his imploring eyes up to heaven:

"While his clear voice,  
Full, deep, and thrilling in that solitude,  
Loud from amid the silence of Earth's grave,  
Proclaim'd 'the justice of eternal God.'"

"O thou, great God, who sittest in the skies  
Amid the lights of swift-revolving suns;  
In brightness everlasting shining there!  
Thou, mid exhaustless splendours high enthroned  
Above thy starry hosts in boundless powers;  
Thy birth unwitness'd by Eternity!  
Thy end unmeasur'd in Futurity!  
O! God unmeasur'd! listen to my pray'r;  
Let my appealing voice reach to thy throne,  
What pain, what fear, what woe, and what despair  
Have seized my heart, & pierc'd my suffering soul!  
My aching breast, my wearied brain, my heart,  
Where throng'd a thousand woes, my sinking frame,  
Most drear abode of age and misery,  
In the strong passion of their agony  
For mercy beg, with deep and loud acclaim.  
What the' you sable clouds whirl o'er my head,  
And wrap the earth in their dark, sulphury shroud;  
What the' you murky sun groans on his way,  
Sad and terrific, through the gloomy sky;  
What the' these mouldering hills & stagnant seas  
Emblem decay through all their lifeless forms;  
What are their woes to mine? for they are dead,  
They cannot feel those heartless flames that burn  
And make my breast a rack where Torture lives.  
They cannot feel the terrors of Despair  
Fix on the writhing soul that howls with pain.  
They cannot feel the breath of hot Remorse  
That fires and blasts the corrugated brow.  
They have no fond of damning sin to bear:  
They cannot see that eye, that flash of pain,  
That dying form upon the bloody cross;  
That blow—that blow—'tis madness in my brain:  
O God! extend thy mercy to my soul;  
Shut out these horrid visions from my mind;  
Within my heart thy anger burnest now  
Like living lightning, and I pray for death,  
Knapsack me with the thunders of thy wrath;  
Grind me to dust beneath thy trampling foot;  
Let mountains cover me, let lakes of fire  
Cling, with tormenting flames around my form;  
Give me but death and peace; oh give me rest!  
Ages on ages have I suffer'd pain,  
Pangs ever-burning with their scorching fire;  
O'er my wasting form, reject with shame,  
Wave following wave, in cruel wrath uncheck'd,"

Time's hissing surges merciless have dash'd,  
Upon the earth I am, all desolate;  
Heart-broken, desolate with grief and age;  
All things are dead, all things have I outliv'd;  
The passions of my soul are burning low. [breast,  
Dread Fear, whose horrid forms once fill'd my  
Whose shrieking voice was ever in my ear,  
Chasing my footsteps wild, I know not now;  
And Pain scarce more with barb'd shaft assail'd  
My callous limbs. Man has been forgotten long,  
And all the ties which bound me to my kind:  
The strength of solid Earth has pass'd away,  
And o'er bright Heaven a pall of gloom now  
Sad Memory on its ailment bath'd [spread;  
Its bitter food, until its light is out,  
Save that which, like unto a furnace-fire,  
It sheds consumingly upon one act,  
One deed, one horrid crime of shame and sin.  
Hope only now remains, hope in thee, God,  
Hope in thy mercy infinitely strong.  
The last man bows submissive to thy will,  
And sheds, O Lord! the penitential tear,  
And calls aloud on thee for mercy now.  
Glory to thee and to thy reign, O God!  
And to thee too, Redeemer, Saviour, Christ,  
Who mid bright bands of angels sit on high,  
Of Cherubim and Seraphim, which sing  
Continual songs of praises round the throne."

"When thus the fated spake, in fear, in faith,  
In heartfelt penitence he bow'd his head,  
And at his feet, upon the thirsty ground,  
The sacred tear of sorrow gently fell;  
And softer than human thought conceives,  
Suffer and clearer than the sweetest note [sang,  
That spring's light breeze or summer bird e'er  
Yet swelling like the thunder's robed tone,  
Glided a voice into his listening ear;  
While universe through all her shining spheres  
Cess'd her loud music then, & trembling heard,  
Hush! 'tis the voice of the Almighty God!  
Across the skies a dazzling radiance sweeps,  
The clouds roll back, and earth is bathed in light,  
The sea leaps up unchain'd through all its depths,  
And waves his shores with amaranthine waves;  
Down from their sources rush the volum'd tides,  
And rivers sparkle in the heavens' boam,  
And lakes reflect the dimpling smiles of morn;  
The sod pith forth its turf, the tree its leaf, [soil,  
And flowers spring up from the sweet, fragrant  
Emmanuel the land; and Spring's soft winds  
Bear to the violet the rose's breath,  
And clouds of perfume fill the amber air.  
Hush! 'tis the voice of the Almighty God!  
A crown of mercy circles his calm brow,  
And sad Ahasuerus sleeps at last.  
Upward on wings of penitence, his soul  
Hath sought the pure realms of eternal rest;  
And with the bow of glory set on high,  
With flashing seas and smiling azure skies,  
With purple mists and golden-hammer'd clouds,  
Millennium comes, and Earth, harmonious all,  
Rolls slowly through her silver-beaming spheres,  
And swells the music of the choral stars!"

### NATHANIEL MACON.

The following character of Nathaniel Macon, is given by Mr. Ingersoll in his new work, the War of 1812:

"Nathaniel Macon was a practical apostle of a sect of politicians radically democrats, invincibly opposed to that small majority of the American people who organized the federal constitution, modified to republican institutions on the English model of regulation. Mr. Macon was opposed to it, as by far too monarchical. Hamilton dread'd anarchy, and deemed the English government the mildest form of republican monarchy.—Jefferson dread'd monarchy, and thought that the American government should be original. Washington perhaps doubted the republican experiment, but was resolved to make it in good faith, though, as he said, it cost him the last drop of his blood.—Macon had full faith in the most democratic institutions, willing to trust the people further, perhaps than Jefferson would have ventured—far beyond Washington—and to an extent which Hamilton considered anarchical. Madison, the disciple of Jefferson and the admirer of Washington, took middle ground between them all. Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Macon all proved the sincerity of their professions, by practising them through life, and to the last, when beyond life's common climacteric, when no selfish or improper motive could induce it; calmly dying as they lived, entirely faithful to their respective principles. Hamilton was cut off by an untimely death. In the prime of life, killed in a duel at 47 years of age, by Burr, on the same spot and about the same time where and when his eldest son was also killed in a duel. He, too, no doubt cherished to the last the politics he professed. Selecting from the government of the Old World, ranging from the bowstring despotism of Turkey, to the democratic royalty of a mother country; the founders of an American constitution chose the latter as a model, reduced it to republicanism, confederation, and much enlarged suffrage. Mr. Macon, a soldier of the American revolution, the native of a State where English Tories were most vindictive and mischievous, and born as he must have been, an innate republican, detested English monarchy, despised English aristocracy, and never could have been reconciled to the turbulence of English democracy. He was a man of middle stature, between 50 and 60 years of age; when I first knew him, with a round, shining playful countenance, bald and gray, always dressed in the same plain but not inelegant manner, and so peculiar in his ideas and conversation, that one of the Jersey members told him, that if he should happen to be drowned, he would look for Macon's body up the stream, instead of floating with the current. Of a distinguished family, brought up to riches and accomplished education, he left Princeton college in the revolution, not for an epaulette and small sword, but the musket and knapsack of a common soldier; as such, enlisted and re-enlisted in the American army, served long in the ranks—at one time as private under the command of his own brother—never it is said, desiring to be commissioned as an officer. Least this strange perversion of common ambition should seem to imply any dissolute vulgarity of disposition, it should be added that his habits, tastes, and associations, were all gentlemanly, perfectly temperate, and without the slightest touch of unsocial

gloomy, or coarse propensity. Elected to the House of Commons of North Carolina, he unfurl'd there his radical banner in the same quiet and inoffensive way that always marked his singular career, opposing the adoption of the federal constitution with all his ability. In 1791, chosen to the House of Representatives of the United States, he remained there five-and-twenty years by continual re-elections, having filled the great station, for a time, of Speaker of that house. But neither his principles nor his habits fitted him for its industrious, onerous, and absolute if not arbitrary, functions. To rule or govern was disagreeable to him, or to labor. As a speaker, he practised the principles he always professed, of the utmost freedom; letting the house alone to keep itself in order, without the presiding officer's interposition—a principle, in theory, so true, that seldom does a newly-elected Speaker return thanks for that honor without reminding his suffragans of the house that he is but their reflected image, and that unless they keep themselves in order, it will be vain for him to attempt it.

"In 1816, Macon was translated to the Senate as a Representative of North Carolina in that body. In 1828, he voluntarily retired from public life, and spent the rest of his days at home a planter and sportsman; to the last, fond of his game of whist, the chase, and other recreations. Beloved by his family, neighbors, and slaves, in charity with all mankind, at peace with himself, he died at a good old age, with much more veneration and influence than fall to the lot of many more conspicuous personages. His system of government was, to govern as little as possible. Extensive discussion, and little legislation, he held to be the policy and duty of Congress. Let alone, was his policy for nations, for parties, and for individuals; his strong preference in this respect being probably strengthened by plantation life and property, which begot intractable independence, and embolden'd proprietors to claim a sort of Polish veto against whatever crosses their homestead, or requires their submission. Six years service for a Senator, were, in his opinion, five too many, and one enough for a representative in Congress. Tyranny begins where annual elections end, was one of his maxims. Nothing is more miserable than a splendid and expensive government, was another. He was a constant advocate of frequent elections, that all offices should be elective, and for short terms of office—not as the only democratic, but likewise as the most durable tenure. High salaries he considered mere baits for irregular and ungovernable ambition. I have often heard him triumphantly argue, that the annual, and even semi-annual judicial elections in parts of New England, were the best guarantee for faithful and permanent service; and he would mention families kept in office from generation to generation by such elections, as irrefutable proof of his opinion. Armies, navies, cities and all coercive authority, including taxes he opposed, as well as the good-behavior tenure, and political authority of the judiciary. Unbounded confidence in popular virtue was the life of his politics. As during most of his life British power and influence were the monsters of republican aversion, he was invariably set against those Jefferson called Anglomans, looked with contempt upon all the imported apories, and what many consider refinements of fashionable life, and with a stronger feeling than contempt on that American idolatry of England, which predominated till the war of 1812, and which is not yet extinct. Jefferson, a free-thinker, would level up to the doctrines of Franklin, Penn, Locke, and Milton, and extirpate aristocratic and regal encroachments, which have usurped the place of aboriginal liberty and equality. Macon, not so deep in thought, literature, or science, as Jefferson, would have outstripped him in actual reform. But he was a passive, not active, radical, except by example. Negation was his ward and arm. His economy of the public money was the severest, sharpest, most stringent and constant refusal of almost any grant that could be proposed. Every one with legislative experience knows that many, if not most, public donations, bounties, indemnities, and allowances are unjust, often unconstitutional, to individuals, commonwealths, corporations, or companies. It requires courage, however, and fortitude, to vote against pensions, compensations for alleged wrongs and the various other demands on congressional charity. Mr. Macon had no such charity; disclaimed it altogether, and kept the public purse more singly than his own. With him not only was *optimum vectigal parsimonia*—parsimony the best subsidy,—but *utrumque*—the only one. No device or contrivance could seduce his vote for such objects, which are the common contrivances for local popularity of most members of Congress, but were with him repudiated to the great gratification of a North Carolina constituency, not rich, and sharing few national favors of the kind. In the nearly forty years he served in Congress, no tea members gave so many negative votes. He was in opposition throughout much of the eight years of Washington's and all the four years of John Adams's administration; did not coincide with all of Jefferson's, and part of Madison's; preferred restrictions and measures of passive suffering, that he thought might prevent war, which he considered dangerous to republican institutions, though he voted for it as a necessary evil, and then against most of the strong acts proposed to carry it on. Though supporting the war with all his heart, according to his own peculiar politics, when Monroe, as Secretary of War, called on Congress for conscription to raise an army, and Dallas, as Secretary of the Treasury, required all the taxes to be much increased, and others superadded, Macon voted against all these measures. It was alleged, however, by others besides him, eminent supporters of the war, that some of these measures, especially conscription, were of rigor beyond law. When Mr. Eppes, the son-in-law of Jefferson, chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, during the war, had constitutional scruples as to some of these measures, Monroe said that we should look to the constitution after war; but that, with the capital sacked, and the enemy threatening us on all points from Plattsburg to New Orleans, we must put forth the whole force of the nation, without too scrupulous regard for what was constitutional.—When, in patriotic effort Dallas poured out a flood of paper on treasury notes, one of Macon's maxims was that paper money was never beat.—Without ever losing the confidence of his party, no member of it so often voted against them. Tenacious and inflexible, remonstrance availed nothing, it should be added that his habits, tastes, and associations, were all gentlemanly, perfectly temperate, and without the slightest touch of unsocial

them. Not taciturn or austere, he was a frequent speaker, always good-humored and jocular, but always self-opinionated. Macon had ingrained preference for the advantages of rural over city life, to form the faculties, both mental and bodily, for distinction, for courage, eloquence, endurance, and every kind of eminence. No man should live, he said, where he can hear his neighbor's dog bark. Sometimes, when a city member addressed the house to his satisfaction, he would jocosely say, I liked that; what a pity you were born and brought up in town, but for that, you might have come to something. Towns he thought unfavorable to the fervor and fortitude which stimulate excellence. Frivolous occupations take place of earnest contemplation and enterprise. Reading is not of the right sort, if there be not even too much of it. Rural life is less stagnant, more racy, more thoughtful, and self-dependent. When it is not only rural, but border life, full of exposure, adventure, and exploit, it obviously conduces to greater strength of character. Some savagism may become mixed with it, which does not detract from the strength, however it may occasionally tarnish the civilization. Not one of the greatest Presidents of the United States laid the basis of his elevation in a city. Washington, Napoleon, Jackson, were *syllarv*, born—born to effort and endurance. I believe Macon never held any office by other than popular election.—Indeed, he was too fond of ease for the laborious responsibility of executive place. He is an illustrious example of the eminence and celebrity attainable by faithful service in Congress, with moderate abilities, constant integrity, and no ulterior or untoward ambition.

Few public speakers, secretaries, ministers, or judges, aspirants or incumbents of place by executive choice, fill with posterity, so large a place in public esteem as Nathaniel Macon, or exercised as much influence while in any office. Born and educated among what Jefferson calls natural aristocracy, the aristocracy of virtue and talents, Macon's distinction is that he loved the people, Learning eloquence & action were not his merits. During his nearly 40 years of life in Congress, he hardly ever proposed any measure; but integrity, simplicity, moderation, forbearance, and uprightness, gave him titles to respect which make even his memory influential. Artificial aristocracy, by birth or wealth Jefferson deemed a mischievous ingredient in government, whose ascendancy should be prevented. But natural aristocracy, by virtue and talents, he regarded as the most precious gift of nature for the instruction, trusts, and government of society; and that form of government the best, which provides most effectually for their pure selection into the offices of government. Some think that the aristocracy should be put in a separate chamber of legislation, where they may be hindered from doing mischief by coordinate branches, and be a protection to wealth against the agrarian and plundering enterprises of a majority of the people. "That," wrote Jefferson to Adams, is your opinion; while I think that the American constitution provides a better remedy, by leaving the free separation and election of the natural aristocracy from the mass, who will, in general, choose the good and the wise. Wealth will take care of itself. Cabals in the Senate of the United States furnish many proofs that to give an elevated class power to prevent mischief, is to arm them for it." Macon's equality and radicalism went beyond Jefferson's. But he was an inactive reformer, and merely by the force of example, as the American republic acts on the rest of the world. A planter of moderate fortune, coveting no more, disliking the labor-gained wealth of professional life, and the chances of trade, he disregarded the vexatious vanities of riches or office, except that of serving the people as one of many law-makers, among whom, too, his rule was to do as little as possible. After serving a quarter of a century in the House of Representatives, what most would consider promotion to the Senate, was perhaps departure from his principles. Did he deem it rotation in office; a principle of republican government, of which Macon's twelve re-elections to the same seat in Congress, proved that he did not consider it applicable to elective places. Men grow insolent, said Tacitus, in a single year's public trust. Doubtless they should, by frequent recurrence of popular election, be continually subjected to that ordeal. But when incumbents of elective posts, like Macon, are faithful, they are not often supplanted without detriment to the constituency.—When one party vanquishes another, it is but just that the principal places should be filled by the victorious. But abuse of this unquestionable principle as to others, demoralizes communities by pampering morbid thirst and insatiable yearning for emolument, substitutes avarice for ambition. Does not Macon's success demonstrate that no American statesman can be successfully both no ambitious and avaricious? That he can no more prefer himself to the people, than serve Mammon before God? To be of the aristocracy of the democracy, is common ambition; but Macon's desire was to be of the democracy of the aristocracy.

Whatever (says Burke, writing to the French National Assembly) the distinguished few may have been, men of known rank or shining talents, it is the substance or mass of the body which constitutes its character and most finally determine its direction. In all bodies, those who will lead must also, in a considerable degree, follow. Macon was a leading follower—not a summit, but part of the mass of Congress, not a commanding actor or writer, no demagogue, hardly communicating with his constituents—but by the monosyllables of votes, always before them in print, but taking no undue means for solving their good will.—Yet his popularity never faded, his success was transcendent, and the influence of his example is still enduring and increasing. The centralism of Hamilton has almost disappeared. The federalism of Washington and the constitutionalism of Madison have been, in a measure, superseded by the republicanism of Jefferson, which may be swallowed up in the radicalism of Macon. Will that be declining or advancing?

The most frequent disparagement cast by Europeans on American republicanism is its alleged tendency to degenerate—downward tendency, which is to swallow up learning, wealth, liberty, and refinement, and establish a despotism of mere vulgarity; that public life is less sought by respectability than elsewhere; or formerly; and that talents avoid it. Whether this be so in America, is it more so than elsewhere? Great talents are the creations of great conjunctures; and the tranquility of the United States has been almost stagnant under the present forms of government. In