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The Argus.

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Poetry.

SUN IN THE HORIZON.

She and to me the last old day
Of evening's sun and light,
When shadows were in every sky,
And stars the gem's bright.

She should a vision of the past
That was the glory of her life,
And to the spirit's heart,
To the soul's light.

And, when the sun of glory sets,
And when the stars are dim,
And when the night is deep,
And when the soul is dim.

Select Miscellany.

A STRANGE STORY.

From a letter of the Rev. H. Stansbury in the Missionary Journal.

"I know a man in Christ above four hundred years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knows) such an one ought to be in the heaven—ST. PAUL.

I have been requested by many persons to give to the public an account of a very singular occurrence that occurred recently within the bounds of my district. I shall give my own statement and facts, allowing your readers to draw their own inferences, and desiring that any who may be incredulous as to the facts may have the privilege of ascertaining their verity, as there are, perhaps, more than a hundred persons in that neighborhood who will readily bear witness.

In November, Rev. Joseph N. Perching of the Salisbury circuit, began a series of meetings at Kelly's station, on the West Pennsylvania railroad, where the Methodist church and an unfinished church and a very festive society. A sermon was preached one night and penitents invited forward, when a young lady, Miss Elizabeth Taylor, a daughter of Mr. John Taylor, of White Station, a young lady of quiet and amiable disposition, came forward for prayer. She remained at the altar for quite a length of time, appearing to be calm in mind and yet earnestly and devoutly looking for the mercy of God. About 9 o'clock her prayer seemed to be answered. Her face wore an expression of unusual brightness as she looked upward, repeated several times with fervent emphasis, "O, that beautiful place over there." She became unusually excited, and was carried to a home near by, it being thought inadvisable to remove her to her father's house, which was about three miles distant. In this condition she remained; for seven days, in the meantime taking no nourishment whatever.

On Tuesday she began to speak in a low tone of voice, and for half an hour, as if she were in another world, after which she remained silent for several days. She spoke of having been conducted to the place of lost souls, had been waiting there for repair, and then conducted to the gates of heaven. Her description of what she saw was so vivid and transporting that the large company present went freely. She spoke of those whom she had known who had died, and were recognized in glory, clad in shining garments, with unknown names on their foreheads. She called them over by name one after another, including the names of all the children she had known who had died, with all those tokens of surprise and delight that attend an actual greeting of long absent friends.

The first of whom she spoke were two ministers. One was the Rev. A. H. Thomas of Pittsburg Conference; the other the Rev. Mr. White, of the Presbyterian Church, once the pastor of the church at Saltburg, but some years before had resigned his charge for another in Ohio. He was not known to any present as deceased, but upon inquiry it was found that he had died a few days before. Of this she said neither Miss Taylor nor any member of her father's family had ever heard.

Persons were recognized there whom she did not expect to see, while others for whom she inquired she was informed were not among that number. Many other things concerning another world were written down, and are being more expressed in language most beautiful and appropriate, but which, if given would trample upon the talents of your paper.

Many experiments were used to restore her to consciousness, among which were singing and animated religious services, but all without the desired effect. On Friday her friends became very much alarmed, owing to the opinions expressed by the physicians that having been so long without food she would never be restored. The effort was made to give her some nourishment, but in vain. She was asked whether she would ever be able to rise, when she replied:

"My Saviour has not yet told me."

At different times she had spoken of her Saviour as present with her, as her Guide and Instructor. Shortly after this she told them that her Saviour had just informed her that she might return to earth on Sabbath evening at 9 o'clock. This statement remained a joyous surprise to her anxious friends. The father said that should it come to pass he would believe all she would say concerning the future state.

On Sabbath evening a large company of the neighbors had gathered to learn the sequel. There was no clock in her room, nor any way in which she could mark the right or the hour, for her eyes lay like lead upon the floor. At three minutes before nine she raised her right hand and waved it as if giving farewell to persons vanishing in the distance and then raised her left hand in like manner, and at precisely 9 o'clock she opened her eyes, spoke a greeting to all her friends, began praising the Lord, and called upon those present to join her in praise for His great mercy.

When asked if she was hungry she replied that she was not in the least; that she had been fed with milk and honey, and, indeed, her strength was so wonderfully renewed that it seemed that she had been fed by an unseen hand.

PLAIN LIKE HOME.

It will be known that many true men of Massachusetts, wherever they may be, look it to be a duty to show an equal dinner in commemoration of the Landing of the Pilgrims. Some years ago, the Rev. Mr. Deane happened to be present at one of these gatherings in the neighboring city. Most of the party were New England men, and the superiority of the New England States, at the rest of the Union was the text of most of the speeches. At length, a toast was given to which the doctor was called to respond. He began by saying that he had been here, had read, and reported to die in the Middle States. He admitted that they might be inferior to the New England, but for his part, he was contented to remain where Providence had placed him. While listening to so much eulogy in praise of New England, from the lips of gentlemen who had left it to seek home or far-off shores, he had been reminded of a story, which, with the permission of those present, he would tell.

Among the recruits sent to the English army during the Peninsular war were two Scotchmen. They had been friends from childhood, and collected in the same regiment, and they slept in the same tent. In the middle of the night, Donald, who was valued by both, was roused by a noise which he had been reminded of a story, which, with the permission of those present, he would tell.

"Donald! I've had a dream!" was the cry.

"And what did you dream, Sandy?"

"O, Donald! I was as well as dead!"

"Did you dream that we had a battle, Sandy?"

"O, I was wiser than that, Donald!"

"Why, then, did you dream so worst about?"

"Worse than that, Donald! We are that!"

"Then you mean you dream that the deler had?"

"Worse than that, Donald! A great deal worse than that!"

"Why, say, what did you see then, that?"

"O, Donald! Donald! I dreamed that I was at home!"

SPARKS FROM THE TELEGRAPH.

San Francisco's new City Hall will cost \$1,500,000.

It is rumored that Gov Clayton of Arkansas is to be impeached.

Mr. Holt, of North Reading, Mass., hanged himself on Sunday. He leaves property worth over \$100,000.

A boiler exploded in Ward's woolen mills on the Ashcroft River, N. H., yesterday, killing Amos Edgworth. It is reported at Jefferson City, Mo., that James Fisk, Jr., has purchased a large interest in the Missouri Pacific Railroad.

Col. Thomas E. Chickering, of the firm of Chickering Brothers, pianoforte manufacturers of Boston, died yesterday morning of apoplexy.

George Smith, a passenger, committed suicide on the passage of the steamer Calabria from Liverpool to Boston by lowering himself down on the vessel's side into the water.

A doctor from North Carolina. The New York Tribune states that a doctor of about three thousand patients, many of whom are Jews, has been recently engaged for the Western part of North Carolina, on the basis of a principle of "cash in advance," and through the intermediation of Mr. Gandy. The tract of land purchased is situated at \$600,000, and a Mr. Cardozo, a lawyer of Baltimore, New Jersey, is on his way to North Carolina to investigate the title to the purchase in behalf of the publisher. "We are ignorant as to the principle upon which the Colorado Springs has been founded, but we suppose it is upon some principle of a joint obligation of the colonists for the purchase money, the government being a general partnership, and the remainder in annual installments—the company of colonists to make titles to the individual colonists.—Chronicle & Sentinel.

The steamboat Judge Wheeler exploded her boilers, burst and sunk at six o'clock this morning at Bell's Landing, forty-five miles above Vicksburg. Con Hogan took hand, Thomas Welch, deck sweep, and another man, whose names were unknown, were killed.

The following were wounded: Captain Nolan, seriously; Charles Story, severely slightly; O. W. Fox, of Little Rock, slightly. Very little of the cargo was saved.

LEGISLATIVE ADDRESS.

CONVENTION.

To the People of North Carolina:

An act has been passed at the present session of the General Assembly, submitting to the voters of the State the question of calling a Convention to revise and amend, under certain specified restrictions, the existing constitution of North Carolina, and an election is ordered to be held on the second Thursday of April, 1871, to ascertain the sense of the people on this important subject.

We, the undersigned members of the General Assembly, wish to set forth briefly some of the reasons which have induced the Legislature to pass such an act.

The warmest advocates of the present Constitution have always conceded that it is marred by many great errors and imperfections. It was only ratified because our people were in an embarrassing position, and were promised that it should soon be amended. The great confidence which it has wrought, and the hearty business it has imposed, have proved it to be utterly unsuited to our condition and circumstances, and repugnant to our natural longings as a people. We cannot now undertake to point out all its evils and will notice only a few of the more prominent.

This Constitution has overturned our ancient judicial system, since the pride of the State, and has introduced in its stead a novel one, so full of deformities that it has become a byword of reproach and contempt.

The old method of practice and proceeding in the courts has been abolished, and a code of procedure substituted so ill-digested, crude and contradictory in its provisions that our highest tribunals confess themselves unable fully to understand it or to administer it except by judicial legislation. The enforcement of rights and the redress of wrongs have to be sought by such tortuous and expensive channels that it is often cheaper to submit to injustice than to seek a remedy through the courts. The code of procedure cannot be repealed or essentially changed by the Legislature, for either this or something like it is prescribed by the Constitution. A Convention alone can rid us of this incubus and nuisance.

The number of judicial districts is too great, entailing much useless expense. Many other features of the present system are inconsistent with purity, efficiency and cheapness in the administration of justice, which is one of the prime objects of all good governments.

The people have by experience been made so sensible of this judicial system that we will not dwell longer upon the subject. A reform is absolutely necessary to prevent our judiciary from falling into general contempt.

The present county and township governments are intolerable evils. Their cumbersome and inefficient, their expensiveness, and their numerous avenues to speculation and extortion which they open up, are grievances which have brought complaints and remonstrances from all sections of the State. We believe there is an almost universal desire for the restoration of the old County Courts, as the simplest, cheapest, and most honest system of county government ever devised, and for the abolition of the existing system, with its wheels within wheels, grinding the people with burdens. The transactions of the business pertaining to the Probate Courts is also much more troublesome and costly than under the old plan. A Convention is needed to effect the reforms which are imperatively demanded in all the foregoing particulars.

There are a multitude of useless offices, established by this Constitution, which ought to be abolished. The hold-

ing of more than one office by the same individual is a serious evil not now prohibited. The cost of carrying on the government upon the present plan, from the chief departments down to the constables and justices of the peace, is vastly greater than it ought to be. The taxes for the last two years have been heavy, and yet the Treasury is bankrupt, and it is difficult to devise the means to meet current expenditures. According to the recent message of Governor Holden, at least seven hundred thousand dollars will be required to pay the expenses of the State government for the current fiscal year. This alone is a ruinous tax upon an impoverished people, being twice as much as they were taxed last year; the last General Assembly not having levied half so much as they knew would be needed. A Convention, by simplifying and cheapening our system of government, would raise money enough in one year to pay its own expenses several times over, as well as to pay the interest on the State debt. No party can administer our State government, on the present plan for less than about six hundred thousand dollars annually, reduce salaries as we may. Ten years ago, under the old system, the annual cost of the State government was about two hundred thousand dollars. A Convention of true and patriotic men will give us a frame of government by which we can return to those old figures or save seven hundred thousand dollars a year to the counties besides. So that the call of a convention, no matter how disadvantageous may be a measure of obvious and immediate economy.

We promised the people relief, and we are anxious to give it. But in devising the means for its accomplishment, this General Assembly is met at every turn by some constitutional barrier, so that we are compelled to call upon the people to transfer our hands, by making the necessary constitutional amendments that we may be able to legislate effectually for their benefit.

There is one overwhelming consideration to which we invite particular attention, and which of itself renders the call of a Convention, in our opinion, an imperative necessity. One of the most striking provisions of the present Constitution has never been enforced, and yet it contains a direct and positive mandate to the General Assembly, which men of common honesty, regardless of their party, and who feel bound by the opinion of our Supreme Court in relation to the limit of taxation, know not how to disobey. It is in these words: "The General Assembly shall, by appropriate legislation and by adequate taxation, provide for the prompt and regular payment of the public debt." If this be construed as applying to the old debt only, it requires the levy of "twelve hundred thousand" dollars of tax to pay interest. Add to this the tax necessary to carry on the State government and it will be perceived that the lowest tax which this Legislature can levy if they carry out their obligations under this constitution, is largely over "a million and a half" of dollars or five times the tax of the past year. The Governor says, in his message, "two million and a half," or eight times the tax of the past year.

We know very well that any such tax would crush the people into the dust. Yet we have taken an oath which cannot be fulfilled unless we do make such a levy; and as honorable men, we see no way of escape, unless the people will call a Convention and relieve us from the dilemma by changing the Constitution in this particular. We cannot believe the true and honest people of North Carolina expect us to violate our oaths. We therefore appeal to them to come to our rescue and their own! Let a Convention be called, that the Constitutional provisions respecting the public debt may be altered, and the debt itself put in the way of being compromised, or otherwise adjusted, as the people may deem proper. If steps be taken towards the accomplishment of these things, we can and will delay any action in the premises until after the Convention has perfected its task. But if the people themselves refuse to call a Convention, and to amend the Constitution by striking out the aforesaid provision, how can we avoid interpreting their action to mean that they must proceed to execute that provision and levy upon them a tax too grievous to be borne? We beg the earnest attention of the people to the foregoing considerations.

The General Assembly have not promised to call a Convention themselves. We had no official expression of the wishes of the people to justify us in doing that. We simply submit the question to the people. They bear the burdens they suffer the evils; and they also are the sovereigns. Article I, Section 8, of our present Constitution declares: "The peo-

ple of this State have the inherent, sole, and exclusive right of altering and abolishing their Constitution and form of government; but every such right should be exercised in pursuance of law, and consistently with the Constitution of the United States." Our Act only provides a method by which the people may exercise this inherent right in a regular and orderly manner—"in pursuance of law."

Nor have the General Assembly assumed to themselves any right or power, on their own mere motion, to impose restrictions upon the Convention when assembled. But being well assured by extensive acquaintance with the wishes of our constituents that the people desire to preserve unchanged some features of our existing Constitution, we have so framed our act that the people themselves may, by approving it, impose such restrictions as will prevent alterations which, in our judgment, are not wished for. Our act, when thus approved by the sovereign people, will after their voice, not ours merely, and that voice will be recognized as imperative. This act, with all its provisions, will be the people's power of attorney to their delegates, which they cannot go beyond. No candid man will contend that a Convention having only a delegate sovereignty can override and disregard the original sovereignty of the people. And to make assurance doubly sure, an oath is embodied in the act binding the delegates to observe its restrictions, and the people will certainly not choose delegates who would either neglect or violate their obligation.

The proposed restrictions will limit and simplify the work of the Convention, shorten its session, and reduce its cost. It will not cost half as much as the unnecessary taking of the census in 1875, which the present Constitution requires shall be done, but which a Convention will no doubt dispense with.

Among the restrictions which we ask the people to impose on the Convention is the one which will forbid any interference with the homestead and personal property exemption. The Conservative party, now dominant in this State, is certainly as much interested (if not more so) as its political opponents, in maintaining the homestead provision; and this party is fully determined that said provision shall never be abolished. The opposite party may become willing to see it abrogated, but the Conservative party will not consent that this shall be done. On this point we perceive the enemies of a Convention are busily at work trying to frighten and deceive the people. To guard against any possible danger on this homestead question, the General Assembly have incorporated into that subject, we do not deem it necessary for us to do more than simply invite attention to them as they appear in the act. They certainly show the earnest purpose of the Conservative party to preserve the homestead and exemption rights intact.

Others of the proposed restrictions will prevent any interference with the rights of citizens of the different races, and any requirement of a property qualification for officers or voters. The revised Constitution must also be submitted to the people for ratification, and be ratified by them before it becomes of any validity. But it is needless to refer in detail to the several restrictions; they are to be seen in the act, and will explain themselves. It is hoped that they will meet with the general approval of the people. Some of them are perhaps unnecessary, because they only prohibit what no State Constitution has power to do under the Federal Constitution. But we have permitted their insertion, in order that the people of all parties and of the entire Union may readily comprehend the true intent of our act, and the spirit in which it has been adopted.

In truth, it is no spirit of violence, of revolution, or of reaction, which weaves us. All these things we most earnestly deprecate. Our aim is to secure to our people relief from the intolerable burden of debt and taxation by which they are now oppressed. And we long to see once more a North Carolina Constitution of North Carolina, which, while conforming to all the requirements of Federal law, shall yet be in strictness with the genius of our people, and under which all our citizens may live in peace and harmony; a Constitution which will enable the State to recover her former prosperity and high credit, and ultimately to fulfill all her just obligations. We sincerely trust that thinking and patriotic men of all parties will unite in the call of a Convention, as an essential step towards the attainment of these happy results.

Signed by 145 members of the Legislature.