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A Democratic Journal—Devoted to National and State Politics, Literature, Foreign and Domestic News, etc.

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Portraits of the Opposition—Seward and Douglas.

What relates to public men is always interesting. History is too much a mere record, too little tintured with metaphysical biography, with individual character, motives, incentives and weakness, to make it either altogether philosophical or truthful. It so happens that all government is the work of individuals, and it is equally true that the public good is not invariably the chart by which they conduct the affairs of office.

Mr. William H. Seward and Mr. Stephen A. Douglas are confessedly at the head of the opposition. We have compiled them together not so much because they are rival chiefs of the same party, but because they are in many respects antipodes in all the essential elements of character. They started upon the race of federal politics from the same point, Mr. Seward going North and Mr. Douglas going South. Each having made the circuit, they have come together, freighted by mutual experiences and animated by a common purpose of occupying the Executive mansion. The great public who are the judges and hold the stakes are interested to know all about the contestants.

Mr. Seward is a well educated, cold, passionless, calculating, ambitious man. What he lacks in positive intellect, he more than makes up in prudence, caution, industry and energy. He is too very much a consumer of ideas, doing up his own in fancy style, and dressing up others for his own special uses. Mr. Seward is literally and truly a made man, enthusiastic, as all such men are, over his own works, for he knows that what he has accomplished has been the result of hard, patient study, and a careful husbanding of his resources. Mr. Douglas is, right on the other hand, a natural growth, with greater power, no more heart, and far less finish. Mr. Douglas is a bold, dashing cavalry officer—a pony-nag, good for a brush, but too unreliable as a hawk for the course. A thorough early training for Mr. Douglas would have impaired his powers of mind. Nature educated him just as he is. Mr. Seward, without education and special training, would have been nothing. This is precisely the difference in this respect between them. They are both now great men. Mr. Douglas is great in positive intellect. He has too some logic. He is not a scrupulous logician. He is a stranger to the chemical faculty of analysis. He cares nothing for premises. He is indifferent to the integrity of argument. He is ambitious, like Mr. Seward, and we take it that this has brought them together. They are both traveling to the same destination; they care not a fig what road they take to get there. In another respect the difference between Mr. Seward and Mr. Douglas is obvious enough; the former has less of the impulse, and of course the greater power of concealment. Mr. Seward is more of a courtier, Mr. Douglas is most frank and manly, and appears best when most excited. He is reliable as a partisan—in war—in strife, when the battle rages—and then his intellect, his resources, are most available. In these respects Mr. Seward is valueless. He will manoeuvre for a position, arrange ambuscades and strategic movements, issue proclamations, excite the passions of the troops, commend their courage and promise them plunder, but somebody else must do the fighting. Mr. Seward is remarkable for persistence, vigilance, patience and for making other people's ideas and other people's labor. Mr. Douglas is self-reliant, courageous, firm and wilful. His heart is not as large as his head. With so great a disparity in this respect, it is hardly possible that he can ever render his intellect truly available. It is not common to say that

real goodness of nature, large sympathies, generous emotions and impulses, are necessary to greatness of mind. It is nevertheless true. When we reflect that the strictest and most faithful deduction becomes wicked deception, unless the premises are truly laid, and that the latter alone taxes the integrity of the mind, this distinction will be seen to be just. Mr. Douglas is not without high estimates of his own powers; it is this that makes him rely with imperious will upon his conclusions, for which he claims the weight of unimpeachable testimony. He is not without caution, but it is intellectual caution, controlled by the superior faculty of ambition. In Mr. Seward, caution is a chief element of his nature, on which he relies as a means to an end. Mr. Seward rests upon ideas, not upon logical conclusions or deductions. Hence his arguments embrace a long array of facts or what he claims as facts. It is manifest in this respect that Mr. Seward addresses himself almost exclusively to the unlearned. There is far more of the demagogue in his character than in that of Mr. Douglas. Mr. Seward shoots into the crowd; Mr. Douglas aims at some glittering whether it be worn by friend or foe. Mr. Douglas finds his enemies in those who do not agree with him; Mr. Seward finds his friends only in those who vote with him. Mr. Seward is no dictator. He does not owe his elevation to the exercise of his will. Nobody fears him. When the storm comes, Mr. Seward will not be on the quarter deck; Mr. Douglas will be there and he will certainly make a speech. It is speeches that made Mr. Douglas. He has been all wrong in what he has said, he ought to be busy all the rest of his life in retracting himself. That he intends to do so we have no doubt, in view of his present position on the Kansas question. We have been accustomed to see Mr. Douglas near by; we shall now be able to recognize him in the distance. He did not make the Democratic party; we have no belief that he can destroy it. Men are of a day; principles will live, too often to admonish and rebuke those who have deserted their warnings and rejected their authority.

Washington Union.

SOUTHERN SLAVERY AS SEEN BY A NORTHERN LADY.—The following is an extract from a letter written by a young lady living in Georgia, to a friend:

In regard to the subject of slavery, in my opinion, those who are the loudest in denouncing the institution, know the least of it. Personal observation has removed my early prejudice, and I really think the slaves in this region of country are the happiest creatures that live; such delightful frolics as they have, packing cotton, shucking corn, &c., can hardly be imagined by Northern fancies. There is a freedom unknown to the laboring classes in Europe, or even in free America, for they are free from care, and solicited for nothing. Furnished with the necessaries, and many of the luxuries of life, what cause have they for solicitude? Their personal appearance is much less repulsive than I had anticipated. Instead of the tattered rags with which I supposed they were clad, they are comfortable and suitably clad for labor, and at church—upon the attendance of which they are very punctual—their dress will compare favorably with that of Northern people in moderate circumstances, and the female servants are sometimes more finely dressed than their mistress. When I hear from any cause, there are two powerful principles that insure to them sympathy, and the kindest attention.—First, the law requires that servants be well provided for under all circumstances, in infancy, old age, sickness or in health. Second, the relative position of master and servant are a guarantee. To me it is no wonder that my prejudice has so soon subsided—the truth is, the thing has been misrepresented. Methinks when the facts are fully understood, political demagogues will be obliged to seek some other subject with which to influence the public mind and array one section of this glorious inheritance against the other.

HON. DAVID S. REID.—A friend who is now absent from this town, (says the Fayetteville Carolinian,) thus writes to us from Richmond, Va., respecting the health of our worthy and much beloved Senator, David S. Reid:

RICHMOND, VA., March 13, 1858.
Mr. Wm. Bow: Having to pass through this city on my journey North, I concluded to tarry a little while especially as our esteemed friend Gov. Reid is confined here by sickness. He has been detained in this place for more than two months. It affords me pleasure to say that he is getting better; yet his improvement is of slow progress. He has a cough which I hope is not serious. His physician speaks of taking him out to ride in a day or so if the weather is good. I earnestly trust he will ere long recover and be able to resume his duties in the Senate. Gov. R. cannot well be spared from that body, for he is a hard working man, and one who can and will accomplish as much for his own State as a Senator. Yours &c.
G.

From the N. C. Christian Advocate.
The Prisoner at Sea.

On a sweet autumnal morning, as lovingly as the month of May, a noble ship lay peacefully anchored in the beautiful harbor of Fair Haven. She intended to sail that day with a cargo of wheat and 276 passengers for the shore of Italy. A band of soldiers guarded a distinguished prisoner, who professed to hold communion with the invisible world. He predicted a storm. The Captain laughed at him. The Commander listened to the Captain, and scorned the pretensions of the prisoner. All aboard, she weighed anchor, and spread her canvass to the winds. With a calm breeze, bathed in the smile of nature's warm sunshine, she glided gracefully away upon the waste of waters, bearing many from their native, to stranger lands.

Ere the sun descended the slope of the western sky, the heavens grew black, and the dark folds of angry clouds rose and spread themselves in dismal sheets upon the sky. A few fearful blasts of wind warned them to take in the sails; but before this could be done the violence of the tempest, with the tread of a tornado, was upon them. The ocean lashed into fury rocked from shore to shore, and the vessel drifted at the mercy of the waves.

"Burst as a wave that from the cloud impends, And swelled with tempest on the ship descends, White are the decks with foam; the winds howl o'er the masts, and sing through every shroud."

Pale, trembling, tired, the sailors freeze with fears, And instant death on every wave appears."

Not having seen the sun, moon, nor stars for many days, and no abatement of the rage of the tempest, driven they knew not where, upon strange seas, they resigned themselves to the safekeeping of a watery grave. Farewell, native land! Farewell, loved ones at home! Farewell, friends and foes! Farewell! No epitaph inscribed upon pillars of stone, upon the rolling wave, shall mark the spot of our peaceful repose. The briny depths shall be our bed, while we slumber in the waves. The Centurion and his prisoner, the captain and his crew, the master and his servant, shall sleep without distinction side by side in a watery grave, till the surging waves of the resurrection morn shall roll our bodies to the shore.

Of the soul when all hope has been surrendered, and the last solitary ray has expired! In this forlorn condition, in unknown regions of the storm beaten main, expecting every plunge to go down to the bottom of the sea, the night came down upon them in darkness, black as the gloom of uncreated space, where a single ray of light has never fallen. Suddenly a light, above the brightness of the sun, shone around the prisoner at sea. A being, from the flaming presence of God, clothed with the sun, stood before him. A short interview, and the light was blown out, and the night was left with the prisoner at sea.

The morning came with no abatement of the lowering tempests. He who in the midst of calm and sunshine predicted the storm, now in the midst of his howling rage, pointed to their deliverance and safety. Those who smiled in derision at his former prediction, as a crazy man's dream, now manifested great confidence in his revelations; and 275 persons hung with breathless silence and trembling anxiety upon the lips of the prisoner at sea.

On the morning of the 15th day, amid the thundering roar of the billows and the foam of the white capped sea, land came in view, toward which the helpless vessel was rapidly driving. The anchors were thrown to the waters; but they were powerless as the foam born bubble floating on the wave. The ship struck the ground and was soon broken to fragments by the violence of the angry waves. The shipwrecked crew, the soldiers and passengers, some on boards, and others on pieces of the vessel, without the loss of a single life, safely reached the shore, in harmony with the prediction of the prisoner at sea.

Gentle reader, for the present upon this strange Island, I leave the captain and crew, the centurion and his band, the passengers and the prisoner at sea. Of all, except the latter, here in the midst of the ocean we take a final adieu! At some future time we may trace the footsteps of the prisoner at sea.
APOLLON.

NOT AT HOME.—The deceptive art of polite society, in which "not at home" is employed to convey a false impression, not unfrequently fails of its aim. In classic history the story is told of Scipio Nasica, who was a near neighbor of Ennius, the poet; and calling one day upon Ennius, he was met at the gate by the servant maid, who told him that her master was not at home. But such was her manner, that Scipio at once perceived that in so saying she had spoken falsely by the direction of her master. It happened soon that Ennius called upon Scipio, who instead of sending a messenger to the door, cried out, "he is not at home." To which Ennius replied, "I know your voice." But Scipio answering said: "You are an impudent man.—I believed your maid when she said you were not at home, but you will not believe me when I say it myself."

A Full Shower of Prayer.

There are many striking and beautiful analogies between the natural and spiritual worlds. Facts and phenomena in one are often used in the Scriptures to illustrate the truths of the other. There is a seed-time in the world of mind as well as in the world of matter. The gentle dews distill, and the early and latter rains descend, both in the world of nature and the world of grace. In the beautiful language of inspiration, the influences of gospel grace are represented as coming down like rain upon the mown grass, and like showers that water the earth. When these refreshing and fertilizing influences are withdrawn, then comes drought and barrenness, both in the natural and spiritual world.

The necessity of revivals of religion, those great rains of the Spirit, is strikingly expressed and enforced by Jeremy Taylor: "As the skies drop the early dew upon the grass, yet it would not spring and grow green by that constant and double falling of the dew, unless, some great showers, at certain seasons, did supply the rest; so the customary devotion of prayer twice a day is a falling of the early and latter dew.—But if you will increase and flourish in the works of grace, empty the great clouds sometimes, and let them fall in a full shower of prayer. Choose out the seasons when prayer shall overflow like Jordan in the time of harvest." In the absence of frequent rains and showers, amid the heat of a summer sun, how soon does the earth become dry, and the fields parched, and the vegetation withered and drooping?—When there is little rain, there is little fruit. And this holds true in the spiritual world as well as in the natural. When there are few outpourings of the Spirit in revivals of religion, there is comparatively little spiritual fruit. And it will continue so in accordance with the laws of the spiritual world, as truly as in the natural. In this respect, the husbandmen who cultivate the soil are wiser than many spiritual husbandmen who cultivate the vineyards of God. The former expect and receive the early and latter rains, and are anxious and alarmed for the result of their fertilizing influence. But now a few spiritual husbandmen seem content if years come and go, and no rains of the Spirit come down on the fields and cultivate. Long protracted droughts in summer, which wither and dry up the luxuriant fields and cut off the harvest, would excite the earnest cries of the suffering, to God, that he would unlock the brazen skies and pour down abundance of rain. There would be sorrow and tears, prayers and supplications. If such would be the feeling and action then, how much more ought there to be strong crying and tears when the fields of Zion are dry and languishing, and the souls of men are in danger of perishing! If the praying ones in any or all the Churches would unite their fervent supplications and pour out a full shower of prayer, how soon would a delightful change come over the fields of Zion, and render them luxuriant and beautiful as the garden of God!

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shall share my last thought, and the last faint pressure of the hand, and the last feeble kiss shall be yours, and even when flesh and heart shall have failed to me, my eyes shall rest on yours until glazed by death; and our spirits shall hold one last communion until gently fading from my view—the last of earth—you shall mingle with the first bright glimpses of the unfading glories of the better world, where partings are unknown. Well do I know the spot, my dear George, where you will lay me; often, we stood by the place, and as we watched the mellow sun-set as it glanced in quivering flashes through the leaves and burnt the grassy mounds around us with the stripes of burnished gold, each perhaps has thought that some day one of us would come alone, and which ever it might be, your name would be on the stone. But we loved the spot, and I know you will love it none the less when you see the same quiet sun-light linger and play among the grass that grows over your Mary's grave. I know you will go there, and my spirit will be with you then, and whisper among the waving branches—"I am not lost, but gone before."

CARE OF THE EYES.—Crawford the celebrated sculptor, had an inveterate habit of reading in a reclining position; one eye had to be taken out in consequence of a cancerous tumor forming behind it, and his life has paid the forfeit, after years of suffering, and the expenditure of a large amount of money.

Prescott, the historian, in consequence of a disorder of a nerve, by which the eyes were rendered useless for all writing purposes, could not use a pen, as he was unable to see when it failed to make a mark for want of ink; nor could he distinguish the lines or edges of his paper; yet with these disadvantages, he wrote all his histories, using an agate stylus on carbonated paper, being guided as to the lines or edges, by brass wires drawn through a wooden frame; but with all these hindrances, he has made himself one of the most readable of modern historians and earned a fortune besides.

To avoid these, and similar calamities, we urge upon the young, especially, never to use the eyes by any artificial light, where nicety of sight is required, nor to use them in any strained position, or while riding in full cuts of carriages.

We urge upon all parents, in view of the many incurable eye diseases, to caution their children against reading by twilight, that is not before sunrise nor after sunset. It would be greatly better not to allow them to read or sew by any artificial light, but if that is unavoidable, let it be imperative that they cease by nine o'clock at night in summer, and by ten at farthest, in the winter. It is a most unexcusable folly, and will, sooner or later, bring its punishment, to read or sew by gas, or lamp, or candle light, and then sleep after daylight next morning, as a habit. To persons of all ages it is a most injurious practice.—Hall's Journal of Health.

NATIONAL BEVERAGES.—All Europe has chosen its prevailing beverage. Spain and Italy delight in chocolate; France and Germany, Sweden and Turkey, in coffee; Russia, Holland and England in tea; while poor Ireland makes a warm drink from the cocoa, the refuse of the chocolate mills of Italy and Spain. All Asia feels the same want, and in different ways has long gratified it. Coffee, indigenous in Arabia or the adjoining countries, has followed the banner of the Prophet wherever his false faith has transpired. Tea, a native of China, has spread spontaneously over the hill country of the Himalayas, the table-lands of Tartary and Tibet, and the plains of Siberia—has climbed the Altai, overspread all Russia, and is equally despotic in Moscow as in St. Petersburg. In Sumatra, the coffee-leaf yields the favorite tea of the dark-skinned population, while Central Africa boasts of the Abyssinian chaat as the indigenous warm drink of its Ethiopian people. Everywhere unexciting and non-narcotic beverages are in general use—among the tribes of every color, beneath every sun, and in every condition of life.—Professor Johnston.

SPLENDID APPLE-PIE MELONS.—The famous Apple-Pie Melons, as they are called, and which have excited considerable interest among the lovers of good apple pies, from the fact that this melon makes good apple pies, will prove a great blessing to all good housewives, for they can now have apple pies all the year round, and not be obliged to pay a dollar, or even two bits a piece, for they can make their apple pies without apples. We only assert what is easily proved—this variety of melons will make pies that nine persons out of ten will pronounce apple pie. Two years since we had two of these melons presented us by James Lick Esq., of Santa Clara. The pies we ate from these melons at various times satisfied us of the facts stated. One of those melons we now have in perfect order, weighing forty-five pounds. Thus we have a valuable proof of their keeping qualities. The present week, when at Santa Clara, we were again presented with two melons of the same species of greater weight, each over fifty pounds.—California Farmer.

THE GOVERNORSHIP OF NORTH CAROLINA.—Most of our readers are cognizant of the fact that a gubernatorial canvass is in full blast in North Carolina; but few of them, we imagine, know what are the questions in controversy between the competing candidates. In the absence of any subject of dispute pertaining to any peculiar interests of the State, or likely to command the attention of its Governor, they have managed to raise a fictitious issue, in the shape of our old friend, Distribution—a topic as foreign from the duties of the office they seek, as a problem in Euclid, or the whereabouts of Sir John Franklin. Such are some of the curious freaks of politics. If the anti-distribution man wins, nothing will be distributed; if on the contrary, the distribution man wins, why, there will be nothing to distribute. In either event, the victory achieved will have no more significance than the result of a horse-race or a cock-fight. For all practical purposes, the contest, is the idlest of mockeries, and we marvel that the good people of the old North State should trouble themselves about the matter. Surely, Mr. McRae can find a better steed for his electioneering pregarations than the old spavined, wind-broken jade of Distribution.—South-Side (Va.) Democrat.

WHERE DO THEY STAND?—There are about a baker's dozen of persons who have heretofore acted with the democracy in the northern States, who now devote all their time to saving the party from the "errors" into which it is to be plunged by the admission of Kansas into the Union. They see the fact that admission is almost universally advocated by the democracy—that it is a party measure by the positive declaration of the President, his cabinet, both houses of Congress, at least twenty-six out of thirty-one States, by nineteen-twentieths of all the democratic newspapers; and yet they would set up the decision of a mere trifling faction against it—they would save the party! They see too that they are cheek by jowl with the republicans, whose cause they are trying to build up just to save the character of the democracy. One of our western cotemporaries wants to know "Where he stands?" Why, sir, you stand in the very centre of the republican ranks. You stand against the democratic party in office and out of office. You stand in any strained position, or while riding in full cuts of carriages.

RECKLESS TEMERITY.—An exchange relates the following instance of reckless temerity, which we have never seen paralleled:

A minister was walking in his garden the other day, when he discovered two saw horses. Struck by their appearance, he had them broken for his private use. Having no harness suitable, he put the yolk of an egg on their necks, attached a cart to them with the traces of a thunder storm; blanketed them with sheets of lightning to keep off the flies. He then leaped upon the cart, sat upon the seat of government, took the whip of a top in one hand and the reigns of terror in the other, and drove off; passing through the gait of a cripple, over the grounds of coffee, and when he crossed the track of a snail he was run into by a train of circumstances. It being a heavy train he was thrown over a fifty cent bluff into a stream of eloquence, where he was dashed to pieces against the rocks of a crack.—By hard work he soon gained an island, formed a boat from the bark of a waf, fitted it with a mast from the north pole and two action sails. Leaving his horses, he sailed down the river to his mouth, and landed on a tongue of land. Here he was seized by a sensation and conveyed to a cell, where he was sentenced by a cord of love to a thunder bolt. The gaoler read him the report of a cannon, and gave him his liberty as a birthday present. He then mounted the wings of the morning, and arrived home in time to hear that day broke, and that his fortune had vanished; when, catching up the scythe of time, he put an end to his existence by cutting off the head of his sermon.

A GOLDEN THOUGHT.—We know not the author of the following, but it is pretty:

"Nature will be reported. All things are engaged in writing her history. The planet, the pebble, goes attended by its shadow. The rolling rock leaves its scratches on the mountain, the river its channels in the soil, the animal its bores in the stratum, the fern and leaf their modest epitaph in the coal. The falling drop makes its sculpture in sand or stone, not a footprint in the snow, or along the ground, but prints in characters more or less lasting a map of its march; every act of the man inscribes itself on the memory of its fellows, and its own face. The air is full of sounds—the sky of tokens; the ground is all memoranda and signatures, and every object is covered over with hints, which speak to the intelligent."

The Ladies.—"May we kiss the girls we please, and please the girls we kiss."