

# WEEKLY COMMERCIAL.

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## THE GAMING HOUSE, AN ANTE-ROOM TO THE GALLOWES.

HENRY WESTON.

"Man courts happiness in a thousand different shapes, and the faster he follows it the swifter it flies from him. Almost everything promiseth happiness to us at a distance, but when we come nearer to it, either we fall short of it or it falls short of our expectation; and it is hard to say which of these is the greatest disappointment."  
[Tillotson.]

He plays the game of the great enemy who places temptation in the way of others. If this conclusion be deemed sound in a general point of view, it has special force when applied to the young. With principles scarcely fixed, with great inexperience of life, surrounded by much that is novel and much that is bewildering, the young require to be fenced in and protected by every restriction and safeguard which can be ranged around them. Command and control of money should surely be slowly, gradually, and sparingly entrusted to them, only after their bent, disposition, habits, and principles have been carefully ascertained. The contrary course is cruelty.

Poor Weston feelingly alludes to this point in his touching defence.

As to the other haunt, to the delirium and excitement to which he mainly ascribes his fall, that may safely be pronounced a scene in which the Tempter daily and hourly triumphs.

**The gaming house!**

How many hundreds has it swiftly conducted to the felon's dock, the crowded transport, and the fatal scaffold! How many hearts has it broken! How many despairing suicides has it made! How many hearts has it desolated! What widespread misery and wretchedness has it caused! More, and general, and lasting anguish has it occasioned than any other vice, that monster evil drunkenness, alone excepted.

The woe it has brought on many a confiding parent! But enough. Let comment give place to facts.

On the 14th of April, 1796, two of the officers belonging to Bow street arrived in town, from Liverpool, with Henry Weston, charged with committing forgeries on the Banks of England to the amount of £17,000. He had succeeded in reaching Liverpool, and had shipped his luggage on board the 'Hector,' bound for the Leeward Islands. The vessel had dropped down to a place called the 'Gut,' about seven miles below Liverpool, and was to have sailed the next morning. The officers found him in bed at Bates' Hotel, with a brace of loaded pistols by his side. On their way to town Weston found means to conceal a case knife in his pantaloons, and on changing clothes at Barnett, he requested permission to withdraw for a brief space, where he cut his own throat, but missing one of the arteries, did not effect his purpose. On the 14th of the following month Weston was put on trial at the Old Bailey, for forging and uttering a warrant of attorney, by means of which he transferred £5,000, 3 per cent., the property of General Tonyn. He had likewise transferred £11,000 of the same stock belonging to the same officer, but was indicted for the former offence only. The fact being fully proved, a letter written by the prisoner to his employer, Mr. Cowan, on his absconding from London, was read in court. It mentioned, among other circumstances, that he, the prisoner, had lost, by speculating in the funds £17,000, entrusted to his care by Sir Hugh Palliser Waters, Bart.; that he afterward had ventured immense sums in speculating at Messrs. Mackay and Forbes; and continuing still unlucky, had recourse to the gaming house, where his ill fortune followed him, and he was under the necessity of imposing on the credulity of Mr. Cowan, by forging two powers of attorney in the name of General Tonyn, the one for £11,000, the other for £5,000 stock, belonging to that gentleman. That he had paid an immense sum to Mr. C. K., at Forbes', besides losing £1,600 in the last lottery, and other great losses which he had experienced at different gaming tables. The letter then alluded to several debts which were owing to him, and finished by a declaration that he was so dreadfully affected by his misconduct that he could live no longer. The concluding words were, 'God forgive me.' The signature was that of 'Henry Weston.'

The prisoner being called upon for his defence, made none. Several respectable gentlemen were called to testify to his

character, the unsullied excellence of which, prior to the fatal transaction which preceded his ruin, was apparent to the whole court. The judge summed up the evidence, and the jury returned a verdict guilty. When it was pronounced, the prisoner addressed the court as follows: I hear the verdict against me with a calmness and resignation I am happy in possessing upon so awful an occasion. I hope the numerous young men who surround me will take example by my fate, and avoid those excesses which have brought me to ruin and disgrace; and that those farther advanced in years will be cautious of indulging, with too lax a control, persons arrived only at an early period of life. At the time I was ushered into life, I possessed that control over property the value of which I could not justly estimate, and from which I date my present dreadful situation. The justice of my condemnation I acknowledge, and shall submit to it with patience, and I hope with fortitude.

Death.

So much for gaming-houses and their victims! And such haunts still exist!—Training-schools for suicides—nurseries for the Evil One. And those who frequent them unblushingly show their faces to society, and are, to a certain extent, received and caressed.

I recollect well some years ago, hearing much of one gamster who was a rare specimen of his class. He was, incredible as it may seem, a successful gambler; lived and died in comparative opulence. My informant respecting him was a connection who, for many months, was obliged to keep up constant intercourse with the 'play-man,' in order to conduct successfully a matter of business. The gambler made no concealment as to his mode of life. Reference to it was made more than once by himself. 'I live by play,' was his avowal. 'The biscuit I eat, and the coat I wear, I won by play. Play furnishes the room I sit in, the livery John wears, and the cab which an hour hence will take me to Chiswick. I'm not ashamed of my calling. I live by play.' And yet he was by no means insensible to religious influences. He attended church solemnly and unfailingly, every Sunday morning, and kept his Sabbath rigidly up to six o'clock. At that hour, according to his creed, the Sabbath ended. He had always by him, during the morning of that day, some devotional book. Heber's Hymns, and Jeremy Taylor's Life, were great favorites with him; and he had read again and again 'Rennell's Narrative of the conversion of Count Struensee.' Up to the hour mentioned (6, p. m.) he was averse to enter upon any topic connected with business. How the remainder of the day was spent would be a matter of painful inquiry. At church his demeanor was decorous, and even devout. If the claims of charity were there brought before him he gave, not handsomely and liberally, but largely. Whether this was the result of some generous impulse; whether he regarded his aims as a set-off against his criminal mode of life; whether by these 'free-will offerings' he hoped to propitiate the Divine favor, is best known to the Searcher of hearts. Certainly no charitable appeal did he give reluctantly or nigardly; and in matters of business my connection found him 'tenacious in the extreme as a proprietor, but liberal and indulgent as a donor.' In his habits he was singularly temperate; drunkenness he abhorred as brutal, and had rare command of temper.

During an intercourse of many months, and occasionally under trying circumstances, my informant told me that he had never once seen him ruffled, or read heard an impatient or angry expression issue from his lips. Soon after the adjustment of the negotiation, his health began to fail, and he sank somewhat rapidly into the grave. He was much depressed toward the close of life: 'not,' as he himself strangely phrased it, 'about his own conduct individually; for what he had realized, he had realized by allowable means. What causes me uneasiness, is the idea that my career and success have been, and may continue to be, the ruin of many.'

He left all he possessed to no relatives, but to a child, for whom, in his last illness, he had formed a passionate attachment, but from whom it passed irrevocably to a public charity, whenever it could be proved that the said Philip—had ever, at any period, or under any circumstances, lost at any one time five shillings or upward at a game of chance.

May this sentence be construed as the gambler's dying protest against his iniquitous calling?

But it has still followers The 'Hell,' appropriate name! is yet frequented; and the stakes there are nothing less than human happiness and human souls: a damning reproach to us a nation that such dens of iniquity are permitted to exist! Yet so it will be, till sounder feelings take possession of the masses—till the requirements of Scrip-

ture are recognised as the rules of human conduct—till there is less of political economy, and more of the Bible among us—till we act, and legislate, and punish, and reward as a nation of Christians!

**RELIGIOUS SECTS—BIGOTRY.**

The number of sects of professing Christians in the world is great, and their manner of worship exceedingly dissimilar; but, if we examine and carefully compare with others, the fundamental doctrines held up and advocated by each, we shall find very little difference in the essential principles of those who receive Christ as the mediator, notwithstanding their numerous, diversified and sometimes expressive titles.

The system of religion, as it is revealed to us in the pages of the scriptures, contains no mysteries. We find no passages which are deemed essential to our happiness, buried in ambiguity, or hermetically sealed. One of the great beauties of the Bible is, that its readings are plain, simple, easy of comprehension, and, at the same time, forcible and convincing. The poor unlettered peasant, as well as the collegian, filled with classic lore; the simple and unknown, as well as the wise and great; and the child, as well as him of mature age, who possesses and ardent desire so search out, that he may travel therein, the pathway to happiness and heaven, will be at no loss rightly to comprehend the commands of duty. We are taught to reverence, love, obey, and worship the Great Source of our being; to do unto others as we would have others do unto us; and to regard every member of the human family as our brother or our sister. Who can mistake language so clear, so forcible? and who will err, if he strictly adhere to these obligations?

It is a difference on non-essential points, which creates the various religious sects and denominations among us. People have different views in respect to the manner, form, and place of worship; and, to gratify their respective opinions, they branch off into separate congregations. Some professors believe that churches should be built plain and simple, a type of their leader and his doctrines; while others regard the embellishments of art as in no way detracting from the purity of the gospel. Some stand when they pray; others kneel. Some regard immersion as important; while others administer the baptismal rite by pouring water on the head, or sprinkling the face. One sect commences worship by singing; another with prayer. One minister reads his sermons; another speaks extemporaneously. These, and numberless other trifling variations, may be observed in the mode of worship; but they cannot in any way, affect the standard doctrines of religion.

This diversity of opinion implies no reflections upon the sufficiency of the scriptures to instruct in matters of faith, nor upon the perfection of religion itself; and therefore, should not be used as an argument, by those who desire to be exempted from obeying its commands. These different modes of worship have all been formed by men. They may shew the instability of man's imagination, and the imperfection of his intellectual powers, in forming a true and perfect system; but they impair not the revelations of Providence. The duty to worship God is obligatory upon every one; the particular mode of his worship will be that dictated by his reason and his conscience.

Regarded in this, its true light, it is not a little extraordinary, that men should make ceremony a bone of contention, and a source of violent dispute, by which evil passions are engendered, contention raised, and, not infrequently, the peace of society disturbed. Why may not all sects unite in fellowship and harmony of soul, and concentrate their efforts to advance the cause of christianity? All profess to follow the same master, and to be striving for the same point. But it is here that an important error is committed. We say not that the christian may be too zealous in the cause of God; but he may be too persevering and obstinate in the cause of his own particular sect. His anxiety to make all Catholics, all Methodists, or Presbyterians, may induce him to overstep the bounds of prudence, and he may, in his zeal, commit indiscretions, whereby injury, instead of good, will be done.

An eminent divine\* once had a remarkable dream, during which an angel appeared to his view. "Are there any Presbyterians in heaven?" said he to the high-born-messenger. "No," was the answer. "Are there any Baptists?" "No." "Any Catholics?" "No." "Any Methodists?" "No." "Any Christians in heaven?" "No." It should be the endeavor of all religiously disposed people, instead of wrangling on minor and unimportant points, to possess themselves of that kind of religion which will make them better men and women; and parents; better neighbors, and better citizens.

There is a certain degree of enthusiasm necessarily connected with religion. Men who possess it, are anxious to make pro-

lytes of all around them; but they sometimes err at this point, and endeavor to convert people to their own sects, to their own mode of thinking, rather than to christianity; and it seems as if they enjoyed more happiness when one is induced to join their denomination, than when a score, or a hundred are taken in by other sects. It has been remarked, that the system of Mahomet was drawn up with particular tact and cunning. The followers of that false prophet were taught, that every disbeliever they slew, added to their attainments in religion, and hence fire and the sword were freely used in exterminating heretics. In our day, notwithstanding the rapid spread of liberal and correct principles, professors of religion retain much bigotry, if not the desire to ridicule and persecute those who think not as they do. "Men will," says a learned divine, "content and wrangle for religion; they will fight for it, and die for it; but they will not live for it." The lesson is impressive.

A circumstance came under our notice some time ago, which may, we think, be aptly introduced here, as an illustration of the hideousness and absurdity of bigotry. The members of a highly respectable religious society, were divided in opinion, in respect to some unimportant point in the government of the church. The difference might have been, no doubt, amicably and satisfactorily settled, by submitting the merits of the case to a competent tribunal; but the zeal of the respective parties was so strong, that from words, they came to an open rupture, and from a rupture to a disgraceful battle! In the contest, one man was observed particularly active in inflicting injury on his late brethren. He had an iron bar, with which he dealt furious blows on all within his reach, old and young. A spectator at length stepped up to him, and modestly inquired, whether the religion he professed justified his conduct; or, setting religion aside, whether he could reconcile his behavior to reason or common sense? "Yes, sir," said he, emphatically, "if religion is not worth fighting for it is not worth having!"

\* "The sword," says Mahomet, "is the key of heaven and of hell. A drop of blood shed in the cause of God, at night spent in prayer, is of more avail, than two months spent in prayer;—whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven; at the day of judgment, his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion, and odoriferous as musk; and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and of cherubims."

**From the Raleigh Register.**

MR. GALES: About the middle of September, as I was returning to North Carolina from Western Virginia, I learned for the first time, that an Editor of the South had discovered in "Roanoke" a publication treasonable to our section of the Union. I passed across the State, and through Raleigh, and I saw many acquaintances, of all parties and professions, and nearly all of them, when consulted by me, advised me to treat the charge alluded to with silent contempt. The origin of the article, the coarseness of the language and the brutality of the sentiment, seemed to make it unworthy of my notice; but after mature reflection, I have concluded to make a publication of my principles upon the subject of Abolitionism. I was deeply impressed with a sense of gratitude towards my North Carolina friends, who had so generously defended me; and I wish to show to them that their confidence is not misplaced. Besides, there are some well-meaning persons, who regard literature and fanaticism as inseparably connected; and in the opinion of such, all authors are mono-maniacs on some subject or other. In addition to all this, we have fallen on evil times; there never was a period in the history of this country, when the fierce passions of the human heart were developed to such an intensity. Politicians are agitating for the dissolution of our glorious Union; and it becomes all moderate men to whose views the least importance is attached, to let their position be distinctly known.

Appended to the Chapter in "Roanoke," so rudely attacked and so utterly misrepresented by the "Fredericksburg Recorder," was originally a note, and in this note the author took occasion to make mention of the abolitionists. He cited this Chapter as an illustration of the fact that Southern people dared to discuss some of the evils connected with slavery; and he expressed the opinion that generally the slave's best friend is his master, and thus for obvious reasons. Sometimes a brutal master will endeavor to force his slave to ponder his vicious appetites; and sometimes such attempts deeply shock the sensibilities of the slave, while they are, if known, severely condemned by the majority of slave-owners. "Wild Bill," as the reader can see, manifested a strong affection for all the members of the family to which he had first belonged; and he was not ashamed of his first condition. The rumors of his misdeeds, &c. were mere rumors, and true to the history of countries where there

are fugitives from justice, or from legal bondage; and his conversations were intended for the eyes of intelligent white people, and not to be scattered among the negroes as incendiary documents. The runaway was a Utopian, and though a negro, fond of discussing abstract questions; nor would it have been exactly natural to make his boyish interlocutor equally as wordy, eloquent or passionate. Still, the boy's arguments were conclusive; and such discussions as those in the text may be heard in the South at every fire-side which is graced with intelligence.

The note to which I alluded was left out of the Magazine, because it obviously tended to provoke controversy; and it was thought that the final denouncement which was all written and stereotyped last winter, did not need an explanation for its own sake.

I dread fanatics of all kinds as much as I dread mad-dogs; and I regard the former as being about as great a nuisance as the latter. We have fanatics at South who are nearly as wild as those at the North, and some of them, at both ends, are obnoxious to the additional and odious charge of hypocrisy. Their method in their madness; and well will it be for the people, if they will look into each others hearts for their own intentions and wishes, and for those of their brethren, and not trust too much to inflammatory addresses of those who would lose their consequence if there were no elements of strife.

Though we have some enthusiasts in North Carolina, I do not believe there is a single son of that good old Commonwealth who has aimed against the Union; and it is not improbable that the sturdy sense and honesty of our people will yet prove one of the bulwarks of our Constitution, and thus of freedom and even of civilization over the world.

I believe myself to be a friend of the human race, because I am myself a man; and I desire first the welfare of the Whites, for to this class I belong, and with it are all my associations, political and social. I am, therefore, not an abolitionist, nor do I entertain extreme opinions on any subject.

In conclusion, I will say of "Sartain's Union Magazine," that is not tainted with any species of fanaticism; and while it desires to inculcate sound morals and to propagate a taste for polite Literature, religious and political sectarianism is carefully excluded from its columns. The Publishers and Editors are practical and sober-minded and liberal-minded men; they go for the Union of the States and the union of all honest men. I know the men of whom I write; and I know that while they regard with contempt the scurrilous ebullitions of illiterate scribblers, they desire and deserve the good will of the intelligent people of the South.

Will the North Carolina papers do me the justice to publish this card?

C. H. WILEY.

Oct. 17th 1849.

and the friends of Mr. Sands got him out of the street.

The next day, Sep. 29th, a meeting of Americans was held at the American hotel, in which they denounced the conduct of Sands, as unbecoming the character of an American citizen. While a deputation of Americans was delivering their views to the Governor of the affair, Sands appeared, and apologized to his countrymen for his conduct, and surrendered himself to the Governor, by whom he was turned over to the authorities, and quiet was restored.—Order reigns in Panama. Panama is entirely free from sickness. The cholera has departed.

**SELF RELIANCE.**

Bad luck, as well as mischance and misfortune, are all the daughters of misconduct and sometimes mothers of success, prosperity, and advancement. To be thrown on one's resources, is to be cast into the very lap of fortune. Had Franklin entered Philadelphia with a thousand dollars in his pocket, instead of one shilling and nine pence, as he did, in all probability he would have gone on a "spree," instead of hunting up employment—and died at thirty-five, from driving tandem teams and drinking brandy-smashes, instead of living to the green old age of eighty, and dying a philosopher, whose amusement was the taming of thunderbolts and bottling up lightning. Had Napoleon's father been the owner of a princely estate, his son would never have got to be emperor. A good kick out of doors is better for a boy than all the rich uncles in the world. One never tries to swim so hard as when he has to do it or drown. To be a rich man's son, is the greatest misfortune that can befall a young man, mentally speaking. Who fill our offices?—not the children of the rich or the sons of the opulent.—*Albany Knickerbocker.*

**MURDER AND ROBBERY.**

A correspondent of the Augusta Constitutional, under date of 23d inst. states that a most atrocious murder was committed on the person of Mr. JOHN G. PONDER, a speculator. He passed through Hawkinsville on Saturday night, on his way from Richmond, Va. to Florida, with a drove of Negroes, and camped about 10 miles below, and during Sunday night two men were seen by a negro girl; she supposing they were some of their own people, as the fire had burnt down and could not distinctly see them, she paid no attention to them. They killed him by a blow with an axe, which the girl heard.

His head was completely split open, and he never spoke or made the least noise after the blow. They carried his trunk off half a mile and broke it open and got \$50, we believe, and a cloth coat—his paper money was under his head and they did not find it. It is not thought that his negroes committed the murder, as they show no signs of guilt. The Coroner has taken charge of the body, and every effort will be made to ferret out and bring to justice the guilty perpetrators of the deed.

**LATER FROM HAVANA.**

By the arrival of the steamship Ohio, Captain Schenck, we have received our files of Havana papers to the 24th inst.

The Havana journals have received advices from Yucatan to the 5th inst. They confirm the intelligence of the assassination of Jacinto Pat and eight other leaders by their followers, the Indians. Pat was killed at the rancho of Hochen, near Bacalar, while in company with 200 armed whites, with whom he was proceeding in order to place himself at the disposal of the government and solicit his pardon. It is stated that there were great rejoicings among the Indians upon learning the death of Jacinto Pat, and that a new government had been formed under a triumvirate. The Yucatan government had endeavored to benefit by the dissensions among the Indians, by offering a free pardon and various privileges to all who would lay down their arms.—The treasury was in a low state, there being only \$1,672 on hand.

**DESERVED COMPLIMENT.**

The Hillboro' Recorder in an account of the recent celebration of the Sons at that place, says:

"We cannot close this brief notice without adding a word in relation to the benefits which have resulted to the town from the efforts of the Sons of Temperance.—The most casual observer cannot fail to perceive a manifest improvement in the morals of the town, and a tippler here is not very easily found. It is earnestly hoped that the reformation will continue to go on, until the work shall be complete, and morality, and industry and thrift become distinguishing characteristics of our pleasant village. All good citizens will join us in wishing God speed to this work of the Sons."

THE AMOUNT of California gold received at the mint in Philadelphia is two millions eight hundred thousand dollars.