

# THE PATRIOT.

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## THE PATRIOT.

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From the Christian Spectator.

## PARAGRAPHS FROM A FAMILY ALBUM.

To read without reflection is to read without profit. An intelligent & well-disciplined mind is formed by much thinking, rather than by much reading. And it is because some people read every thing and digest nothing, that their reading often makes them ridiculous. Their heads are full of discourses I have known a learned doctor compound his discourses of such miscellaneous assemblages of things, and with such incoherent effect, as to hold his wandering hearers in a state of confusion or fool. Nay, I have known a congressman, and that fairly, starting a thousand topics, and discussing none, quoting in a single speech all the authors he had ever seen, sacred or profane, till he raised a question whether he were in his wits, or out.

With a view to prevent this habit of merely passive reading, in my own family, I have lately adopted the following plan. We have a large blank book, in a convenient place for writing, which we call the Family Repository. Each member, whenever he meets with any thing, in his reading which strikes him as interesting or important, is expected to write down the passage in this book, with his reflections upon it; or, if he please, his reflections without the passage. Our friends who visit us are usually desired to do the same. The two youngest of the family (whose ages are nine and eleven) are allowed to transcribe, without comment, such passages, in prose and poetry, as strike their fancy, provided they be not too long and so do not take too much time, by which means their judgment is exercised, and an opportunity is given me to correct and improve their taste. As to method we begin on the first leaf, and each one, leaving a suitable blank, writes where the last left off putting the number and subject of what he writes in an irregular index at the end.

Besides the advantage already mentioned,—that this plan promotes thinking, it may be added that thinking promotes conversation, and conversation makes each one's knowledge common property. We elicit, too, some of the best thoughts of our friends—who thus leave behind them something to remind us of their visit, and renew the pleasure which we derived from their society.

In the famous Club which Franklin formed at Philadelphia, in 1727, the first of a long string of questions which were put to each member at each meeting, was, ("Whether he had met with any thing in the author he last read remarkable or suitable to be communicated to the junta?")

Why may not the members of a family be as useful to each other in this way, as the members of a junta?

Having said thus much about my

plan—which is more than I intended—I shall add an extract or two which are taken at random from our repository.

## POSTHUMOUS INFLUENCE.

It is an affecting consideration that our friends speak when we are dead, no less than our virtues. We die, but our example lives. It continues to exert its influence, while we have no longer power to undo the evil we have done, or in any measure to cancel or recall the mischiefs we have bequeathed to our survivors. "Being dead, he yet speaketh." These words struck me with melancholy force, when, a few days since, as I was sitting in a reading-room, the silence of the place was broken by the sudden laughter of one reading a witty but profane author. Being dead, he yet speaketh—he still utters his sarcasms, and immortal still answer with mirth. But how sad I could not help reflecting—how sad to one in eternity must be the consideration that he is still a mirth-maker for the unthinking living! How mournfully, if they might reach him there, must those sounds of laughter—excited by his own ungodly wit—strike him, amidst the unutterable things of eternity.

Love of literary fame is the passion of the age. The world is full of writers, too many of whom are less anxious for the moral tendency of productions than for their reception with the ravenous public. But let such writers be rewarded? "Verily, he had his reward." But who would dare to be the inheritor of Byron's fame, if along with it he must take upon him Byron's responsibilities.

Cowper had an almost painful sense of his accountability for every word he wrote. "An author," he remarked to his friend, "had need narrowly to watch his pen, lest a line should escape it which by possibility may do mischief, when he has long been dead and buried. What we have written in a book, will never be known till the day of judgment: then the account will be liquidated, and all the good that it has occasioned, and all the evil, will witness either for or against us." II.

## RURAL TASTE.

In reading the books of our travellers in England, nothing delights me more than their descriptions of an English cottage. Similar specimens it is true, are to be met with in our own country: they are many, and multiplying, it is hoped, yet there is much reason to regret that they bear so small a proportion to the habitations of a different aspect. An American farmer is generally more intent on acquiring land, than desirous of cultivating what he already possesses. Let him be adding field and he is satisfied; give him the privilege of calling them his own, and he is content to pay taxes on some hundreds of lean acres, which yield him no profit.

I regard the man who surrounds his dwelling with objects of rural taste, or who even plants a single shade-tree by the roadside as a public benefactor; not merely because he adds something to the general beauty of the country, and to the pleasure of those who travel through it, but because, also, he contributes something to the refinement of the general mind:—he improves the taste, especially of his own family and neighbourhood. There is a power in scenes of rural beauty, to affect our social and moral feelings. A fondness for these scenes is seldom found with coarseness of sentiment and rudeness of manners. One may judge, with confidence, of the taste and intelligence of a family by the external air of their dwelling. In my excursions in the country, if I

pass a habitation, however spacious, standing naked to the sun, with no thing ornamental, nothing inviting around it, I cannot help saying to myself, however abundant may be the slovenly possessions of its owner, there is no refinement in that house; there is no delicate and kindly interchange of sentiment among its inmates, and if ever they are sociable, their sociableness consists in rude and flippant loquacity. Their books are few, those ill-chosen and unread. But if I notice a dwelling, however humble, which is apparently as snug as its owner, has means to make it, displaying neatness and taste in its fences, and shades, and shrubbery, with perhaps a tasteful summer-house in a luxuriant garden, and flower-pots at the windows, I feel assured that this is the abode of refinement; this is the home of quiet and rational enjoyment, of intelligent and kindly intercourse;—the wayfaring man as he passes by, at the close of the day, weary with his journey, might cast his eye wistfully towards it, and fain make it his lodging-place for the night.

Let the sons and daughters of a family join their hands thus to adorn their paternal dwelling and they shall find themselves not less agreeably than usefully employed. A blooming Eden shall rise up around them and repay their toil with its fragrance and its beauty. And I cannot help remarking, if all our young people would spend a portion of their leisure hours in these employments, how soon and how easily would a charm be spread over our whole country, the charm of groves and waters, of green foliage and greener herbage, filling the mind of the beholder with sensations how different from the effect of that barren aspect which now too often meets the eye.

MARIA.

[By a guest.]

## LUTHER'S CELL.

The people of Glasgow have built a tall monument in honor of John Knox. More impressive to my mind is the manner in which the memory of Luther is preserved at Erfurt. In Russel's tour in Germany, I find the following notice of his cell.

"The Augustine monastery, in which the young Luther first put on cowl of the hierarchy which he was to shake to its foundations, and strove to lull with his flute the impatient longings of a spirit that was to set Europe in flames, has been converted to the purposes of an orphan asylum; but the cell of the Reformer has been religiously preserved, as the earliest memorial of the greatest man of modern times. The gallery on which it opens, is adorned with a Dance of Death,\* and over the door is the inscription,

Cellula, divino magnoque habitata Luthero,  
Salve, vix tanto cellula digna viro!  
Dignus erat qui regum splendida tecta subiret,  
Te designatus non tamen ille fuit.

The cell is small and simple, and

\*The reader probably knows, that such a Dance of Death is a series of paintings, representing Death leading off to the other world all ranks of men, from the monarch to the beggar, and of all professions, and characters, priests and coquettes, soldiers and philosophers, musicians and doctors, &c. &c. They were generally painted, either in church yards, or in the cemetery of Newstadt, in Dresden, to teach the general doctrine of human mortality, or in churches and convents, to commemorate the ravages of a pestilence. Of the latter kind was the celebrated Dance of Death at Basle, painted on the occasion of the plague which raged while the council was sitting."

must have been a freezing study. Beside his portrait is hung a German exposition of the text: "Death is swallowed up in victory," in his own handwriting, and written in the form of which old books often terminate, an inverted pyramid. There is a copy of his Bible so full of every good illumination, that it might be called a Bible with plates. The wooden boards are covered with ingenious carving and gilding, and studded with pieces of coloured glass to imitate the precious stones which so frequently adorn the manuscripts of the church. It is said to have been the work of a hermit of the sixteenth century, who thus employed his leisure hours to do honour to Luther; yet Protestant hermits are seldom to be met with." G.

From the American Farmer.

## DESCRIPTION OF A GOOD HORSE.

Sir.—From an apparently very old work of 500 pages the date of its publication being torn out, I send you an extract, descriptive of a good horse. The title of the book is "Directions for hunting and killing all manner of chase used in England, with the terms of art belonging thereunto, also, a short account of some peculiar beasts not usually hunted in England, by Nicholas Cox."

I am, &c. T. E. W.

"His head ought to be lean, large, his ears small, and pricked, or if they be somewhat long; provided they stand upright like those of a fox, it is usually a sign of mettle and toughness. His forehead long and broad, not flat, and as we term it marefaced, but rising in the midst like that of a hare, the feather being placed above the top of his eye, the contrary being thought by some to betoken blindness. His nostrils wide, and red within, for an open nostril betoken a good wind; his mouth large deep in the wykes hairy; his thropple, weasand or wind-pipe big, loose and straight, when he is reined in by the bridle; for if when he bridles, it bends in like a bow (which is called cock throppled) it very much hinders the passage of his wind. His head must be set on to his neck, that there must be a space feet between his neck and his chaul; for to be bull-necked is uncomely to sight, and prejudicial to the horse's wind. His crest should be firm, thin and well risen; his neck long and straight, yet not loose and pliant, which the Northern men term withy cragged; his breast strong and broad, his chest deep, his chine short, his body large, and close shut up to the huckle bone; his ribs round like a barrel, his belly being hid within them; his fillets large, his buttocks rather oval than broad, being well let down to the gascins; his chambers upright, and not bending, which is called by some sickle houghed, though some hold it a sign of toughness and speed. His legs clean flat and straight; his joints short, well knit, and upright especially betwixt the pasterns, and the hoofs, having but little hair on his fetlocks; his hoofs black, strong and hollow, and rather long and narrow than big and flat, and lastly his mane and tail should be long and thin, rather than thick, which is counted by some a mark of dullness."—On the subject of colour he says "I dare pass my word, that wherever you shall meet with an horse that hath no white about him, especially in his forehead though he be otherwise of the best reputed colours, as bay, black, sorrel &c. that horse hath a kind was the celebrated Dance of Death at Basle, painted on the occasion of the plague which raged while the council was sitting."