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WILMINGTON, N. C.

SUNDAY, JUNE 27, 1897.

SALMAGUNDI.

It is known that the Greeks set great store by athletics. They knew nothing of the latter-day foot ball savagery, but they had foot races and other sports. Reading lately some Greek opinions about many things, we found one philosopher, Xenophanes, as quoted in Bergk, talking decided ground in favor of the intellectual over the physical. He endeavored to counteract the favoritism in behalf of mere physical powers, endurance and other supposed advantages, and to assert the pre-eminence of the intellectual over physical advantages. Read what this philosopher said, who wrote some 500 years before Christ came. He said: "You give all kinds of honors—precedence at festivals, pensions, and public maintenance—to runners, boxers, pentathletes, wrestlers, pancratiasts, and charioteers, who bear away the prize at Olympia; yet these men are not so worthy of reward as I am; for better than the strength of men or horses is our wisdom. What is the use of all this muscular development? It will not improve the constitution of the state, or increase the revenue?" This opinion of Xenophanes was by no means singular. All through the most glorious portions of Greek literature you will find something corresponding to the above in the course of the physical sports. It is stated by one thoroughly versed in Greek literature that "Plato Aristotle, and all political moralists of Greece blamed Sparta and Thebes for training mere soldiers and gymnasts, to the exclusion of intellectual culture; thus retarding the growth of their constitutions and forcing them to depend in all emergencies upon brute force." The Athenians themselves were censured, for it was charged that they suffered from "effeminacy and ignobility of purpose." But two remarks we make. It has not been long since some of the very foremost American seats of learning the athletics were the heroes. The scholarly man, ranking at the head, was not so much as heard from. It was the man of brawn and staying physical force, who could jump higher or out-kick his adversary over whom poems were sung and for whom garlands were woven. The other remark is that while the pagan Greek moralists were united in condemning the excesses in the athletic grounds, there have been in the last three years many modern and American "moralists"—some even Christian "apologists"—who enjoyed the great excesses of the foot ball game and joined in all the shouts and praises in behalf of the physical over the intellectual. The Greek was a much wiser man than the end of the century advocates of brutal games that maimed and killed and caused drunkenness and many disgraceful scenes. Many a clergyman and professor in educational institutions have shown far less insight, wisdom and genuine moral judgment in the matter of athletics than the Greek philosophers who never so much as heard of Christ, as they all lived many hundreds of years before the epiphany of Christ on the earth.

We quoted a saying yesterday. It came from a northern poet, name not known to us. He struck his resounding harp a few years ago and sang a strain worthy of attentive ears, and particularly in these days of pretension and small men and political corruption and personal profligacy, and the worship of the "almighty dollar" that will damn more souls in perdition we believe than anything else but drink. We cannot reproduce the whole, but give a part. He said, and he had the vision of a prophet as well as the convictions of a political philosopher—he saw the great desideratum of the age, of the boasted land of the free, this vain, glorious republic—he saw and sang of the most needed thing now:

"God give us Men! A time like this demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith,
and ready hands—
Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who love honor; men who will not lie;
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog
In public duty and in private thinking;
Whom Freedom weeps,
Whom wrong rules the land, and waiting
Justice sleeps."
These are noble sentiments and worthy of an American patriot and

friend of humanity, whoever he may be. Tennyson has also some noble, vigorous lines in the same direction, written in the fifties, we think it was. We have no copy of his works at hand or we would reproduce a few of his stirring, ringing lines. He has sung in a high, impressive strain in two or three of his masterful poems on liberty and patriotism. The fine poem of Sir William Jones, the celebrated English Orientalist, who died in 1794, more than a century ago, is well known to most intelligent readers in our country. His theme was "Patriotism." What he wrote then as constituting a state is true now, is eternally true. We give some of the opening lines and closing:

"What constitutes a State?
Not high-raised battlements or labour'd ground,
Thick wall or moated gate;
Not cities proud with spires and turrets crown'd;
Not bays and broad-arm'd ports,
Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride;
Not starry and spangled courts,
Where low-brow'd baseness wafts perfume to pride.
No—Men, high-minded men—
Men, who their duties know,
But know their rights, and knowing dare maintain."

These constitute a State."

A year or two ago Edmund C. Stedman, poet and critic, and Professor Woodberry, of Harvard, author also, published an edition of Edgar Allan Poe's works in ten volumes. Both the editors are of New England, and such an undertaking by them and the publishers showed that there was still uncommon, perhaps even a growing, interest in the unfortunate, unhappy poet, and that they believed a large, elegant edition would prove acceptable to the public and profitable to them. We have never seen this edition. Modern books are so high that few persons in the south who love the best literature can hardly ever get a glimpse of the fine editions and never hope to read them. New books are today three or four times higher than they were between 1840-60. Our own library can make that statement good. That the edition is desirable is no doubt true. Professor Woodberry published before this a life of Poe that was cruel in its harsh revelations, as well as most painful. The work is divided in this wise: Five volumes are given to his tales, altogether the most original, marvelous, and ingenious in literature. In fact Poe invented the short modern story as it is now written—the weird, the canny, the mysterious, the inventive, the curiously and elaborately wrought. Four volumes are given to his essays, and one to his poems. The information concerning all is said to be most minute and equal to all demands. "We preserved the following that appeared last year in a northern criticism of the edition:

"With the notes on the poems a complete variorum is printed for the first time, the editors having thought this desirable, partly because there is no such illustration in literature of the elaboration of poetry through long-continued and minute verbal processes, and partly because so large a portion of the verse written by Poe perished in those processes." Mr. Stedman's introductions to these two divisions of the works are as interesting, thoughtful, and discriminating as is that to the Tales."

It must not be omitted that the northern critics and poets have never done justice to Poe, and perhaps the reason is that he was so very severe in his criticisms of Longfellow and other New Englanders contemporary with him. Poe is much more highly appraised in France and in England than he is in New England. In fact, by many critical writers he is considered at the head of American poets. Mr. Stedman is a good critic, but of New England. He said of the nature and quality of Poe's lyrical genius that "a distinctive melody is the element in Poe's verse that first and last has told on every class of readers—a rhythmic effect which, be it of much or little worth, was its author's own; and to add even one constituent to the resources of an art is what few succeed in doing." We do not know whether to class Poe with writers of the south. He was connected on his father's side with a good Maryland family, his mother was an actress, and not native to the south and he was born in Boston. He is in no respect a New England product. He neither thought with them nor wrote like their poets.

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RELIGIOUS EDITORIALS FOR SUNDAY.

Every day is a fresh beginning;
Listen, my soul, to the glad refrain,
And, spite of old sorrow and older sinning,
And puzzles forecasted and possible pain,
Take heart with the day and begin again.
—Susan Coolidge.

The higher critics have unexpectedly come to grief in one of their chief witnesses or authorities. They have quoted from and relied upon Professor Harnack, a very distinguished Biblical authority. They know his great scholarship, and have boasted of his opinions as justifying their own advanced views. The sappers and miners, however, appear to have struck a snag as they were sailing around in the Harnack waters. He is not so much of a destructive as they had supposed. He holds views as to the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament Scriptures that they had hardly counted



Coty's Cologne

St. Louis, New Orleans, Baltimore.

upon. He is clearly not in harmony with the contention of some, perhaps all, of the miscalled higher critics. The able New England organ of the Baptists, The Watchman, says this, and we see no reply that is possible:

"Harnack may be right or wrong in his conclusions; the indisputable thing is that the scholar under whose name so many of the advanced critics have sheltered themselves has admitted the early date of the first Christian documents. We have been told ad nauseam that in these high matters the decision of the experts is final, and we have been taught that Harnack is a high priest of the experts. Now that Harnack rejects only St. Peter as wrongly attributed, and regards all the Pauline epistles as genuine with a little hesitancy as to Ephesians, and even roots the pastoral Epistles in original real letters, and places all the Gospels within the first century, why do not perverts of the question at all, point out that the chief of the experts has broken with the higher critics?"

When a writer like Harnack accepts the substantial trustworthiness of the Christian Scriptures, and their early date, which is the chief matter in dispute, then the men who have been quoting from and relying upon Harnack will have to get support elsewhere. They would better come in out of the rain.

The tendency for some years has been with many preachers and writers to ignore the miraculous element in the Christian Scriptures. Hume tried in his way to destroy the credibility of miracles. But those who have read the little book of Archbishop Whately, so marvelously acute and conclusive, on "Historic Doubts" will not be longer puzzled or annoyed with Hume's plausible sophisms. Doubtless men of certain schools, men who are sceptical by nature or from study, would like to get rid of the miraculous in the Bible, as some would like so much to get rid of the Bible altogether, but, like Banquo's ghost, "it will not down." This generation may quibble, may speculate, may deny, may pervert, may try to drop out of sight the supernatural in the Scriptures but it cannot be done. The eternal verities will remain, for without the miraculous and the supernatural the very foundations of the Christian religion cannot stand. A distinct, clear, unflinching recognition of the supernatural element underlies the whole Christian structure. Wipe out all of the supernatural, of the miraculous and you sap the foundations by opening up the way for all manner of foolish "isms"—agnosticism, theosophy and all the other baseless humbugs—and naturalism in religion will come in abolishing God altogether and all that belongs to him. The New York Examiner, another very able Baptist paper, strongly, impressively says of the tendency in later years to which we refer: "It is, without doubt, true that less stress is laid upon miracles as evidential witnesses of Christianity than a century ago. More stress is placed upon the moral character of Christ and the uplifting power of Christianity, its adaptation to the wants of human nature, than formerly. But the Christ presented to men as the one great nine-tenth-century witness for Christianity will not be effective if he be not regarded as something far different from the highest of men. Only a supernatural Christ can be a convincing witness for our faith."

Not many business houses in these United States can boast of fifty years' standing. The business of Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass., whose incomparable Sarsaparilla is known and used everywhere, has passed its half-centennial and was never so vigorous as at present.

THE MOST INFAMOUS OF REPUBLICAN LAWS.

When we read the letter of our Raleigh correspondent in Saturday's Messenger as to the very oppressive law concerning tax paying passed by the late body of legislative nincompoops, we felt that the Arkansas judge would again adjourn court for a recess that he "might blow off" if he were in North Carolina and had the cases before him compelled by the most oppressive of all North Carolina oppressive laws. What is it?

It is a law that compels the taxpayers, one and all, to pay every cent of their taxes before the fall term of the court—that is before the first superior court that meets after the first Monday in September. The law is mandatory. The act is most vicious, most oppressive. It compels the sheriff to report the list of all delinquents—all who have failed to pay by the time specified—to the judge presiding. It shall be the duty of the judge to at once submit the list of delinquents, of those failing to settle by the time indicated, to the solicitor for prosecution. The failure to pay the taxes by the time indicated is made a misdemeanor at law. The penalty is very severe and very unreasonable. The delinquent shall be fined not more than \$500 or shall be imprisoned at the option of the judge mind you, not exceeding six months. The sheriff shall be paid by the county for his services in executing this act of oppression and outrage.

Since the days of Barons—under the

Feudal System—there has been nothing so unwise, so senseless, so arbitrary and oppressive except under some despotism or paternal government. We do not know if the tar had any hand in this infernal trap for hard-up people—this medieval system of violence for the hewers of wood and the drawers of water.

How will it work? How many people in Wilmington of the thousands who pay taxes can pay them by the time set in the law. It will inconvenience thousands in this city. It will be impossible for hundreds to do as required unless by the help of others. Falling in that they must either go to jail or pay an impossible fine. It will cost the county in a year more than the taxes of the delinquents would perhaps amount to in a life time.

How can the farmers pay their taxes by the time indicated—September? Can they get their cotton and tobacco into market by then? But few can get their cotton and not one his tobacco. Then this ungracious, vile law forces the farmers to sell by a given time whether it be a favorable time or not. However depreciated the market he must sell at least a part of his cotton crop or go to jail or pay a big fine.

However viewed the law is an outrage. It is every way worthy of the asses who framed it. It was conceived in stupidity, passed in malignity and its execution will be a crime. It ought to be a dead letter from the start.

If there should be vicious, vindictive, sheriffs, judges and solicitors how they might glut their devilishness if they had up for punishment men who opposed them in politics. How they could make the offence small if the delinquents happened to be of their own political gang. Lord Byron, in the only speech he ever made in the house of Lords spoke of the impossibility of justice in England then "with a Jeffreys for a judge and twelve butchers for a jury." What chance would genuine democrats have in a court presided over by a malignant of the opposition when they appeared as guilty of misdemeanors? We would rather be tried in Byron's supposed court feeling surer of justice.

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SNAPS.

Baltimore's taxes this year aggregate \$7,617,000. The property holders must feel happy under this burden.

The headline, "Barnato Suicided," appeared in Congressman Barrett's Boston Advertiser, and the people of that town will never recover from the pain and shock it caused. Mr. Barrett is too busy editing the nation to give proper attention to his newspaper.—Washington Post.

The southern papers that use "suicided"—very common—can take offense and find shelter under the Boston paper's wing. Then there is that word "executed," and another euphemistic and elegant word—"funeralized." Nice additions to the vocabulary of newspaper man.



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