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MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Cincinnati Commercial.

The Masses—Their Condition and Amelioration.

The term "Masses" is certainly sung often enough in our ears to produce a thorough understanding, not only of its meaning, but of all their wants, resources and prospects. But nothing can be more mysterious than these latter conditions, so far as general agreement and harmony of action extend. From the time of the ancient republics of Greece and Rome until the present day, the amelioration of the masses has always been an agitated and predominating question with those directing the affairs of government. Conflicting parties have ever offered different and contrary measures which should secure the greatest amount of good to the greatest number of people. The Masses have always been talked of and held up as a conspicuous feature of legislative action, but, considering the times and the circumstances by which they are surrounded, we cannot see that their condition is much more improved or their interests much more furthered than they were centuries ago. The Masses—by which we understand all who obtain a livelihood by actual labor, money for toil, without bargain, trade or speculation—have been important thus far in theory rather than practice, in being talked of rather than being talked to, in possessing nominal rather than actual consequence. They have been employed as a means, not as an end; and their name has been used as a sort of clap-net by which to catch public applause and their support and enthusiasm in the execution of certain projects, professing the show without the substance of their advantage. In this manner has it happened that, through all the "sound and fury" of public debate, strong contention, enactment and annulment of laws, and the revolutions of countries, the Masses still require many of their rights, and ask for amelioration even in our bright land of equal liberty. How much longer will this be, and when will true action begin, are questions the most natural though the most difficult to answer. It is, at least, evident, from a consideration of the past, and a scanning of the present, that the Masses must not dream of prosperity, but awake to action; they must themselves take part in what concerns their good, and not trust to the promises and pretensions of demagogues who would elevate them to the heavens while they feel the need of their aid, and kick them to the earth when their services are no longer required.

One feature in the history of the Masses is observed: they have almost invariably been acted for, and their needs and interests become known more through others' mouths than their own. This is very opposition to

the end they expect to attain; and it cannot but be regarded as a little singular that they do not see through the error of their life-time, and adopt a different mode of procedure. Their case is much like that of a patient and his physician. They know not thoroughly what is their condition or what the disease of which they are to be cured. They hear a number of learned disquisitions which appear all very fine and sound mellifluously, but are not understood. They swallow what is offered them greedily, and find, to their astonishment, "they get no better fast." Thus from month to month, and year to year, they continue in the same practice, and listen to aught that is told them with a marvelousness which abundantly bespeaks their patience and their expectation. They are advised to beware of new humors and strange diseases, whose appearance they confidently expect, and down goes another antidote to preserve the health they never enjoyed. Worn in mind and fatigued in body, they yet continue to hope and will hope, it seems, while life lasts, without any genuine evidence of improvement, until they burst the bonds of foreign alliance and depend upon their native, vigorous constitution, and their own means of increased strength, for complete activity and restoration.

The evils of the masses are usually exaggerated, and they are goaded on to a point whose obtention augments in place of diminishing the injustice they suffer.—Annoyed, and irritated, and provoked by those pretending to be their best friends, they know not what they do, and make blunders which eventuate disastrously to their interests and to their future prospects. They clutch at straws and mistake shadows for substance, until they imagine there must be a common agreement and a natural desire to oppress them. Cynicism and dissatisfaction perhaps result, and despairing partially of any proper favors, they even snap at the hand which would elevate them.—Their true friends they consider their foes, because in opposition to their false ones, and bewildered and harassed, they know not which way to turn or what to choose. The sole remedy for this is to search themselves for what they absolutely need, and take counsel from those of their own number who are able to give wholesome teaching, and have done so. Let them elevate themselves by knowledge and virtue, and not wait for the realization of Utopian schemes, that can never have existence. When they do so, the masses will obtain amelioration, and not till then.

Improvements.

There is a large class of men every where and especially in remote country districts, who are in the habit of discouraging all projected improvements, without discrimination. And yet these same men are the very ones who always insist upon having tip-top prices for their lands, when they have been brought into market and made valuable by the very measures which they have continually denounced and derided. When a farmer or other property-holder takes the ground that a projected plank road, railroad, pavement, &c., will not advance the value of his land a single dollar, we like to see him stick to his declaration to the end. It seems to us rather mean in him to ridicule and oppose every effort of his neighbors for the general good; and then demand a heavy, additional price for his property, based upon the completion and success of the very measures which he had opposed from the beginning. There is only one thing meaner than this; and that is to ridicule schemes of improvement, not from ignorance, but from a selfish desire to avoid taking part in the outlay—thus throwing the whole burden upon the shoulders of a few public-spirited and generous men, while the beneficial results are shared alike by all. This seems the very quintessence of meanness—and yet it is not done every day?—*Sat. Eve. Post.*

The Olive Branch tells a capital story of a sarcastic old fellow, who, being asked one day by Parson A. if he had any treasures laid up in Heaven—replied with a doleful look, "Sartin, sartin; I guess they must be there, if anywhere—I haint got none laid up thome, I say, sartin!"

Health comes of itself; but we are at great pains to get our diseases. Health comes from a simple life of nature; disease from the artificial life of nature.

PHOTOGRAPHY.—A lazy boy out in Indiana, spells Andrew Jackson thus: Kru Janu.

From the National Intelligencer. Washington National Monument.

This Monument has now reached an elevation of 121 feet from the surface, and is an object of interest and attraction to all who visit the metropolis of the nation. Some idea of its magnitude may be formed by those who see this structure as it now is, when they know that it has not yet reached the one-fourth of its proposed height. It is at present an object visible for miles down the Potomac, at a short distance from the margin of which it stands. The building committee have caused to be prepared a car, which is calculated to accommodate eight persons, and carry up such as may desire to ascend to its present elevation, from which a most splendid panoramic view of the city and surrounding country may be obtained—when not covered in, as it now is, for the season.

The contributions made at the polls during the last Presidential election, in compliance with the circular of the Board of Managers, amount so far to \$16,000, but which no doubt would have reached a much larger sum had earlier arrangements been made for collections on that occasion. The contributions from other sources will enable the Board to proceed with their usual energy in carrying up this great national work during the next building season; and from the patriotic feeling so far manifested throughout the country there is every reason to believe that a sufficient amount will be obtained to complete this great testimonial of the people's gratitude to the illustrious founder of their liberties.

The resolution of 1783 is now proposed to be carried out by authorizing the erection of an equestrian statue of Washington, to be executed by an American artist in bronze. This artist, wholly untaught, and without having ever seen a statue of that kind, has made one in honor of Jackson, the first ever cast in this country, which will transmit his name to posterity as a man of surpassing genius, and as one who has done what no other artist has ever yet been known to accomplish. The statue ordered will, no doubt, when completed, give additional reputation to the artist, as it must do honor to the legislative body that has, to the late, determined to carry into execution the resolution of 1783. A resolution, however, adopted at a later period, in May, 1800, which authorized "a marble monument to be erected by the United States in the capital at the city of Washington in honor of Gen. WASHINGTON, to commemorate his services," &c., has become a dead letter on the Journals of Congress ever since that time. To remove this stigma from the character of the nation the Monument Association now existing was established in this city in 1833, and by earnest appeals to the American people for pecuniary aid, and by indefatigable perseverance and effort, they have so far succeeded in raising a structure in honor of the great Father of his Country to the one-fourth of its contemplated height without the least assistance from Congress, in the expectation and with the gratifying assurance that the countrymen of Washington, from a feeling of patriotism and a veneration for his character, will do what Congress has so long and so strangely neglected to do. There is now every reason to believe that the people will, by their voluntary contributions, prove to the world that however neglectful their representatives may have been, they at least are desirous to show that republics are not ungrateful, and that they can properly appreciate the services of one who, under Providence, mainly achieved their independence, and enabled them to enjoy the great political blessings they now possess.

THE NORTH CAROLINA TWINS.—We find in the Statescope, a valuable journal, published in Richmond, Va., an account by the editor, Dr. Good, of this remarkable freak of nature:

These two children were born in July, 1851. The mother is a stout negress, aged 31, very fat, and of large frame. They are remarkably sprightly and healthy children, of natural size, one somewhat larger than the other, and perfectly formed, but they are united at the sacra—the lower termination of the back. The bond of union seems to be cartilaginous, but the sacra are so closely approximated, that some suppose there is osseous union of those bones. The anatomical confirmation has some strange peculiarities interesting to professional men, which we omit. Their usual position is on their sides, (the right side of the smaller, and left of the other,) with their neck bent so as to put the face upwards. Having now grown for a year in the recumbent position thus bent, their faces and hands have become somewhat distorted laterally. The mother nurses them by lying first on one side, and then on the other. From their sprightly and intelligent countenances, there is reason to hope that they will soon acquire an education in the art of sitting and locomotion. They must sit back on one common seat, and take it by turns, which is to walk forwards, while the other must lock step backwards a la militaire. They are far more wonderful than the famous Siamese Twins.

In fashionable life the men most run after are the men deepest in debt.

A Strong Temperance Speech.

We find in an eastern paper the following arguments in favor of Temperance by Mr. Edward Baines, of England, who is the member of Parliament, we believe, for Leeds. The following is an extract from his speech:

"The peculiar danger of intoxicating drinks is in their extreme seductiveness, and in the all but unconquerable strength of the drinking habit when once formed; and their peculiar malignity is in their being the parent or nurse of every kind of crime, wickedness, and suffering."

"I say boldly that no man living who uses intoxicating drinks is free from the danger of at least occasional, and if of occasional, ultimately of habitual excess. I have myself known such frightful instances of persons brought into captivity to the habit, that there seems to be no character, position, or circumstances that free men from the danger. I have known many young men of the finest promise led by the drinking habit into vice, ruin, and early death. I have known such become virtual pariahs. I have known many tradesmen whom it has made bankrupt. I have known Sunday scholars whom it has led to prison. I have known teachers, and even superintendents, whom it has dragged down to profligacy. I have known ministers of religion, in and out of the Establishment, of high academic honors, of splendid eloquence, nay, of vast usefulness, whom it has facilitated and hurried over the precipice of public infamy, with their eyes open, and gazing with horror on their fate. I have known men of the strongest and clearest intellect, and of vigorous resolution, whom it has made weaker than children and fools. I have known gentlemen of refinement and taste whom it has debased into brutes. I have known poets of high genius whom it has bound in a bondage worse than the galleys, and ultimately out short their days. I have known statesmen, lawyers, and judges whom it has killed. I have known kind husbands and fathers whom it has turned into monsters. I have known honest men whom it has made villains. I have known elegant and Christian ladies whom it has converted into bloated sots."

"Is it not notorious that under the ravages of drunkenness the land mourns? That it is this which—I may almost say exclusively—fills our prisons, our workhouses, our lunatic asylums, our dens of pollution, and our hospitals, which cause most of the shipwrecks, fires, fatal accidents, crimes, outrages, and suicides that load the columns of our newspapers; which robs numberless wives of a husband's affection, and numberless children of a parent's fondness, which strips thousands of homes of every comfort, deprives scores of thousands of children of education, and almost of bread, and turns them on the streets; which leaves so many places of worship almost empty, and so many Mechanics' Institutes languishing, whilst the pot-houses are crowded; which brings down (it is estimated) sixty thousand of our population every year to a drunkard's grave?"

"And of all the victims of intemperance, be it remembered, there is not one who did not begin by moderate drinking, or who had the remotest idea when he began that he should be led into excess."

WATER-PROOF BOOTS AND SHOES.—The February number of the American Farmer has the following recipe for rendering boots and shoes water-proof, which the editor says he has tried with perfect success:

"Take one pint of boiled linseed oil, two ounces of beeswax, two ounces of spirits of turpentine, and two ounces of burgundy pitch. Let them be carefully melted over a slow fire. With this mixture new shoes and boots are to be rubbed in the sun, or at a little distance from the fire, with a sponge or brush. This operation should be repeated without wearing them as often as they become dry, until they are fully saturated, which will require four or five times brushing; by this the leather becomes impervious to water. The boot or shoe, thus prepared, lasts much longer than common leather; it acquires such a pliability and softness that it will never shrivel, or grow hard, and in that state is the most effectual preventive against colds, &c. It is necessary to remark that shoes and boots thus prepared ought not to be worn until they become perfectly dry and elastic; as in the contrary case the leather will become too soft, and wear out much sooner than it otherwise would."

THE MORMONS.—A correspondent of the St. Louis Intelligencer writing from Utah, says that he attended service at the only house of worship in the place, and had the pleasure of hearing a sermon upon the plurality of wives, from brother Orson Pratt, as well as the reading of the original revelation of Joseph Smith upon the same subject, by President Young. One singular idea advanced by Mr. Pratt in his discourse I cannot refrain from mentioning. That was, that the principal reason why the people of the United States and Europe did not adopt the system of a plurality of wives was that they were too avaricious and penurious to support such large families; that they were at last becoming too fond of gold to support even a single wife and her offspring.

From the San Francisco Herald. Ice in San Francisco.

The arrival of the brig Consort, with two hundred and twenty tons of ice from Sitka, marks a new era in the ice trade of the Pacific. The Consort is owned by the American Russian Commercial Company, who have engaged with much vigor in the enterprise of supplying the various markets on this coast from Sitka. With the rapid advance of civilization, the article is becoming a necessary of life, and especially is this the case in the summer months, when the thermometer, out of San Francisco, averages over one hundred degrees. On the coast too, and in the steamer ice is indispensable, and from this time forward there is every reason to believe it will be quite as extensively used on the Pacific coast as in the United States. Fortunately the supply is near at hand, within fifteen days sail of San Francisco. The like from which the American Russian Commercial Company obtain their ice, is capable of furnishing fifteen thousand tons a year, and is exceedingly easy of access, being within fifteen hundred yards of the landing. The company have despatched engineers, ice-cutters and all the other force necessary to get out the ice, build ice-houses, construct a railway from the lake to the shore, and do all other things preparatory to loading the ships of the company with cargoes during the whole year. Hereafter a supply may be expected twice a fortnight, as there is already in the ice-houses sufficient stored to load several vessels. The enterprise is being prosecuted with a great deal of energy, and when the arrangements are fully completed, as they will be in a very short time, our citizens may expect to be furnished with abundance of ice in every month of the year. Of course this supply from Sitka will annihilate the ice trade between Boston and this port, as the latter place cannot keep up a competition with a rival locality but fifteen to twenty days distance from San Francisco, and where labor is likewise so very cheap. We learn that the company intend despatching another vessel in a few days.

PUNCTUALITY.—Washington was a minute man. An accurate clock in the entry at Mount Vernon controlled the movement of the family. At his dining parties he allowed five minutes for difference of watches and then waited for no one. If members of Congress came at a late hour, his simple apology was: "Gentlemen, we are too punctual for you." "Gentlemen, I have a clock who never asks whether the company has come, but whether the hour has come." Nobody ever waited for General Washington. He was always five minutes before the time; and if the parties he had engaged to meet were not present at the season appointed, he considered the engagement cancelled, and would leave the place and refuse to return. [Nat. Intelligencer.]

A NEW GUN PATENT.—We were shown a very ingeniously constructed rifle, invented by Col. F. W. Porter of Tennessee, which, to all appearances, is the most destructive weapon for its size which the ingenuity of man has yet devised. It is provided with a cylinder at the base of the barrel capable of containing nine separate charges, which can be discharged in as many seconds. A magazine has also been invented to fit on the lock, capable of holding an indefinite number of charges, by the aid of which it may be practicable to make sixty discharges a minute. The patentee claims that, by the arrangement of his lock, the powder obtains more complete combustion than in any other gun now in use, because the ignition takes place nearer the ball.—The lock opens on hinges as easily as the door of a closet, so as to permit the freest access to the cylinder and all the parts of the machinery, for cleaning, repairing, or any other purpose. It is self-capping and self-priming, and is said to shoot with unparalleled force and precision. [New York Post.]

SARDINES.—A Paris correspondent of the Washington Republic gives the following particulars of the sardine fishery:

"How many sardines do you suppose have been taken this year upon the coast of Brittany, two hundred miles long? Five hundred and seventy-six millions. Half of them are to be preserved and sold fresh, and half are to be put down in oil. One hundred and sixty vessels, manned by five thousand five hundred sailors and fishermen, are engaged in the trade. The preparation, transport, and sale of the fish employ ten thousand persons. Nine thousand of these are occupied all winter in the making and mending of nets."

"The fishing lasts two hundred days, and yields a net profit to all concerned of three millions francs. The sardines invariably disappear in November and return in April. Where they go during these four months, why they go, or what they do while gone, has never been discovered. The fishermen say that the same individuals never come twice, and that every successive arrival is composed of fish much smaller than those that left, and that they appear to be their young. At any rate, they count implicitly on their appearance; and no sardines were ever yet known to break any engagement thus tacitly entered into."

Thrashing the Wrong Man.

BY YANKEE SLENDER.

Yankee peddlers, from time immemorial, have been famous for doing others, and being done, notwithstanding their shrewdness, and though, in the long run, they may come out right side up, yet once in a while the force of circumstances so corners them that they are obliged to cry peccati.

"In the course of human events," to find a new style antipodean with the flood, or contemporary with the time of George Washington,—there happened to be a pedlar of the old Bay State, by the name of Ike Jewel, who one day packed up his traps and started off South, along the line of the Mississippi, in order to dispense patents for various inventions—from a tooth-pick to a fanning-mill, and at last brought up at the little village of Helena, in the State of Arkansas. Now, it happened that on the very day that Mr. Jewel arrived in town, a fellow had been arrested for negro stealing, and placed in the old log jail, preparatory to receiving the penalty of fifty lashes for the offence. The jail being insecure, there being no patrol a la horse guards to protect it, and the prisoner having a tinge of Jack Sheppard blood in his veins, managed to escape, and, of course, flew by night, after the manner of the witches in Macbeth. The consequence was that when the sheriff went the next morning, in all the dignity of official pride, to administer the punishment, he was both surprised and indignant to find his man non est inventus.

"Ah, this won't do," said the dignitary, biting his lip and looking poignantly at the under-sheriff—a carrot-headed deputy, with a pumpkin-colored beard of a week's growth. "We must set spies about for him and have him re-apprehended."

Spies were immediately dispatched on all sides, all of whom had seen the man on trial, and knew his face, and as the sheriff's indignity was hugely "rized," their orders were uncompromisingly stringent.

"Now, it happened from some strange and unfortunate cause, that the newly arrived Yankee pedlar was the very image—the regular 'Corican Brother'—the Siamese Twin, of the fugitive culprit, and, as he was uttering a pancake at breakfast the next morn, a large, strong man, with an official grin, tapped him gently on the shoulder."

"Well," said the Yankee, "what's the row now, eh?"

"Want you, mister," was the brief reply. "Yes—do you want me? I s'pose you've heard of my having cum into town with my everlasting and all-month inventions. You're wide awake, I sees for cummin afore any one else."

"Curse you invention," said the official. "The sheriff wants to see you immediately. You thought to escape, did you?"

"Sheriff—sarpent! Luke-a-hard, c'mint, what on earth do you mean?"

"Mean for you to come along with me without another word." And so saying, he dragged the pedlar out of the room. On the way he learned the circumstances of the arrest, and though he protested and swore he was not the man, the likeness was too strong for belief. The sheriff advised him for the good of the country and the honor of his friends, if he had any, not to let such "dreadful lies," but quietly submit to the punishment.

The consequence was, he was tied to the whipping post, and the sheriff prepared to render, in the driest manner, the infliction.

"Now, before I begin, old fellow," said the sheriff, "what have you got to say?"

"Oh, nothin' in particular," said the pedlar laughing, with a meaning curve of the lip—only if you can afford to pay for luxuries, mister, go ahead."

The sheriff, not comprehending the drift of this business-like assertion, applied the scourge, and at every cut, the Yankee laughed with immoderate glee. Lash succeeded lash, and still he laughed, and still the wonder grew. When the fiftieth lash had been well laid on, as a parting salute, the sheriff in a flood of wonderment, threw down the whip, and asked him the reason of his mirth.

"I'm regularly dumfounded," said he. "What in the devil's name makes you laugh so?"

"Laugh! Who could help it?" fairly roared the yankee. "I'm laughin' 'tue think how you've bin ricked in on this operation—I aint the man!" He said this so meaningly, that the sheriff began to think there must be a mistake somewhere. The Yankee continued:

"It strikes me that business in my line is gone 'tue be rather dull in this ere town, and if there's any law 'tue be had, I'll speculate on this lickin', and see if I can't turn it the sum account. I'm always open for trade, mister, if you wish to compromise—for remember, you've licked the wrong man!"

What a pity that loafers can't tell when they have loined long enough in one place!

No one has more enemies in the world than an upright, proud and sensible man, disposed to take things for what they are, and not for what they are not.

The greatest pleasure of life is love, the greatest treasure is contentment, the greatest possession is health, the greatest ease is sleep, and the best medicine a true friend.

