

# THE SOMERSET HERALD.

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## LIFE'S GUIDING STAR.

The youth whose bark is guided o'er  
A summer's stream by zephyr's breath,  
With idle gaze delights to pour  
On imagined skies that glow beneath,  
But should a fleeting storm arise  
To shake awhile the watery way,  
Quick lifts to heaven his anxious eyes,  
And speeds to reach some sheltering bay.

'Tis thus, down times eventful tide,  
While prosperous breezes gently blow,  
In life's frail bark we gaily glide;  
Our hopes, our thoughts all fixed below,  
But let one cloud the prospect dim,  
The wind its quiet stillness mar,  
At once we raise our prayer to Him  
Whose light is life's best guiding star.

## THE SOFT ANSWER.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"I'll give him law to his heart's content, the scoundrel!" said Singleton, walking backward and forward, in an angry state of excitement.

"Don't call harsh names, Mr. Singleton," said lawyer Trueman, looking up from the mass of papers before him, and smiling in a quiet, benevolent way that was peculiar to him.

"Every man should be known by his true name. Williams is a scoundrel, and so he ought to be called!" responded the excited client, with increasing warmth.

"Did you ever do a reasonable thing in your life when you were angry?" asked Mr. Trueman, whose age and respectability gave him the license to speak thus freely to his young friend, for whom he was endeavoring to arrange some business difficulties with his former partner.

"I can't say that I ever did, Mr. Trueman; but now, I have good reason for being angry, and the language that I use, in reference to Williams, is but the expression of a sober and rational conviction," replied Singleton, a little more calmly.

"Did you pronounce him a scoundrel before you received this reply to your last letter?" asked Mr. Trueman.

"No, I did not; but that letter confirmed my previously formed impressions of his character."

"But I cannot find, in that letter, any evidence proving your late partner to be a dishonest man. He will not agree to your proposed mode of settlement, because he does not see it to be the most proper way."

"He won't agree to it, because it is an honest and equitable mode of settlement, that is all! He wants to over-reach me, and is determined to do so if he can!" responded Mr. Singleton, still excited.

"There you are decidedly wrong," said the lawyer. "You have both allowed yourselves to become angry, and are both unreasonable; and if I must speak plainly, I think you are the most unreasonable, in the present case. Two angry men can never settle any business properly. You have unnecessarily increased the difficulties in the way of a speedy settlement by writing Mr. Williams an angry letter, which he has responded to in the like unhappy temper. Now, if I am to settle this business for you, I must write all the letters that pass to Williams in future."

"But how can you properly express my views and feelings?"

"That I do not wish to do, if your views and feelings are to remain as they now are—for any thing like an adjustment of the difficulties, under such circumstances, I should consider hopeless," replied Mr. Trueman.

"Well, let me answer this letter, and after that, I promise that you shall have your own way."

"No, I shall consent to no such thing. It is the reply to that letter which is to modify the negotiation for a settlement, in such a way as to bring success or failure; and I have no idea of allowing you, in the present state of your mind, to write such an one as will most assuredly defeat an amicable adjustment."

Singleton paused for some time before making a reply. He had been forming in his mind a most cutting and bitter rejoinder to the letter just alluded to, and was desirous that Mr. Williams should have the benefit of knowing that he thought him a "tricky and deliberate scoundrel," with other opinions of a similar character. He found it, therefore, impossible to make up his mind to let the unimpassioned Mr. Trueman write this most important epistle.

"Indeed, I must write this letter, Mr. Trueman," he said. "There are some things that I want to say to him, which I know you won't write. You don't seem to consider the position in which he has placed me by that letter, nor what is obligatory upon me as a man of honor. I never allow any man to reflect upon me, directly or indirectly, without a prompt response."

"There is, in the Bible," said Mr. Trueman, "a passage that is peculiarly applicable in the present case. It is this—'A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger.' I have found this precept, in a life that has out-

numbered more than double your years, to be one that may be safely and honorably adopted, in all cases. You blame Mr. Williams for writing you an angry letter, and are indignant at certain expressions contained therein. Now, is it any more right for you to write an angry letter, with cutting epithets, than it is for him?"

"But, Mr. Trueman—"

"I do assure you, my young friend," said the lawyer, interrupting him, "that I am acting in this case for your benefit, and not for my own; and, as your legal adviser, you must submit to my judgment, or I cannot consent to go on."

"If I will promise not to use any harsh language, will you not consent to let me write the letter?" urged the client.

"You and I, in the present state of your mind, could not possibly come at the same conclusion in reference to what is harsh and what is mild," said Mr. Trueman; "therefore I cannot consent that you shall write one word of the proposed reply—I must write it."

"Well, I suppose, then, I shall have to submit. When will it be ready?"

"Come this afternoon, and I will give you the draft, which you can copy and sign."

In the afternoon, Mr. Singleton came, and received the letter prepared by Mr. Trueman. It ran thus, after the date and formal address—

"I regret that the proposition did not meet your approbation. The mode of settlement which I suggested was the result of a careful consideration of our mutual interests. Be kind enough to suggest to Mr. Trueman, my lawyer, any plan which you think will lead to an early and amicable adjustment of our business. You may rely upon my consent to it, if it meets his approbation."

"Is it possible, Mr. Trueman, that you expect me to sign such a cringing letter as that?" said Mr. Singleton, throwing it down and walking backward and forward with great irritation of manner.

"Well, what is your objection to it?" replied Mr. Trueman, mildly, for he was prepared for such an exhibition of feeling.

"Objection! How can you ask such a question? Am I to go on my knees to him, and beg him to do me justice? No! I'll sacrifice every cent I've got in the world first, the scoundrel!"

"You wish to have your business settled, do you not?" asked Mr. Trueman, looking him steadily in the face.

"Of course I do—honorably settled!"

"Well, let me hear what you mean by an honorable settlement."

"The young man hesitated a moment, and then said,

"Why, I mean—"

"You mean a settlement in which your interest shall be equally considered with that of Mr. Williams?"

"Yes, certainly, and that—"

"And that," continued Mr. Trueman, "Mr. Williams in the settlement shall consider and treat you as a gentleman?"

"Certainly I do; but that is more than he has done."

"Well, never mind. Let what is past go for as much as it is worth. The principal point of action is in the present."

"But I'll never send that mean cringing letter, though."

"You mistake its whole tenor. I do assure you, Mr. Singleton. You have allowed your angry feelings to blind you. You certainly carefully considered before you adopted it, the proposed basis of a settlement, did you not?"

"Of course I did."

"So the letter which I have prepared for you states. Now, as an honest and honorable man, you are, I am sure, willing to grant to him the same privilege which you asked for yourself, viz: that of proposing a plan of settlement. Your proposition does not seem to please him; now it is but fair that he should be invited to state how he wishes the settlement to be made—and in giving such an invitation, a gentleman should prove us gentlemanly language."

"But he don't deserve to be treated like a gentleman. In fact he has no claim to the title," said the young man.

"If he has none, as you say, your professed to be a gentleman, and all gentlemen should by their actions and words that they are GENTLEMEN."

"I can't say that I am convicted by what you say; but, as you seem to be bent upon having it your own way, why, here, let me copy the thing and sign it," said the young man, suddenly changing his manner.

"There, now," he added, passing across the table the brief letter he had copied, "I suppose he'll think me a low-spirited fellow, after he gets that; but he's mistaken. After it's all over I'll take good care to tell him that it didn't contain my sentiments."

Mr. Trueman smiled, as he took the letter, and went on to fold and direct it.

"Come to-morrow afternoon, and I think we'll have things in a pretty fair way," he said, looking up with his usual pleasant smile, as he finished the direction of the letter.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Singleton," he said, as that gentleman entered his office on the succeeding day.

"Good afternoon" responded the young

man. "Well, have you heard from that milk-and-water letter of yours? I can't call it mine."

"Yes here is the answer. Take a seat, and I will read it to you," said the old gentleman.

"Well, let's hear it."

"DEAR GEORGE: I have your kind and gentlemanly note of yesterday, in reply to my harsh, unreasonable, and ungentlemanly one of the day before. We have both been playing the fool; but you are ahead of me in becoming sane. I have examined, since I got your disposition for a settlement, and it meets my views precisely. My foolish anger kept me from seeing it before. Let our mutual friend, Mr. Trueman, arrange the matter according to the plan mentioned, and I shall most heartily acquiesce. Yours, &c."

"THOS. WILLIAMS."

"He never wrote that letter in the world!" exclaimed Singleton, starting to his feet.

"You know his writing, I presume," said Mr. Trueman, handing him the letter.

"It's Thomas Williams's own hand, as I live!" ejaculated Singleton, on glancing at the letter. "My old friend, Thomas Williams, the best-natured fellow in the world! he continued, his feelings undergoing a sudden and entire revolution. "What a fool I have been!"

"And what a fool I have been!" said Thomas Williams, advancing from an adjoining room, at the same time extending his hands towards S. N. L.—

"God bless you, my dear friend!" exclaimed Singleton, grasping his hand.—

"Why, what has been the matter with us both?"

"My young friends," said old Mr. Trueman, one of the kindest-hearted men in the world, rising and advancing towards them, "I have known you long, and have always esteemed you both. This pleasant meeting and reconciliation, you perceive is of my arrangement. Now, let me give you a precept that will make friends and keep friends. It has been my motto through life, and I don't know that I have an enemy in the world. It is,

*"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."*

## FROM CALIFORNIA.

The Journal of Commerce has received, by way of Panama, full files of THE CALIFORNIAN, published at Monterey, Upper California, under the editorial supervision of WALTER COLTON, Alcalde of Monterey and Chaplain of the United States frigate Congress, to the 28th January last.

Order and quiet prevailed throughout California. The local outbreaks, resulting in a temporary success of the insurgents, had been suppressed, and of the restless spirits and adventurers who had been active in promoting them, all who had survived the conflicts with our troops had returned to their homes. No violent measures were deemed necessary to be taken with them.

We make a few extracts from the Californian:

THE PRESS.—We have received the first two numbers of a new paper, just commenced at Yerba Buena. It is issued upon a small but very neat sheet, at six dollars per annum. It is published and owned by S. Brannan, the leader of the Mormons, who was brought up by Joe Smith himself, and is consequently well qualified to unfold and impress the tenets of his sect.

DEC. 12.—The United States ship Cyane, Capt. S. F. Dupont, arrived at San Francisco Monday week. Since the occupation of San Diego in July last, she has been on the coast of Mexico and captured fourteen prizes; she burnt or destroyed one brig and two Mexican gunboats, the three last in her attacks on Guaymas, and shipped between thirty and forty guns at San Blas.

JAN. 23.—On Thursday, December 13, 1846, the launch belonging to the United States sloop-of-war Warren left Yerba Buena, on the San Francisco, for Fort Sacramento, (Sutters,) for the purpose of communicating with the commandant of the fort, Capt. E. M. Kern.

She was put in charge of Passed-Midshipman William H. Montgomery, acting master of the U. S. sloop-of-war Warren, with Midshipman Daniel O. Hugenin, of the U. S. sloop Portsmouth, as pilot, and E. M. Montgomery, Clerk to Commander. — Montgomery, and a crew of nine men, George Rodman, seaman, coxswain; Anthony Sylvester, Alexander McDonald, Samuel Turner, Samuel Lane, Milton Ladd, John W. Dawd, Gilman Hilton, Lawson Lee.

After being absent seventeen days, fears were entertained for her safety, and Mr. R. T. Ridley was sent in search of her, with the launch "Paul Jones," with four men, from the Warren. Mr. Ridley returned after an absence of nineteen days, having cruised up the San Joaquin and the Sacramento. Nothing was heard from them, and the conclusion is that the launch was lost in the bay.

ARRIVAL OF THE INDEPENDENCE.—This noble ship, bearing the broad pennant of Commodore Shubrick, came to anchor in our harbor on Friday evening last. She sailed from Boston on the 29th of August. Commodore Shubrick, in virtue of his rank, takes command of all the naval and land forces here. He will, we learn, make a vigorous effort to establish at once a civil government in California.

We have ourselves received "The Californian Extra," of the 28th January, which is principally occupied with the details of the battles in the vicinity of "San Gabriel," and at "Mesa," on the 8th and 9th of January, which led to the recapture of the city of the Angeles. Of these engagements we published a brief statement yesterday, which appears to be substantially correct. We copy, however, from the Californian the following announcement of the victory:

NEWS FROM THE SEAT OF WAR.—We have received by special messenger the result of the engagement near the Pueblo de los Angeles, between the American forces under command of Commodore Stockton, and the Californians, commanded by Gen. Flores. We consider the war in California at an end. It will be the first effort of Com. Shubrick, now commander-in-chief, to establish a civil government, a duty for which he is eminently qualified. Com. Stockton has performed a brilliant achievement in his march from San Diego to the Pueblo de los Angeles, and in his signal success over a resolute enemy. The following is his General Order:

HEAD QUARTERS, Ciudad de los Angeles, January 11, 1847.

The commander-in-chief congratulates the officers and men of the Southern division of the United States forces in California on the brilliant victories obtained by them over the enemy on the 8th and 9th instant, and on once more taking possession of the "Ciudad de los Angeles."

He takes the earliest moment to commend their gallantry and good conduct, both in the battle fought on the 8th inst. on the banks of the "Rio San Gabriel," and on the 9th instant on the plains of the "Mesa."

The steady courage of the troops in forcing their passage across the "Rio San Gabriel," where officers and men were alike employed in dragging the guns through the water against the galling fire of the enemy without exchanging a shot, and their gallant charge up the banks against the enemy's cavalry, has perhaps never been surpassed; and the cool determination with which, in the battle of the 9th, they repulsed the charge of cavalry made by the enemy at the same time on their front and rear, has extorted the admiration of the enemy, and deserves the best thanks of their countrymen.

R. F. STOCKTON, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Territory of California.

We also copy the following paragraphs:

THE PROSPECT.—We do not apprehend another outbreak in California.—The last is a lesson that will not be soon forgotten. It was started by a few restless spirits, and through adventures rallied itself up into quite a formidable mass. But it is all over now, and those engaged in it are returning to their homes. No violent measures have been taken with them. They have had their frolic and fight, and that seems pretty much all they wanted.

The friends of order and all who are interested in the soil are in favor of our flag. They do not wish to go back to Mexico. They desire to see California a territory of the United States, and at length a member of the glorious Confederacy. We can assure our friends at home and our Government at Washington that if they wish to haul down our flag here it will cost them a great deal more than they are willing to pay when they who read this are in their graves.

Politicians and diplomatic functionaries may dispose of California on paper as they please. They may surrender her to Mexico, but she will not be surrendered. She holds her destiny in her own hands, and goes with her whole heart for union with the United States. A few who have lost office by a change of flag may, as they have done, oppose it, but they will be overpowered by the mass of those who are interested in the soil. We have all the intelligence, industry, and enterprise of California with us.

DEPARTURE OF THE DALE.—The United States sloop-of-war Dale leaves to-day for Panama, where she will land her commander, W. W. McKean, Esq., whose health compels his return home. We part with him with no little reluctance.—Still we know it is his duty to return.—It is apparently the only means of saving his life, and even this may fail.

The United States ship Lexington, Theodore Bailey, commander, with United States troops, arrived at Monterey on the 28th January.

From the Nat. Intelligencer.

THE PLANS OF THE EXECUTIVE.

We copied in Thursday's paper extracts from the Washington correspondence of two leading Administration papers, giving reason to suppose that communications were about being opened by the President of the United States with Mexico, with a view to peace. The terms therein stated to have been proposed by our Executive, however, are such as, if accepted by Mexico, never could be ratified by the Senate of the United States, and never can become constitutionally binding on this people. We say CONSTITUTIONALLY; for the intrigue for the annexation of Texas, constitutionally condemned by the treaty-making power, was yet carried out, in the face and teeth of the Constitution, by bare majorities of the two Houses of Congress. In the same manner, for aught we know, those who have for their own ends involved us in this war with the neighboring Republic, may continue to saddle upon the United States the curse of annexation of one half of Mexico.

The following additional information, more exact and probably more to be relied upon than the extracts which we have already published, is from the Washington correspondence of the Philadelphia Public Ledger, the unmistakable marks of which denote official authority for what is stated in it.

Besides the other interesting information it contains, it must be highly gratifying to the People of the United States to know that "the Order in Council," lately issued by the President, without any semblance of legal authority, is exceedingly gratifying to THE MINISTERS OF ALL THE FOREIGN POWERS. Whether they were called into "Council" on the occasion of the correspondence of the Ledger does not state. We think it quite likely that they were consulted on the subject.

Correspondence of the Public Ledger.

WASHINGTON, April 18, 1847.

"The rumor which is in circulation here, to the effect that the Administration means to give up all the conquered territory south of the thirty-sixth degree of latitude, in order to get rid of the Wilmot proviso, and all its pernicious consequences," is without a shadow of foundation. Neither the President nor the Cabinet entertain such an absurd proposition. The frontiers of our country must be fixed according to strategic prudence, and in reference to military position against so excitable and peevish a neighbor as Mexico. The Administration understands this perfectly, and is not afraid, as it is charged, of meeting the proviso men in the Senate at the time of the ratification of the treaty."

"The Wilmot proviso, moreover, was started in a technical point of view, by men who had to attain another more immediate object, and who would only lose that object by introducing the proviso in a treaty with Mexico. I have no hesitation, therefore, in saying that the basis of our negotiations with Mexico will be a few degrees south of the thirty-sixth degree of latitude in California, and that our Government means to hold the PASSO DEL NORTE."

"As to the immediate object of peace, I believe there have been received indirect but no direct offers of peace thus far; that is to say, the proper Department, is probably from a RELIABLE though not OFFICIAL source, informed that an offer of peace, on generous terms, would be acceptable to Mexico; but even the most reliable source in Mexico may mislead you, and the men who are willing to treat with you to-day may not be in power to-morrow. It is a Herculean task to watch the political tide in Mexico, in which the best man may commit many blunders.—Similar causes, in Mexico, are not always followed by similar effects, and bona fide promises often broken from a want of ability to perform. While, therefore, no great reliance is placed on the apparent disposition to treat for peace, of the present Mexican rulers, an offer will no doubt be made by our Government; while, at the same time, neither army nor navy will for a moment relax in its endeavors to enforce peace by constraint. Gen. Scott will press forward on the route to Mexico, and the navy will be employed to seize upon every Mexican port in the Gulf, till the whole maritime coast is in our possession, so as to give effect to Mr. Walker's tariff for Mexico, and raise a revenue for the expenses of the war."

"The Ministers of all the foreign Powers have expressed themselves exceedingly gratified with the opening of the Mexican ports; and the measure is, no doubt, calculated to go far in smoothing over certain asperities, to which all rigid blockades are liable to give rise with neutrals."

A letter from a Matamoros correspondent, dated March 25, informs us that Gen. Taylor was preparing for an advance on San Luis Potosi, which he would commence on the 15th inst. The letter also states that Gen. Taylor will be able to take with him eight thousand troops—quite enough, in the opinion of the writer, for the old hero's purposes.—Balt. Amer.

## VIRGINIA ELECTION.

Of the Congressional Election which took place in the State of Virginia, we have heard only of the following results, viz:

The re-election of JOHN S. PENDLETON (Whig) in the Fairfax district, without serious opposition; and

The election of JOHN M. BOTTS (whig) in the Richmond district, by a majority exceeding three hundred votes! This is a Whig gain.

The returns from two counties (Frederick and Jefferson) in the tenth Congressional district are unusually cheering, so much so as to induce the hope that ANTHONY KENNEDY (Whig) has been elected over Mr. BRIDGER, the late member, in a district which in 1844 gave Mr. Polk a majority of 700 votes.

LOCOFOCO GRATITUDE.—While Taylor was fighting the battle of Buena Vista on the 21st and 22d February, the friends of President Polk in the United States Senate were trying to pass the Lieutenant General Bill which had for its object the recall of old Rough and Ready, and the appointment of that party hack and mere civilian, Mr. Benton. What a comment is this! When Taylor was leading the assault on our Mexican foes, the Locofoco and Tory Senators were leading as fierce an assault against him! When Taylor was exposing his life on the battle field, Herriek and Thompson, and other Polk men, were denouncing the victor of Monterey, and trying to pass a virtual censure upon him! Patriots! true lovers of the glory, honor and integrity of your country, remember these things, and let them nerve you to exertion in the coming political contest. Let us sweep from the places they have desecrated the revilers of our nation's bravest champion!

FIVE WARS.—The United States have been engaged in five wars during their national existence, viz: the Revolution, the last war with Great Britain, the war with Tripoli, the Florida war, and the Mexican war, and in all of them we have come off victorious and conquering.

THE DIFFERENCE.—JOS. K. POLK, President of the United States, with a salary of 25,000 a year contributed fifty dollars for the relief of suffering Ireland. Gen. James Irvin, a private citizen, voluntarily contributed fifty barrels of flour, equal to three hundred dollars!

Should you meet my true love.  
(OLD GERMAN.)

Should you meet my true love,  
Say—I greet her well;  
Should she ask you how I fare,  
Say—she best can tell.  
Should she ask if I am sick,  
Say—I died of sorrow;  
Should she then begin to weep,  
Say—I'll come to-morrow.

A GOOD ONE.—The Springfield Gazette tells a good story about a clergyman, who lost his horse on Saturday evening. After hunting in company with a boy, until midnight, he gave up in despair.—The next day, somewhat dejected at his loss, he went into the pulpit, and took for his text the following passage from Job—

"O, that I knew where I might find him!"

The boy, who had just come in, supposing the horse was still the burden of thought, cried out—

"I know where he is! He's in Deacon Smith's barn."

A QUESTION ANSWERED.—An exceedingly tall gentleman was walking with a very short friend in the midst of a heavy shower, when the latter observed:

"Bill, ain't it coming down?"

Bill, lifting his shoulders still higher, answered—

"I don't know how it may be with you, but it's raining like blazes up here!"

A Strong Specific for Curling Hair.—A correspondent informs us that he bought a bottle of this Specific out west, and applied it once to his pate; which caused his hair to curl so tight that it raised him off the ground for two weeks, three days, thirteen minutes and seven seconds!

"John, can you tell me the difference between attraction of gravitation and attraction of cohesion?"

"Yes, sir, attraction of gravitation pulls a drunken man to the ground, and attraction of cohesion prevents his getting up again."

An Irishman who had just landed, said the first bit of MEAT he ever ate in this country, was a ROASTED POTATO—BOILED yesterday. And if you don't believe me, I can show it to you, for I have it in my pocket now.

KITTENED.—An Ohio paper announces the marriage of Mr. J. B. KITHON, to Miss Eliza Jane KITHON. "SCAT.—St. Louis Revelle.

"There," said Patrick, handing him the money, "see how easy I might have picked your pocket."