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THE AGITATOR.

Devoted to the Extension of the Area of Freedom and the Spread of Healthy Reform.

WHILE THERE SHALL BE A WRONG UNRIGHTED, AND UNTIL "MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN" SHALL CEASE, AGITATION MUST CONTINUE.

VOL. V.

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THE BOY PATRIOT.

BY GEORGE A. TOWNSEND.

History is filled with the deeds of MEN of the Revolution; nor are the patriot women forgotten in the "burning words" of the annals of '76...

There were boys in the Revolution—boys of noble patriotism and dauntless spirit—boys who would not become traitors...

Let us relate an instance: It was in the year 1777. Philadelphia was in the hands of Howe and his inhuman soldiery, while the field of Brandywine gave the American people an evidence of British humanity.

On the evening of a delightful autumn day, a group of boys, ranging from twelve to seventeen years of age, were gathered together on the steps of a tenantless storehouse in the little village of Newark, Delaware.

The town seemed lonely, and, with the exception of the youthful band already referred to, not a human being met the eye. All the men capable of bearing arms had left their homes to join the army of Washington on the banks of the Schuylkill.

"I am not old enough," said he, "but had I a musket, I would not stand idle here with my hands useless by my side."

"Are there no guns of any description in the village?" asked a listening youth.

"None. I have spent nearly a week trying to find one, but my efforts have been of no avail. I strongly suspect that the old Tory Livingston, has several in his house, but, as he permits no one to trespass on his land, I am unable to say positively."

"Why not take a party and search his dwelling?" asked Frank Howard. "He has no one there to assist him, except his cowardly son George, and I can thrash him as easily as that," and the boy snapped his fingers to imply the readiness with which he could whip old Livingston's son.

"If any three boys in the company will help me, I will search old Livingston's house this night. All who are willing will just step forward three paces!"

Every boy in that little crowd, without a moment's hesitation, stepped forward. The boy's eyes flashed like stars. "Now by the dead of Bunker Hill, I will search old Livingston's residence, though death stands in my path."

With a firm tread and in the utmost silence, the young heroes took up their march for old Squire Livingston's.

Livingston had long been suspected of harboring British spies, and some of his former laborers had reported that he kept up a regular correspondence with the British commander. At all events, he was generally regarded by the genuine Whigs as a dangerous man, and therefore avoided.

At the time James Wilson and his little band had left the deserted storehouse in the village of Newark, dusk had given place to the darker shades of night—still it was not dark. The new moon was shining brightly in the clouds, and every object was perfectly distinguished. The boys walked solemnly forward, maintaining a solemn silence.

At length they gained the bank of the creek, and slowly following the winding path, soon came in sight of the object of their destination. As they came to a little log bridge which crossed a shallow rivulet leading into the White Clay, James Wilson ordered them to halt.

"Let Frank Howard and myself reconnoitre the premises first, to see whether any danger may be apprehended. All the rest stand here until we return. Make no noise and keep a constant watch."

James and Frank silently departed and were soon lost to the eye in the thick woods through which the path ran. Scarcely had they gone from the view of their companions, etc. the quick ear of Wilson detected a noise.

"Hut!" said he to Frank, as he pulled him behind a gigantic beech tree. The noise soon resolved itself into a human footfall, and in another moment George Livingston, the Tory's son, stood opposite the tree.

"and I'll toss you into the creek!"

The Tory's son was struck dumb with fright, and before he had recovered from his stupor he found himself in the midst of the whole group of boy-heroes with the vice-like grip of James Wilson and Frank Howard on either arm.

"Now," said James, "answer me promptly and truly or I'll make your position uncomfortable. Do you hear?"

"Yes," gasped the affrighted youth.

"Who are in your father's house at this moment?"

"I—I cannot tell," stammered the half-dead boy.

"You shall tell, or—"

"Spare me, and I will disclose every thing. When I left the house there was no one there but our own family and—Major Beardstone."

"Who is he?" asked James.

"I don't know—I don't indeed!"

"Tell!" threatened Frank.

"He is a captain of the Yorkshire dragoons."

The eye of James glistened with joy, and he soon gained from the Tory's son a revelation which stamped his father as a traitor of the most appalling character. He discovered that old Livingston not only kept up a correspondence with the British commander, but that he had so plotted in his traitorous designs that the little village of Newark was to be burned to ashes, and its women and children left exposed to the mercy of their pitiless foes.

The old Tory was to receive for his reward the land whereon the village stood, and an annual pension from the English government. But stranger than all, the plot was to be consummated on that very night, and the Tory's son had been captured while he was going on an errand to a Tory neighborhood, about two miles distant.

The little band of heroes learned too that the British troops had secured their horses in Livingston's stable, and intended to descend the creek in a large boat. There were twenty of them besides their captain, Major Beardstone, the leader of the band, was in temper and heart, a thorough demon, and scrupled not his cruelty to destroy the slumbering infant and the sickly wife. Not a few in that youthful band of patriots trembled for the safety of a widowed mother or a defenceless sister.

Some were for departing immediately, but James Wilson, still retaining his grasp on the Tory's son, ordered all to be silent. The prisoner was tied hand and foot, a thick handkerchief bound over his mouth to prevent his uttering any words, and a stout cord fastened to his wrists, wound about a tree. All hope of escape forsook George Livingston. Wilson motioned his little band to follow him, and in a few minutes they stood on the summit of a high precipice which overhung White Clay Creek.

"Now, boys," said James Wilson, "the narrative we have just heard is true; and as we have no muskets or ammunition, we must make the best of the occasion. The British band will pass this spot in their boat, and as we have an hour to work let us busy ourselves in rolling some of those large rocks to the edge of this precipice, and, when the red coals pass below, let us sink them to the bottom."

Each boy set to work, and in an incredible short time, nine huge rocks, each of half a ton in weight, were nicely balanced upon the precipice. The creek, at this point, was not more than twenty feet wide, and was directly overhung by the rock on which our heroes stood. If the British band descended the creek, they would pass this spot, and if they passed it, then death was their certain fate.

In about an hour the quick ear of Wilson detected the measured beat of muffled oars. "They are coming," he whispered, "let no one drop his rock until I give the word, then drop all at once."

It was a beautiful night to work a work of death. The heavens were spangled with innumerable stars, and every object on which the moonbeams played, sparkled with a silvery radiance.

Closer came the doomed Royalists, and the hearts of the boy patriots beat wildly in their bosoms. Peering cautiously over the cliff, James Wilson saw the Tory boat slowly but surely approaching. An officer stood in the bow, guiding the oarsman by his orders, and the epaulets on his shoulders told that he was the identical fiend, Major Beardstone.

"Don't drop till I give the order," again whispered Wilson.

When the boat was about twelve feet from the rock, the boy leader fell securely behind his stone defence, and shouted "Who goes there?"

In a moment the oarsmen ceased rowing, and gazed with amazement above them. The impetus which the boat had acquired, caused it to drift slowly beneath the rock, and just as it was fairly below, forth came the doomed words: "Cut loose in the name of Liberty!"

The dog lay there when the boat started, the clerk giving him the better half of the office.

A QUEER MISTAKE.—An ignorant fellow, who was about to get married, resolved to make himself perfect in the responses of the marriage service; but, by mistake, he committed the office of baptism for those of riper years; so, when the clergyman asked him, in the church, "Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?" the bridegroom answered, in a very solemn tone, "I renounce them all." The astonished minister said, "I think you are a fool!" to which he replied, "All that I steadily believe."

The slightest sorrow for sin is sufficient if it produces amendment; the greatest is insufficient if it do not.

doom, and there was no one to mourn their loss.

"Such be the end of America's foes forever!" said James Wilson.

Old Livingston's house was searched, and to the surprise of every one, not only guns but three brass field pieces, several barrels of powder, and an abundance of balls, etc., were found concealed in the Tory's cellar.

The military stores found here were given over to the American troops, and found a jovial welcome at their headquarters. Had not the British party been so signally defeated along the banks of White Clay, the town of Newark and the whole northern part of the State of Delaware, would have been run over by predatory parties of British soldiers.

James Wilson and Frank Howard both joined the army of Green, and served with distinction in the Southern campaigns. Frank fell in the memorable battle of Eutaw Springs, bewailed by all who knew him. James Wilson lost a leg at the siege of Yorktown and retired to his native village, but mortification ensued, and he expired with the ever to be remembered words on his lips: "Cut loose in the name of Liberty!"

The village of Newark still stands, and has become a town of some celebrity. The scene of the defeat of the British by the band of boy patriots is still pointed out, and it is a sacred spot in the annals of Newark.

Such reader, were the acts of the boys of '76," and though they have no monumental pillar to preserve their memories, they live in legends, song and verse, where they exist when history has been swept into obscurity. Let our literary men redeem from darkness the deeds of American youths, and while they recount the noble achievements of our Revolutionary patriots, let them not forget the boy heroes.

Flatfooted Courtship.

One long summer afternoon there came to Mr. Davidson's the most curious specimen of an old bachelor the world ever heard of. He was old, gray, wrinkled and odd. He hated women, especially old maids, and wasn't afraid to say so. He and Aunt Patty had it hot and heavy, whenever chance threw them together; yet still he came, and it was noticed that Aunt Patty took unusual pains with her dress whenever he was expected.

One day the contest waged unusually strong. Aunt Patty left him in disgust, and went out into the garden. "The bear!" she muttered to herself, as she stooped to gather a blossom which attracted her attention.

"To get rid of you," "You didn't do it, did you?" "No; you are worse than a burdock bur." "You won't get rid of me, neither."

"I won't, eh?" "Only in one way." "And that?" "Marry me!" "What, us two fools get married? What will people say?" "That's nothing to us. Come, say yes or no: I'm in a hurry."

"Well, no, then." "Very well, good-bye. I shan't come again." "Stop a bit—what a pucker to be in!" "Yes or no?" "I must consult."

"All right; I thought you was of age. Good-bye." "Jabez Andrews, don't be a fool. Come back, come back, I say. Why, I believe the critter has taken me for earnest. Jabez Andrews, I'll consider."

"I don't want no considering. I'm gone. Becky Hastings is waiting for me. I thought I'd give you the first chance. All right. Good-bye." "Jabez—Jabez! That stuck-up Becky Hastings shan't have him if I die for it, Jabez—Yes. Do you hear?—Y-e-s!"

AN EXTRA PASSENGER.—An amusing scene took place on the steamer Baltimore, just as she was leaving for Cleveland. A rough looking customer came aboard with a powerful looking bulldog at his heels. Walking directly into the office, the individual said to the clerk:

"Stranger, I want to leave my dog in this here office, till the boat starts; I am afraid some one will steal him." "You can't do it," said the clerk, "take him out."

"Well, stranger, that's cruel; but you are both dispositioned alike, and he's kinder company for you." "Take him out," roared the clerk.

"Well, stranger, I don't think you're honest and you want watching. Here, Bull, set down here and watch that fellow sharp," and the individual turned on his heel saying—"put him out stranger, if he's troublesome."

Communications.

Familiar Letters on Geology, Etc.

MY DEAR MARY: In examining the subject of the antiquity of the creation of man, I shall divide my evidence into three parts, or rather the evidence so divides itself.

1st. The evidence derived from the Bible.

2d. The evidence derived from Geology and Paleontology.

3d. The evidence derived from man himself, in his various races and physical conformations.

1st. The evidence of the Bible.—The advocates of the doctrine that man was created only four thousand and four years before Christ, or only about five thousand eight hundred and sixty-two years ago, derive the whole proof of their theory from the Bible.

I suppose you have read the two lectures of Hugh Miller, which I indicated in my last letter, and can duly appreciate his argument when applied to ascertain the meaning of the six days of creation.

Dr. Kurtz, Professor of Theology at Dorpat in Germany, one of the most learned and ingenious biblical scholars of the age, says, when speaking of the interpretation of prophetic writings: "Both these sorts of history," (the past lying back beyond man's knowledge, and the future,) "lie beyond the region of man's knowledge. It is God alone who standing beyond and above space and time, sees backwards and forwards both the development which preceded the first present of man and that which will succeed this our latest present."

Whether the difference of the two kinds of history may be, they hold the same position in relation both to the principle of the human ignorance and the principle of the ignorance, is man's condition as a creature; the principle of the knowledge is the divine knowledge; and the medium between ignorance and knowledge is objectively, divine revelation, and subjectively, prophetic history.

The very important role of interpretation continues Dr. Kurtz, "viz., that the representation of pre-human events which rest upon revelation are to be handled from the same point of view and expounded by the same laws as the prophecies and representations of future times and events, which rest also on revelation."

This is the only proper point of view for the scientific exposition of the Mosaic history of creation, and I will add, of the Mosaic history of those periods of human existence which lie without the pale of human history and are only communicated to us by prophetic vision.

Speaking of the drama of creation Dr. Kurtz says: "Before the eye of the seer, scene after scene is unfolded, until at length, in the seven of them the course of creation in its main momenta has been fully represented."

"The revelation," says Hugh Miller "has every characteristic of prophecy by vision; and may be perhaps best understood by regarding it simply as an exhibition of the actual phenomena of creation presented to the mental eye of the prophet under the ordinary laws of perspective and truthfully described by him in the simple language of his time."

All the arguments cited by the authors I have quoted, were used to show that the six days of creation were correctly understood to represent the six indefinite periods of creation and to reconcile the first chapter of Genesis with the developments of geological science, and not to those periods denoted or described in the early genealogies of Genesis, for both Dr. Kurtz and Hugh Miller acquiesce in, if they do not directly advocate the Usher chronology; yet you cannot help seeing that the same rules of interpretation apply to all past history dependent on prophetic vision.

The various visions of Daniel, of Ezekiel, of Isaiah, and indeed of nearly all the prophets are examples of perspective pictures of the future, and bear the same relation to the future as the prophetic visions of Moses do to the past; and all are to be subjected to the same canon of interpretation.

Without coming any further down in the Mosaic history of the former ages than to the time when the Lord sent Abraham out from his country with the promise that he would make him a great nation, I think any candid scholar will admit that this history of the first races, or nations, or families, or individuals, if you choose to call them such, was a prophetic revelation of the past to Moses, or to whomsoever may have been the prophet, or prophets of Genesis. The book of Genesis itself furnishes internal evidence that it is made up of separate tablets, or visions revealed perhaps to successive and different prophets, and compiled probably by Moses under the direction of God himself. I do not think that this view of the matter derogates in the least from the sacredness of the volume, or from the authenticity of its details, when rightly understood. The great object of the revelation of the first creation was to give to man a view—such a view as in his then uncalculated state he could comprehend, of the origin of the world. The revelation

was given to counteract monstrous superstitions about the origin of all things, which, at that time existed; a revelation too, that conforming to man's comprehension in a state of low mental culture, should be true in all its details when science should have developed the great book of nature.

The first chapter of Genesis contains a succession of tablets or visions as seen by the prophet, and they are written down as they impressed themselves on his mind. The earth at first a chaos, without form and void, deep darkness veiling all things in impenetrable mist; then a dim light penetrating through the darkness, as the sun far above the atmosphere that held this mist in suspension, passed on his western journey, and as he sank down beyond the western horizon, deep night; then this thick mist rising gradually up from the surface of the earth and condensing into one vast circumambient cloud, and forming as it was a wide spread firmament above, holding in suspension in a great store-house the waters ready to be poured down when occasion should require; and the waters that encompassed the earth slowly receding, and islands and continents slowly uprising, and then the herbage springing up to cover the new made land with a mantle of green; and then as the rains became loosened from the clouds and descend to water the dry land, and to nourish the springing herb and fruit tree and grass, the clouds breaking asunder and revealing to the gaze of the prophet the glorious sun careering in his journey, and as he disappears, the moon and myriads of glittering stars coming forth in all their brilliancy; then as the prophet gazes down into the waters he beholds the sporting fish and the mighty Leviathan, and out in the forest the winged fowl that fly up towards the firmament; and anon he beholds the beasts of the field, the cattle upon a thousand hills, and the serpent as he glides along swiftly upon the face of the earth; and then comes man in the image of God, the crown-work of creation—male and female—Adam, the father of all the men of earth and Eve the enlivening, the mother of all living.

All things were now finished. The six great periods of creation as seen in the vision, were ended, and a new vision of a seventh day suddenly passes before his mind's eye, and he sees God the Creator at rest. God himself symbolizing the Sabbath—a day of rest to man—one is seven, in which to rest from his labors also, and to worship God in the great temple of nature. And the importance of the observance of this day of rest is the example!

Then comes the great vision of man in a primitive state of innocence, in the prophetic garden of Eden; his temptation and his fall symbolizing that great propensity in human nature to treat the permitted and the forbidden alike; that great serpent as he is called in the vision—that evil spirit, whose influence we feel every day leading us astray from the path of virtue and true enjoyment; and the tendency of man to excuse every delinquency of duty; then man's departure from the garden, which to him had been an Eden, a paradise; the decay of a happy state of society and the springing up of vice and consequent misery.

The fourth chapter gives us a prophetic type of two classes—the one virtuous, happy, contented and worshipping God—the other, evil disposed, ill-tempered, envious, revengeful, type of the world's dwellers of all historical times—the good and the bad; the reward of virtue, the punishment of vice.

But I will not pursue this train of thought farther. Suffice it to say that so far as the vision of creation is concerned, most scientific theologians adopt the explanation and interpretation I have given above, though I know of none who pursue it further. But why adopt it for the creation? Because the discoveries of science have absolutely demonstrated that this is the true exegesis of the chapter, or rather chapters, and such exegesis is not inconsistent with the language made use of, and is certainly consistent with what appears to be the great intent of revelation.

I ask now your special attention to a more particular examination of "the vision of the early ages of creation" as recorded in the first part of the book of Genesis. Turn to the fourth chapter and you will see in the first verse that Cain was born just about one year after the creation of Adam, (taking the chronology as generally adopted. Then was born his brother Abel, and then is related the murder and its attending circumstances, and Cain's punishment. What was the great object of this revelation. Simply to teach us the genealogy of the world? or to teach the world or the people whom God had selected as an entering wedge between idolatry and the human race, a great moral lesson. Look at the fourteenth and fifteenth verses. You will observe that as soon as the murder is committed, Cain receives his sentence. Does he not most distinctly imply in what he says to the Lord that the earth is then peopled by more than the descendants of Adam and Eve, if he, Cain is the first born of Eve; and Abel the second and not representative men as I hold them to be. Read the Lord's answer. Either the earth was then in a great degree peopled, more so than can be reconciled with the hypothesis that Cain and Abel were individual men and not representative, and the second and third of the race, or the narrative manifestly in its language implies what cannot be true. In the sixteenth verse, Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod—literally the land of the vagabond; symbolizing his disgraced state after the murder of his brother. "And he knew his wife and she conceived and bare Enoch." If the narrative is to be taken literally and not as a prophetic vision, where and what was the land of Nod? Who named it? Where did Cain procure his wife? Was she his sister or who was she? Did you ever read this chapter without feeling that if the common exegesis was to be accepted as the true one, there was a mystery you could not solve? Have you not always felt inclined to ask the same questions that I have asked above? And do you not feel that this explanation that Cain and Abel were only types or representative men, introduced to symbolize certain moral actions, does away with the difficulty and gives a moral sublimity to the whole narrative? Read on.—And Cain when he had committed the fratricidal deed of blood built a city and called it after his son Enoch. This the chronologists say was one hundred and twenty-nine years after the creation of Adam and Eve, or when Cain was one hundred and twenty-eight years old. We have then following in this fourth chapter a genealogy branching off or coming down from Cain and apparently distinct from that in the fifth chapter. The fifth generation from Enoch or the seventh generation of the world according to the common exegesis embraces "Jabal, the father of such as dwell in tents and have cattle." "Jubel, the father of such as handle the harp and organ," and "Tubal Cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron." Allowing one hundred years to intervene between the birth of each progenitor, which is probably too much and is forty-three years more than the aggregate put down from Adam to Methuselah, which embraces the same number of progenitors, and we have about seven hundred years of the world of man from the first germ, and during the time, or rather commencing at that time, we have the various manufacturers of brass and iron and the invention of the harp and organ. According to any rational method of biblical exegesis, Jabal and Jubel and Tubal Cain must be taken only as representative names to distinguish the distinct classes of shepherds, musicians and artificers, and perhaps to give to the post-diluvian inhabitants a glimpse of ante-diluvian advancement. The object of the prophetic tablet in the twenty-third and twenty-fourth verses seems to have been to present a case of deep remorse arising from a most foul crime, and that remorse impelling to confession, and an acknowledgment of the justice of even a very much deeper punishment than had been inflicted on Cain for the murder of his brother.

The first murder was cool, concealed, and without remorse. Its punishment was retaliating circumstances, was followed by deep remorse, by full confession and by a frank and free acknowledgment of the justice of any punishment God might see fit to inflict, and Lamech was not punished.

Was the object of these two prophetic visions to give simply the genealogy of some eight of the children of Cain? Or was it for a nobler object—to teach the two great moral states of the mind consequent on crime, the punishment of crime doggedly justified and the forgiveness of crime repented of; to foreshadow, indeed, the great fundamental doctrine of the dispensation of Christ? Was not the second as I have indicated above, and was not the first a tablet or vision representing two brothers, descendants of one common father—one quiet, contented and happy, the other ambitious, envious, with a mind disordered by vicious propensities and ready even to resent on the recipient the respect his virtues naturally commanded. Yea, has not this vision a higher meaning, if possible?—and does not this view of it give the divine record a dignity with which the other most signally fails to invest it?

But I am making this letter too long and must close. Do not think, my dear Mary, I am dwelling too minutely on this part of my argument. I wish to make it plain to you that the divine historian has given us a narrative, when rightly understood, in perfect harmony with the revelations of science. I would not for the world infuse into your mind even the smallest doubt, but would lead you to take a higher and nobler view of this great prophetic record, than has been taken by most of our theologians. In my next I will pursue the argument and trust in the mean time you will duly weigh all I have said, and that you will carefully and prayerfully study the record.

Yours truly, J. E.

AN ODD SORT OF THEOLOGY.—A Presiding Elder in Walker Co., Ala., was examining an applicant for a preaching license—one who felt very ambitious of "spaining and 'spounding the scriptures"—"Brother," said our friend, the Presiding Elder "ate you a Unitarian or a Trinitarian?"

After studying awhile—repeating in an undertone, "U-n-i-t-a-r-i-a-n, T-r-i-n-i-t-a-r-i-a-n" the applicant answered: "Well, I always voted the Union ticket, and I'm a Union man; so I reckon I'm a Unitarian."

The quarterly Conference didn't think it a safe case; although the worthy brother is on hand on election days, for saving the Union.

SENSE.—A rough common sense pervades the following, in which there is certainly more truth than poetry:

"Great men never swell. It is only three cent individuals who are salaried at the rate of two hundred dollars a year and dine on potatoes and dried herring, who put on airs and flashy waistcoats, swell, puff, blow and endeavor to give themselves a consequential appearance. No discriminating person can ever mistake the spurious for the genuine article. The difference between the two is as great as that between a bottle of vinegar and a bottle of the pure juice of the grape."

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