

THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

"I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man."—Thomas Jefferson.

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POETRY.

FREEDOM.

BY JAMES GORDON BROOKS.

When the world in throngs shall press,
To the battle's glorious van;
When oppressed shall seek redress,
And shall claim the right of man;
Then shall freedom smile again
On the earth and on the main.

When the tide of war shall roll
Like imperious ocean's surge,
From the tropic to the pole,
And to earth's remotest verge;
Then shall valor dash the gem,
From each tyrant's diadem.

When the banner is unfurled,
Like a silver cloud in air,
And the champions of the world
In their might assemble there;
Man shall rend his iron chain,
And redeem his rights again.

Then the thunderbolt shall fall,
In their fury on each throne;
Where the despot holds in thrall,
Spirits nobler than his own;
And the cry of all shall be,
Battle's shroud or liberty!

Then the trump shall echo loud,
Stirring nations from afar,
In the dawning line of crowd,
And to draw the blade of war,
While the tide of life shall rain,
And crimson every plain.

Soon shall earth awake in might—
Retribution shall arise;
And all regions shall unite,
To obtain the glorious prize;
And oppression's iron crown
To the dust be trodden down.

When the Almighty shall deform
Heaven in his hour of wrath;
When the angels of the storm
Sweep in fury on his path,
Then shall tyranny be hurled
From the bosom of the world.

Yet O! Freedom! yet awhile,
All mankind shall own thy way;
And the eye of God shall smile
On thy brightly dawning day;
And all nations shall adore
At thine altar evermore.

"I wish you would give me that gold ring on your finger," said a village dandy to a country girl, "for it resembles the duration of my love for you—it has no end."

"Excuse me, sir," said she, "I choose to keep it, for it is likewise emblematical of my love to you—it has no beginning."

"Cuff, you see dem two ladies ob color 'cross de street dare?" "Yes, I see dey dear angers, Pompy." "Well, don't dey look 'mazing like one anoder?" "Dat berry true; I gibs you credit for your nice demonstration; dey do mazingly zemble one anoder, 'specially de one on dis side."

"Be collected," as the printer said to a huge batch of old newspaper bills, vat vas'nt paid, lying scattered over his desk.

MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Pittsburg Saturday Evening Visitor.

LOVE'S GUERDON.

A TALE FOR THE LADIES.

BY A BACHELOR.

Chapter First.—The Wager.

"Oh, that I was a man!" sighed the pretty daughter of old Calico, the retired dealer in muslins and mantuas, "I wish I was a man," and closing her music book, she leaned the loveliest face in Cincinnati upon a hand so petite, yet graceful, that Praxitiles would have forgotten the painter in the man, and instead of transferring its counterfeit to the dull canvass, have penciled it upon the living heart.

Her cousin Harry heard the querulous exclamation, but his attention was absorbed in tracing certain mystical combinations, as the blaze of the coal occasionally gave them to his view; so he said nothing, although the speaker seemed to expect an answer.

"Cousin, cousin Harry, I say!" exclaimed the spoiled beauty, stamping a foot of Chinese proportions upon the rich Brussels, "you are positively stupid to night! Here have I been talking to you, yet you pay no attention; thinking of the lost Pleiad or the sophistries of Thales, for aught I know!"

"My dear Agnes," replied the gentleman, what do you wish?"

"I wish I was a man!"

"Do you?" quietly responded her cousin, at the same time stirring the fire in the grate, it was the last night of a dying year, and the keen blast howled fiercely the requiem of the passing fragment of a century.

"I do indeed," was the reply of Agnes, "for I feel that woman is deprived of all those opportunities of becoming great, of doing good and benefiting mankind, which are so lavishly strewn in the paths of favored manhood. We are shut out from all agency in the government of men; we may be fired with ambition, but despotic custom has deprived us of the right to assert our claims with the slightest chance of a hearing! Pray, what chance have our sex of piling a fabric of honor or fame, of accelerating the march of knowledge, or curbing the progress of vice?"

This speech came from the cherry lips of sweet seventeen, yet my readers must not condemn her: ambition is a godlike attribute, and burns as brightly upon the altar of woman as it does upon the shrine of manhood. Woman can exercise her powers in the tented field, the cabinet, and the hall of debate as well as in the social circle—witness Joan of Arc, Elizabeth of England and Fanny Darusmont. Woman has a right to be ambitious, especially of the ambition of doing good.

"You can do much, my sweet Cousin," answered her hearer—"to your sex is given power to mould the plastic mind that it may acknowledge the truths of virtue and receive those sound inculcations which, implanted early, become the guiding principles of the man; strengthening with the advance of years."

A cloud of vexation crossed the brow of the listening maiden and with the rash confidence of youth, she denied the premises laid down by the speaker.

A smile, rarely seen upon the face of Harry Harrington, illuminated his countenance, as drawing his chair to the side of the pouting Agnes, he thus continued his exordium, or, rather, altered its direction.

"You well know, dear Agnes, of the strong desire entertained by your father for our immediate union. Nay, now, do not get angry, but listen! You have bid me wait until another year shall have passed—to this arrangement I seriously object, but am willing to rest the question upon the issue of an adventure, which will at the same time prove to you, that in deeds of virtue, philanthropy and kindly influence to the human race, your sex have decided superiority over ours."

Agnes looked seriously into the face of her companion to see whether he was not

jesting with her, but reading there the same calm, serious features that marked his general demeanor, she bent her eyes to the ground and laughed. "You may smile," continued her cousin, "but listen—I will undertake to prove to you all I have asserted—ay, more! Yourself shall admit that I conquered. If I do this, my guerdon shall be an immediate union. If I do not, harsh as you rimperious doom of delay is I will bow submissively. Do you agree?"

"I do, I do," laughed the merry girl, "and I know I shall win!"

The bell was touched—the servant summoned to bring her mistress' roquelaire and furs, and Harry Harrington with Agnes upon his arm, sallied forth in quest of proofs, which were to decide the singular wager.

Chapter Second.—The Hovel.

The demon of the storm was abroad in his wrath as the pair wended their way along the snow-covered streets of Cincinnati. The ice in the Ohio heaved and trembled with a hoarse dull sound as the passing waters sluggishly lifted the bodies of ice, one upon another. The wintry heavens were starless—moonless; and the snow falling in flakes upon the person of Agnes, made her half regret her willing acquiescence in the strange freak of her cousin-lover.

Yet was the little world of this Athens of the West busy in its way. The paces were lined with groups of young and old; the one anticipating with the enthusiasm of their season; the others somewhat affected by the merry voices, and careless aspirings of those around them, were hastening to purchase the gifts which childhood is very willing to attribute to the generosity of Santa Claus. The stores were in the blaze of their holiday array, and toy and trinket, book and bauble were temptingly displayed to the gaze of the multitude gathered there to purchase.

What a mercurial, easily cheated world we live in! Youth pleased with trifles, age descending from its gravity, finds enjoyment in filling up the requisitions of childhood. All are gay, all forgetful that they are standing upon the spot where was an important landmark in the circumscribed voyage of life! Hope that ever attending visitant, looks eagle-eyed from the grave of the dead to the cradle of the new year, and whispers to the mourner that with the past has departed his sorrow; that brighter, happier days come with the advancing future, experience, judgement, the monitors of reality, come but to be chased away before the laugh of the blue-eyed tempter.

Agnes pressed more closely to the arm of her companion as the rush of the rejoicing passengers obstructed their progress. Harrington seemed not to notice what was passing around him: buried in thought, he neither glanced at the world on the pave, nor the vociferous mirth of the sleighers, who in their eggshells flew over the bosom of the yielding snow. Agnes inquired where he was going, but without returning any answer he turned down one of those suspicious lanes which his companion had frequently noticed, but had never passed through and, pausing before a wretched cabin, he knocked upon the time-rent panels of the door.

Awe-struck, and wondering, the timid girl offered no inquiry, but threw a hasty glance over the exterior of the building. It was one of those log-houses still to be seen in the by-ways of our Western cities. Decay had done its work upon it, and whatever comfort it may have once possessed was now destroyed. The plastering of the interior was gone, and the storm had free passage. The windows were stuffed with rags, and the sounds of pain came upon the ear, as the door was slowly opened through which she and her companion entered.

Why describe the interior of the dwelling where want is lord, and misery has taken up his abode? Yet Agnes, vered as she was in the details furnished by others,

was sickened at the display of human wretchedness that met her vision as she stepped within an apartment, which she felt was indeed the habitation of misery. Upon a couch by the embers of a waning fire was stretched a woman apparently in the grasp of the King of Terrors. Several children, young and squalid, were weeping on their knees by the side of the dying; and the tears swelled in the eyes of Agnes as she heard their sobs and felt their misery. A further look brought a blush of shame to the cheek of the gazer, for by the fire, making a warm draught to give the sufferer, was one whom Agnes well remembered having made the butt of her merriment.

This minister of mercy was Miss A—, who belonged to that despised body called spinners, and whenever the rich daughter of old Calico observed the faded features and humble dress of the retiring Miss A— she had made them the subject of ridicule among her young and equally thoughtless companions. Now was the spinster's triumph, for the heart of Agnes bowed to the superiority of her whom she had formerly condemned.

Without noticing the pair, who stood contemplating the scene with sad emotions, this voluntary attendant on misery, proceeded with her task of charity. A heavy groan from the dying woman recalled her to the bedside, and she saw that all earthly aid would be of no avail. The damps of death were thickly gathering upon the brow of the sufferer, and the film closing over the eye, told that her hour was at hand.

"My children," murmured the dying parent, the mother triumphing even in that dark moment, "what will become of my helpless babes?"

"I will protect them," said Miss A—, "I will be to them, instead of the mother they have lost."

"And I," said Harrington, stepping forward full in the presence of the spinster, "will share with you in your glorious, yet noble work. Let me too, be an agent in clothing the orphan and giving bread to the motherless."

"I also will assist," sobbed the spirit-softened Agnes, "dear Miss A—, pardon the past, and make me your pupil in the cause of holy charity."

"God forever bless you for your kindness to my little ones," hoarsely whispered the dying woman—"I have placed my trust in the Friend of the widow, and the Father of the Fatherless, and he has raised me up many friends; my children—the words died upon her lips, her last look was upon her offspring, and pressing the hand of Miss A—to her heart, she passed away from the theatre of her many sufferings."

Chapter Third.—The Family Group.

One more visit, dear Agnes," said Harrington, as he drew the arm of Agnes within his own, and left the spot where death had been busy—"We have seen what woman can do to smooth the dying pillow; and temper sorrow with the tear of mercy. Let us turn now to a brighter evidence of woman's usefulness."

Agnes replied not, the events of the night had quelled the rash confidence in herself, with which she started, and with passive obedience that argued well for the fruition of her cousin's hopes she allowed him to take her where he pleased.

"Do you remember George H.?" asked Harrington of his cousin, as they again came upon Main-street.

"George H. the drunkard, whose wife and children were obliged to leave him in consequence of his intemperate habits?"

"The very same," answered the gentleman, "we are going now to his house," and so saying he rang the bell of a large, handsome edifice, and a servant promptly obeyed the summons.

A few moments sufficed to seat them before a cheerful fire in an elegant furnished apartment, that contrasted well with the chamber they had so lately quitted.

Agnes had known Mrs. H. some five years before, a heart broken and wretched

woman, who seemed travelling rapidly to that refuge for human sorrow, the grave; now, she saw her the quiet, happy matron, her countenance saddened with the traces of past care; but an air of serenity and christian thankfulness showing that the present was without alloy. Her husband, the drunkard that was, welcomed them with an air of easy politeness and discoursed fluently upon the current topics of the day, while several children were pouring with beaming, happy looks, upon the pages of the Inspired Volume, which, it was evident the father had been reading to his family.

"Can it be possible," thought Agnes, "that this is reality?"

Her cousin seemed to read her thoughts and he smiled as turning to their hosts he mentioned the wager.

"My young friend," observed H. addressing Agnes, "you know not, you cannot know the vast difference between the desire to do good and the fact of its accomplishment. It is not in the saloon, the gay circle, or the fashionable rout that the energies of your sex are called into requisition; yet woman can, nay, does more to sweeten the cup of human life than man in his purest moment dreams of. I am a living witness of woman's usefulness,"—he paused, and looking fondly on his wife, resumed, "four years ago, and I was an outcast from the esteem of my fellows, the victim of fell untamable passions. She whom I had vowed to protect and cherish, was exposed to want, and driven forth to seek an asylum other than the one which I had turned into a den of dissipation and vice. You see me now—the cause of it is the energy, the christian fortitude, the ceaseless prayers of her who clung to my ruined fortune after at my children, but the wine cup had a stronger voice, and I went on until disease prostrated me upon a bed of pain. Then it was that she conquered! Through the long months of my illness she toiled to get bread for me, unworthy as I was, and I arose from that couch of repentance, an altered, because a thinking man. She had been the "still, small voice," to lure me from my follies. She had taught me to look upon myself as a creature born for high purposes, and then when the wife was before me, she brought our little household around and bade them kneel with her before me. The past with all its madness came upon me like a spirit's voice, and the misery I was inflicting upon others, made me take that resolution, which under God's favor I will never altar, to live for her who had regenerated me—to live for my children."

The gratified wife gratified less at hearing a recital of her well earned praises, than delighted with the tone of her husband's determination as to his future course, smiled tearfully upon him, while he took her hand and clasped it within his own.—Agnes was affected with the scene: here was indeed woman's triumph, immeasurable beyond any that the victor field of the conqueror may present, or the annals of political pre-eminence afford. No bodies bleach lifeless in the pathway of woman's triumph—no bleeding sensibilities, no selfishness, no thirst for dominion marks her course! Her weapon is Virtue, bending to circumstances, yet rising superior to difficulty. Her battle field is the human heart, and she instils into it sound principles, bidding the wanderer return, and pointing out the advantages of reformation!

Agnes left the mansion of George H. no longer discontented with her woman's estate, and Henry Harrington, as they re-entered the parlor where Agnes had uttered her wish that she was a man, felt in his own mind that his wager was not very doubtful.

Chapter Fourth.—The Letter.

"Married, on the 10th day of January, 183—, HENRY HARRINGTON, Esq. to AGNES, only daughter of Cadwallader Calico, Esq., all of Cincinnati."

There is something excessively provoking in the air of impertinent happiness as-