

# 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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## TERMS:

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ADVERTISEMENTS not exceeding a square will be conspicuously inserted at One Dollar for the first three insertions, and Twenty-five cents for every subsequent insertion. A liberal discount made to those who advertise by the year. LETTERS addressed on business, must be post paid.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### ANECDOTE OF THE REVOLUTION.

Almost every one is acquainted with the circumstances of the taking of General Prescott, the then commanding officer of the British forces on Rhode Island, by Captain Barton of Providence. He was exchanged for General Lee, who was previously captured by the British.

Shortly after his exchange he returned to Rhode Island and was invited to dine on board the Admiral's vessel, with many other officers of the highest grade. General Prescott was naturally a haughty, imperious man, and as a commander was very unpopular with his officers and soldiers and with the citizens of Newport, but was a brave and skilful officer.

It was often the case that boys as well as men were sent from the town on board the Admiral's ship for any offence, and confined there for some time, by the arbitrary authority of these in power. Martial law was the law of the place. A small lad about thirteen years of age was placed in this situation previous to General Prescott's return, and was on board with many others at the time the General dined there. He did not know General Prescott.

After dinner the wine circulated freely, and a toast and song was repeatedly called for. In the course of the evening the first lieutenant observed to the admiral, who was a real jolly son of Neptune, that there was a Yankee lad on board who would shame all their singing.

'Bring him up here,' said Prescott. The boy was accordingly brought into the cabin. The Admiral called on him to give them a song. The little fellow being somewhat intimidated by gold-faced coats, epaulettes, &c. replied, 'I can't sing any songs but Yankee songs.' The Admiral perceiving that he was embarrassed ordered the steward to give him a glass of wine, saying 'come my fellow, don't be frightened, give us one of your Yankee songs.' General Prescott spoke in his usual haughty imperious manner, 'you d—d young rebel, give us a song, or I'll give you a dozen.' The Admiral interfered and assured the lad that he should be set at liberty the next day if he would give them a song, any one he could recollect.

The following doggerel, written by a sailor of Newport was given, to the great amusement of the company.

'Twas on a dark and stormy night  
The winds and waves did roar,  
Bold Barton then with twenty men  
Went down unto the shore.

And in a whale boat they set off  
To Rhodes' Island fair,  
To catch a red-coat General  
That then resided there.

Through British fleets and guard boats strong  
They held their dangerous way,  
Till they arrived unto their port  
And then did not delay.

A tawny son of Africa's race  
Them through the ravine led,  
And entering then the Overing house  
They found him in his bed.

But to get in they had no means  
Except poor Coffee's head,

Who beat the door down then rushed in,  
And seized him in his bed.

Stop, let me put my breeches on  
The General then did pray,  
Your breeches Massa I will take,  
For dress we cannot stay.

Then through the rye stubble him they led  
With shoes and breeches none,  
And placed him in their boat quite snug  
And then from shore were gone.

Soon the alarm was sounded loud,  
The Yankees they have come,  
And taken Prescott from his bed  
And him they've carried home.

The drums were beat, sky rockets flew,  
The soldiers shouldered arms  
And marched around the grounds they knew,  
Filled with most dire alarms.

But through the fleet with muffled oars  
They held their devious way,  
And landed him on Gansett shores  
Where Britain held no sway.

When unto the land they came  
Where rescue there was none,  
'A d—d bold push,' the General said,  
'Of prisoners I am one!'

There was a general shout of all the company during the whole song and at the close, one who was a prisoner on board at the time, observed, he thought the deck would come through with the stamping and cheering.

General Prescott joined most heartily in the meriment. Thrusting his hand into his pocket he handed the boy a guinea, saying 'here you young dog is a guinea for you.' The boy was set at liberty the next morning.

This anecdote is often related by an aged gentleman now living in Newport. \*\*\*\*

\*There is a deep ravine leading from the shore to the house which was occupied by General Prescott.

†Mr. Overing was a tory and owned the house in which General Prescott resided.

‡He was landed on Narragansett shore near Warwick.

### WINTER EVENINGS.

During the winter season, most of the youth of our land, particularly those of the country, have the evening at their own disposal, to devote to amusement, recreation, or whatever pursuit they choose. We speak now of those who are employed in some active or necessary pursuit; during the day, to whom evening brings their only leisure; for the youth who has not some such employment, or who does not seek it, is not the one to be benefited by any thing that may be said on the improvement of his leisure hours. We therefore address our remarks to the industrious youth of our country, who are trained to useful and laudable purpose. Such young men will hail the long evenings of the season with delight, and bless the glad hours which they may devote uninterruptedly to the cultivation of their minds.

Few young men are at all aware of the amount of valuable knowledge of which they might become the masters and possessors, by a careful and judicious improvement of the leisure afforded by the evenings of a single winter, and when we add to this the acquisition of ten or fifteen winters the aggregate amount of what a youth of common capacity might attain would make him a learned man in any section of the Union. Many who rendered themselves eminent and useful in their day—the Franklins, the Shermans, the Rittenhouses, and the Bowditches of our own country—the Watts, the Fergusons, and the Simpsons of England—names conspicuous in the list of contributors and the benefactors of that species—made themselves what they were by a diligent use of less leisure than falls to the lot of four-fifths of the young men of the United States. The greatest men of every age have in general been self taught and self-made. They have risen from obscurity, and struggled with adverse circum-

stances. A diligent use of their time, (studying and laboring while others slept or played,) a steady perseverance and an indomitable energy gave them their attachments and their eminence. Cicero, by far the most learned man of all antiquity, as well as the greatest orator of Rome, let us at once into the secret of all his vast and varied learning he tells us that the time which others gave to feasts, and dice, and sports, he devoted to patient study.

It matters not what may be a young man's intended pursuit of life; he cannot choose any which reading and study, during his leisure hours, will not the better qualify him. If he is to be a farmer, let him read books and treatises on agriculture; if he is to be a mechanic, let him study the mathematics and works on mechanism, architecture &c. if he is to be a merchant, let him become familiar with the principles of political economy, the statistics of trade, and the history of commerce; and, finally, if he is to be an American citizen, one of the millions to whom is to be intrusted the rich heritage of civil and religious liberty bequeathed to us by our fathers, let him study well the history, and the institution of the United States, and let him contemplate the lives and character of those who wrought out and framed our liberties.

Nor is the knowledge to be thus acquired the only inducement for a young man to devote the hours of his leisure to reading and study. The pleasure to be found in such pursuits is as much superior to that transient and giddy excitement attendant merely on the graver amusements, as it is purer, more elegant, and more refined.—The young man too, who habituates his mind to find pleasure and gratification in reading and study, can never want for society; for he creates around him a society of which he can never be deprived—a society which will never be cold or artificial or false—a society composed of the very elite of the earth—the master minds of all ages, all countries. With them he can retire into his library, to spend a leisure hour, whenever opportunity occurs, certain of finding them ever ready to delight and instruct.

*Effect of Free Material.*—A dealer in wool informs us that during the past six months, some fifteen thousand bales of foreign coarse wool have been sold in this market. A few years ago, a cargo of five hundred bales overstocked the market, and supplied the sales for a year. But wools costing less than eight cents a pound were made free under our tariff, and immediately there has grown up the vast business in the manufacture of them. Now it is proposed to tax the wools. What the whole effect of the proposed tax may be, it is difficult to say; but the facts show the stimulating effects of letting in raw materials free of duty, while they also show the danger of government interference for the purpose of regulating the business of the citizens, and the extreme difficulty of working such interference into any system which will on the whole operate beneficially, or even fairly. Our manufacturers will never be safe until all interference with their interests on the part of the Government, is withdrawn.

Journal of Com.

### LOST IN A CANEBREAKER.

A late number of the *Corydon* (Indiana) Whig, states that two citizens of that county, one by the name of John Ellis, the other not remembered, while on their way to New Orleans, with a flatboat, landed somewhere in Arkansas, on account of bad weather, and left the boat, taking with them their guns, intending to take a few hours' hunt. They soon got into a very heavy cane-breaker; and after turning round a few times knew not the course back to the boat; and it had snowed so fast that they were unable to follow back their track.

So they continued to be lost for four days and nights, travelling through a deep snow in a heavy cane-breaker, without fire or a mouthful to eat. They were found in a most piteous and wretched condition, one of them insensible to his misery, and the other barely able to walk but yet urging the other one forward, who was falling and pitching in every direction. Mr. Ellis, the most able one of them; has come home.—He, from all probability, will lose all his toes, several of them having come off already. He was much injured otherwise from the cold.

## MESSAGE

Of Governor Porter vetoing the Bill giving to the Legislature the appointment of Canal Commissioners.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

GENTLEMEN:—The Bill entitled "An Act relating to Canal Commissioners" has been presented to me for the Executive approbation. As I cannot approve the Bill, I return it to the Senate, which it originated, with my objections thereto, in order to such further action thereon as is provided by the Constitution.

The Bill provides for the election and appointment of three Canal Commissioners, to wit: the election of one Commissioner by the Senate and one by the House of Representatives, and the appointment of a third by the Governor. This mode of appointment, as to any officers of government, is novel and without precedent; and I confess I can see in the system here proposed, nothing but discord and confusion. It is an event to be reasonably expected, that different parties, interests and combinations in each House, and it may be with the Governor, will lead to frequent removals and changes of the incumbents, and thus our improvement system, instead of being conducted as it should be, with consistent steadiness, will be constantly undergoing the changes and experiments incident to our daily political mutations. Collisions will take place in the Board of Commissioners, embarrassment will be thrown in the way of its action by the minority of its own members, and the public interest will be sacrificed to promote the objects of private or local or political designs. By the appointment of the Board by each House, and by the Governor, nearly the whole responsibility is destroyed. For wrong done, should they be done, it will be quite impossible to reach all the delinquents at once. The adherence of the Governor or of either House to its favorite, will place him beyond the reach of popular opinion, although his associates, who are responsible to an appointing power differently elected, may be promptly dismissed. The Governor, the Senators and the members of the House, are not all elected at once, nor by the same constituents.—The members of each House are the immediate representatives of detached portions of the people, with peculiar local interests to advance, all of which must more or less conflict with those of the State at large; and although each House, in the aggregate, no doubt, represents the people of the whole State, it is through the medium of thirty-three members in one, and one hundred in the other. Responsibility thus divided, vanishes almost entirely, and ceases to afford an adequate guarantee to the public.

Should Commissioners thus appointed, be guilty of official misconduct, how are they to be punished? The House impeaches, and the Senate tries—but here the House is impeaching an officer whom it has itself just confided in, and appointed; and the Senate is to try justly and impartially, for misdemeanors in office, the man whom it has but a few days before trusted and honored. What a spectacle of absurdity would this exhibit? Would not combinations among the friends of each in the respective Houses, defeat the ends of justice, and laugh to scorn all efforts to inflict punishment?

The history of all representative governments shows, that although their legislatures, especially when numerous, are admirably adapted to the enactment of general laws, and the promotion of the rights and liberties of the people, they are, from the very nature of divided responsibility, the most easily tampered with, by political intriguers and demagogues, in their appointment of officers of any other branch of the government; and in the selection of their officers, have been often made the dupes of intrigue, of venality and of corruption. I beg you to understand me as speaking in the abstract, and not in regard to any past or future legislation in Pennsylvania. I cannot, however, consent to forego, altogether

the salutary lessons of experience. We have no right to expect entire exemption from evils that other people have suffered, and I am determined, so far as I am concerned, to share none of the responsibility of introducing them into Pennsylvania.—If done by others, their be the honor, I want it not.

But I am satisfied that neither agreeably to the spirit of our Constitution, nor on the ground of expediency, ought the appointment to be vested in the Legislature: The Legislature have the power of enacting the laws making the appropriations to purposes of internal improvement; and the spirit of the Constitution, as well as the legislation of the Commonwealth, has provided that the disbursement of the moneys and settlement of the accounts of the Commonwealth should be in the hands of officers differently appointed, evidently to prevent combinations or collusion, or the operation of the same influences in the appointment of each: To give to the branches of government which appropriate the moneys, the appointment of the officers who are to disburse them, would, in my judgment, tend to break down the safe-guards provided by the Constitution in the disbursements of public moneys.

The Bill before me presents other difficulties. The constitution vests the legislative power in the General Assembly; the Executive power in a Governor, and declares the duties of both. The leading duty of the former is to enact laws, and of the latter, to take care that they are faithfully executed. To enable him to perform that duty, the Constitution declares "all officers whose election or appointment is not provided for in this constitution, shall be elected or appointed as shall be directed by law." A plausible argument may be drawn from the Bill before me, that it establishes a mode of appointment within the latter clause above of the Constitution, which declares that "no member of the Senate and House of Representatives shall be appointed by the Governor or to any office during the term for which he shall have been elected," it manifestly shows that the people intended to confine the principal duties of their Representatives to direct legislation. If this Bill becomes a law, and the principal extended, they might fill all offices out of their respective bodies, which would destroy their purity, and destroy the incompatible principle in the Constitution, which restrains the Governor from making appointments from either House, during the time for which they shall have been elected.

In point of expediency I think the Bill ought not to become a law, and this I think is manifest from our previous legislation on this subject:

Under the acts of 27th of March, 1824, 11th April 1825, 10th April, 1826, and 16th April 1827, the Canal Commissioners were appointed by the Executive. At first the Board consisted of three members;—it was then increased to five; and by the act of 10th April, 1826, it was increased to nine; at which number it continued until 1830.—By the act of 16th of April, 1829, nine persons named in the law, were appointed Canal Commissioners, and authority was given to the Governor to fill any vacancies which might occur in the Board, from death, resignation or otherwise.

On the sixth day of April, 1830, in less than a year after its passage, the act of 16th April, 1829, was repealed, and the Governor was authorized to appoint three persons as a Board of Canal Commissioners: public opinion having decidedly pronounced against the appointment by the Legislature. By the act of 23rd January, 1830, the time of appointing Canal Commissioners was changed from the 1st of June, to the 1st of February, and by the provisions of that law, the then existing Board of Canal Commissioners were legislated out of office four months before the expiration of their commissions, but no change as to the number of the Commissioners, or their mode of appointment was made. It will be within the recollection of all, that the leading reasons