

AMERICAN CITIZEN.

"Let us have Faith that Right makes Might; and in that Faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it"—A. LINCOLN.

VOLUME 1.

BUTLER, BUTLER COUNTY, PA., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1863.

NUMBER 3.

THE AMERICAN CITIZEN.

Published every Wednesday in the borough of Butler, by Thomas R. BROWN & C. B. ANDERSON on Main street, opposite to Jack's Hotel—office up stairs in the brick tenement occupied by Ed. Letter, six store.

TERMS.—\$1.50 a year, if paid in advance, or within the first six months; or \$2 if not paid until after the expiration of the first six months.

RATES OF ADVERTISING.—One square non, (ten lines or less) three insertions.....\$1.00
Every subsequent insertion, per square.....25
Business cards of 10 lines or less for one year, including paper.....7.00
Card of 10 lines or less 1 year without paper.....5.00
1/2 column for six months.....12.00
1/2 column for one year.....20.00
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1/2 column for one year.....20.00
1 column for six months.....20.00
1 column for one year.....30.00

The Southerner at Home.

MISSISSIPPI.

Yesterday I met a well-dressed man upon the road, and inquired of him if he could recommend me to a comfortable place to pass the night?

"Yes, I can," said he; "You stop at John Watson's. He is a real good fellow, and his wife is a nice, tidy woman; he's got a good house, and you'll be as well taken care of there as any place I know."

"What I am most concerned about is a clean bed," said I.

"Well, you are safe for that there."

So distinct a recommendation was unusual, and when I reached the house he had described to me, somewhat before nightfall, I of course stopped to solicit entertainment.

In the gallery sat a fine, stout man, and a woman who in size and figure matched him well. Some ruddy, fat children were playing on the steps. The man wore a full beard, which is very uncommon in these parts. I rode to a horse-block, near the gallery, and asked if I could be accommodated for the night? "Oh, yes, you can stay here if you can get along without anything to eat; we don't have anything but once a week."

"Well, you look as if it agrees with you, I reckon I'll try it for one night." "Alight, then, sir, alight. Why, you came from Texas, didn't you? Your rig looks like it," he said as I dismounted. "Yes, I've just crossed Texas, all the way from the Rio Grande."

"Have you, though? Well, I'll be right glad to hear something of that country." He threw his saddle and bags across the rail of the gallery, and we walked together to the stable.

"I hear that there are a great many Germans in the western part of Texas," he said presently. "There are a great many; west of the Guadalupe, more Germans than American born."

"Have they got many slaves?" "No," "Well, won't they break off and make a Free State down there, by and by?" "I should think it not impossible that they might."

"I wish to God they would; I would like right well to go and settle there if it was free from slavery. You see, Kansas and all the Free States are too far North for me; I was raised in Alabama, and I don't want to move into a colder climate; but I would like to go into a country where they hadn't got this curse of slavery."

He said this not knowing that I was a Northern man; greatly surprised, I asked, "What are your objections to slavery, sir?"

"Objections! The first is here (striking his breast); I was brought up in a nigger State, and have always been used to it, but I could never bring myself to like it. Well, sir, I know slavery is wrong, and God'll put an end to it. It's bound to come to an end, and when the end does come, there'll be war in the land. And, instead of preparing for it, and trying to make it as light as possible, we are doing nothing but making it worse and worse. That's the way it appears to me, and I'd rather get away from here before it comes. Then, I've another objection to it. I don't like to have slaves about me. Now, I tell a nigger to go and feed your horse; I never know if he's done it unless I go and see; and if he didn't know I would go and see, and would whip if I found he hadn't fed him, would he feed him? He'd let him starve. I've got as good niggers as anybody, but I never can depend on them; they will lie and they will steal, and take advantage of me in every way they dare. Of course they will, if they are slaves. Lying and stealing are not the worst of it. I've got a family of children, and I don't like to have such degraded beings round my house while they are growing up. I know what the consequences are to children growing up among slaves."

"I reckon you never saw a conscientious man who had been brought up among slavery who did not think of it pretty much as I do—did you?"

"Yes, I think I have, a good many." "Ah, self-interest warps men's minds wonderfully, but I don't believe there are many who don't think sometimes—it's impossible, I know that they don't."

Were there any others in this neighborhood, I asked, who avowedly hated slavery? He replied that there were a good many mechanics, all the mechanics he knew, who felt slavery to be a great curse to them, and who wanted to see it brought to an end in some way. The competition in which they were constantly made to feel themselves engaged with slave labor, was degrading to them, and they felt it to be so. There was a good deal of talk now among them about getting laws passed to prevent the owners of slaves from having them taught trades, and to prohibit slave mechanics from being hired out. He could go out to-morrow, he supposed, and in the course of a day get two hundred signatures to a paper alleging that slavery was a curse to Mississippi, and praying the Legislature to take measures to relieve them of it as soon as practicable. He knew a poor, hard-working man who was lately offered the services of three negroes for six years each if he would let them learn his trade, but he refused the proposal with indignation, saying he would starve before he helped a slave to become a mechanic.

He considered a coercive government of the negroes by the whites, forcing them to labor systematically, and restraining them from a reckless destruction of life and property, to be necessary. Of course he did not think it wrong to hold slaves, and the profits of their labor were not more than enough to pay a man for looking after them—not if he did his duty to them. What was wrong was making slavery so much worse than necessary. Negroes would improve very rapidly, if they were allowed any considerable measure of the ordinary incitements to improvement. He knew hosts of negroes who showed extraordinary talents, considering their opportunities for mental development; there were a great many in this part of the country who could read and write, and calculate mentally, as well as the general run of white men who had been to schools.—There were Colonel —'s negroes, some fifty of them; they were almost as free as any people in the world, and he did not suppose there were any fifty more contented people, perhaps. They were not driven hard, and work was stopped three times a day for meals; they had plenty to eat, and good clothes; and through the whole year they had from Friday night to Monday morning to do what they liked with themselves. Saturdays the men generally worked in their patches (private gardens), and the women washed and mended clothes. Sundays, they nearly all went to Sunday-school the mistress taught, and to meeting, but they were not obliged to; they could come and go as they pleased all Saturday and Sunday; they were not looked after at all. Only on Monday morning, if there should be any one missing, or any one should come to the field with ragged or dirty clothes, he would have to be whipped. He had often noticed how much more intelligent and sprightly these negroes were than the common run; a great many of them had books and could read and write; and, on Sundays, they were smartly dressed, some of them better than he or his wife ever thought of dressing. This was from the money they made out of their patches, working Saturdays.

Well, then, there were two other plantations near him, in both of which the negroes were turned out to work at half-past three every week-day morning—I might hear the bell ring for them—and frequently they were not stopped till nine o'clock that night. Saturday nights the same as any other. One of them belonged to a very religious lady, and on Sunday morning at half-past nine she had her bell rang for Sunday-school, and after Sunday-school they had a meeting, and another religious service after dinner. Every negro on the plantation was obliged to attend all these exercises, and if they were not dressed clean they were whipped.—They were never allowed to go off the plantation, and if they were caught speaking to a negro from any other place, they were whipped. They could all of them repeat the catechism, he believed, but they were the dumbest, and laziest, and most sorrowful looking negroes he had ever seen.

As a general rule, the condition of the slaves, as regard their material comfort, is greatly improved within twenty years.—Otherwise, he did not know that it had. It would not be a bit safer to turn them free, to shift for themselves, than it would have been twenty years ago. Of this he was quite confident. Perhaps they were

a little more intelligent, knew more, but they were not as free, not as much accustomed to work and contrive for themselves, as they used to be, when they were not fed and clothed nearly as well as now.

Except by the excessive and incessant labor required of them on some plantations, he did not think slaves were often treated with unnecessary cruelty. It was necessary to use the lash occasionally.—Slaves never really felt under any moral obligation to obey their masters. Faithful service was preached to them as a Christian duty, and they pretended to acknowledge it, but the fact was they were obedient just so far as they saw they must be to avoid punishment; and punishment was necessary, now and then, to maintain their faith in their master's power. He had seventeen slaves, and he did not suppose there had been a hundred strokes of the whip on the place for a year past.

He asked if there were many Americans in Texas who were opposed to slavery, and if they were free to express themselves. I said that the wealthy Americans there were all slaveholders themselves—that their influence all went to make slave servants fashionable, and labor by whites disreputable. They were all partisans of slavery, and there were a great many miserable, ignorant and desperate fellows whom they could employ or encourage to bully down anything that was given the name of Abolitionism. "But, are there not a good many Northern men there?" he asked. The Northern men, I replied, were chiefly merchants or speculators, who had but one idea, which was to make money as fast as they could; and as nearly all the little money there was in that country was in the hands of the large slaveholders, they never lost an opportunity to establish their reputation as zealously loyal to the institution.

If that was the way of things there, he said, there was not much chance of its becoming a free State. I thought the chances were against it, but if the Germans continued to flock into the country, it would rapidly acquire all the characteristic social features of a free-labor community, having an abundance and variety of skilled labor, a home market for a variety of crops, denser settlements, and consequently more abundant social, educational and commercial conveniences. There would soon be a numerous body of small proprietors, not so wealthy that the stimulus to personal and active industry would have been lost, but yet able to indulge in a good many luxuries, and to give employment to numerous tradesmen, mechanics and school-teachers, and the laborers who were not land-holders would be intimately involved in all their interests with them; the two classes not living dissociated from each other, as was the case generally in the South, but engaged in a constant fulfillment of reciprocal obligations. If such a character of society could once be firmly and extensively established before the country got to be much taken up with these little independent negro kingdoms, which had prevailed from the beginning in every other part of the South, I did not think any laws would be necessary to prevent slavery. It might be a slave State but it would be a free people.

We had an excellent supper, the bread being wheat of his own raising, the first plantation-grown wheat that I have met with. He said this was an excellent wheat-growing country if people took any pains with it. He always grew a little more than he used in his family. His crop had never been less than twenty bushels per acre, and he had once raised over thirty without manuring or especial pains-taking.

He had grown wheat weighing sixty-six pounds to the bushel. There was a good market for wheat as it was rarely raised in that vicinity. Cotton, however, was ordinarily a more profitable crop, especially since a railroad had lessened the expense of wagoning it to market. Judging that events in Europe were likely to lessen the demand for cotton, he had planted but little this summer, giving his labor chiefly to corn.

On coming from my room in the morning my host met me with a hearty grasp of the hand. "I have slept very little with thinking of what you told me about Western Texas. I think I shall have to go there. If we could get a free State in this climate, I believe it would soon be the most prosperous in the Union. What a disadvantage it must be to have your ground all frozen up and to be obliged to fodder your cattle six months in the year, as you do at the North. I don't see how you live. I think I should like to buy a small farm near some town where I could send my children to school—a farm that I could take care of with one or two hired men. One thing I wanted to ask you: are the Germans learning English at all?"

"Oh, yes; they teach the children English in their schools." "And have they good schools?" "Wherever they have

settled at all closely they have. At New Braunfels, they employ American as well as German teachers, and instruction can be had in the classics, natural history, and the higher mathematics."

When I left, he mounted a horse and rode on with me some miles, saying he did not often find an intelligent man who liked to converse with him on the question of slavery. It seemed to him there was an epidemic insanity on the subject. It is unnecessary to state his views at length. They were precisely those which used to be common among all respectable men at the South. I have recently received a letter from him, in which, after alluding to the excitement which the Kansas question has produced, he says he thinks a considerable change of sentiment has occurred from reflection, stimulated by the discussion of Kansas affairs. He is fully determined to go to Western Texas, and reckons that 10 families, and 30 single men would go with him if there was a prospect that free servants and laborers could be hired there and negroes be kept away. I am sorry to say that, since the outbreak of the Know-Nothing pestilence, which was extremely rancorous in Texas, the German immigration has almost entirely ceased, and the discouragement of two failures of crops leaves little reason to expect its revival. The country will soon, probably, be occupied by the slave labor withdrawing from Missouri, and the German population, dispirited and dispersed, lose all its respectable qualities. A slaveholding country cannot support towns, and without towns or village communities, the maintenance of varied, intelligent industry, is impossible. The Germans will relapse to boors or progress to ruffians.

As we rode, an old negro met us, and we greeted him warmly. He observed to me that he had never uttered his sentiments in the presence of a slave, but in some way all the slaves in the country had, he thought, been informed what they were, for they all looked to him as their special friend. When they got into trouble they would often come to him for advice or assistance. This morning, before I was up, a negro came to him from some miles distant, who had been working for a white man on Sundays till he owed him three dollars, which, now the negro wanted it, he said he could not pay. He had given the negro the three dollars, for he thought he could manage to get it from the white man.

He confirmed the impression I had formed of the purely dramatic and deceptive character of what passed for religion with most of the slaves. One of his slaves was a preacher and a favorite among them. He sometimes went to plantations twenty miles away—even further—on a Sunday, to preach a funeral sermon, making journeys of fifty miles a day on foot. After the sermon, a hat would be passed round, and he sometimes brought home as much as ten dollars. He was the biggest rascal, the worst liar, thief and adulterer on his place.

THE RULING PROPENSITY.—Success in the allotted or chosen walk of life is the passion, the ruling propensity, in every condition of society. And it is as potent in the cottage as in the mansion—the studio of the author and artist as the office of the merchant—the theatre of pleasure as the sanctuary of prayer. It is, in short, the motive power that creates and holds together nations, strengthens the bonds that maintain communities in subjection to law and order, gives a stimulus to the functions of the brain, and imparts consistency and usefulness to the natural selfishness of every human creature. It is the presiding genius of labor in all its branches, and in both its aggregate and individual efforts tenaciously strives to compel the phantoms that dazzle the imagination to give place to those realities which tempt both body and soul to take some path or another that will ultimately lead to the promised land—the glittering, fruitful, and luscious Canaan of our respective, everyday longings. This, in general terms, is the condition symbolized as prosperity; and to the acquisition of which, in all its varied forms, mankind apply themselves with marvellous devotion.

A HAPPY REPORT.—A few days since, during the trial of a case of assault and battery in the Superior Court in this city, a lawyer, who is fond of quoting Latin, used the expression, "Nihil fit;" whereupon his witty opponent, assuming a grave and indignant expression of countenance, said to the jury that as "Nihil" was not a party to the action, either as the assaulter or the assaulted, it made no difference whether "fit" or not, or where, or when, or for what purpose, or with whom, he fought. This happy "turn" threw the judge, jury and spectators into a fit of hearty laughter, and so disconnected the quoter of foreign tongues that he could not even make use of his own.

WHITHER.
BY ALICE CART.

All the times my soul is calling,
"Whither, whither do I go?"
For my days like leaves are falling
From my tree of life below.

Who will come and be my lover!
Who is strong, enough to save,
Now that I am leaning over
The dark silence of the grave!

Who will linger to embrace
With a smile that wondrous place—
Leaving "neath the lid of iron
Tender kisses on my face!

Whosoever should my soul be calling,
"Whither, whither do I go?"
For my days like leaves are falling
In the hands of God, I know.

As the seasons touch their ending,
As the dim years fade and flow,
Let me rather still be sending
Some good deed to gladden thee.

Then, though none should stay to weep me,
Lovers-like, within the shade,
He will hold me, He will keep me,
And I will not be afraid.

Even that dead time that's coming,
But will hold me in His power,
And death find my heart there, humming
Like a bee within a flower.

WIT AND WISDOM.

REGARD the interests of others, as well as your own.

THE trials of life are the tests which ascertain how much gold there is in us.

THE mercy of man is to be just, the justice of woman is to be merciful.

GENUINE politeness is the first-born offspring of generosity and modesty.

LITERATURE is a garden, books are particular views of it, and readers are visitors.

THE intoxication of danger, like that of the grape, shows us to others, but hides us from ourselves.

HE submits himself to be seen through a microscope who suffers himself to be caught in a passion.

DELIBERATE with caution, but act with decision, and yield with graciousness, or oppose with firmness.

THE best eugh mixture: A suit of warm clothing, mixed with plenty of air and plenty of exercise.

WHY are crows the most sensible of birds?—Because they never complain without cause.

IF motives were always visible, men would often blush for their most brilliant actions.

A WARNING.—It is said that the people who dine on cold steak are subject to night-mare.

"I know by a little what a great deal means," as the gardener said when he saw the tip of a fox's tail sticking out of a hollow tree.

PEOPLE who take cart loads of medicine every day, they imagine they are going to be sick, and the fools upon whom the quacks feed and fatten.

"I have an idea in my head," said a noodle to his companion. "Have you? Then keep it there—it may be some time before you get another."

"I REPEAT," said a person of questionable veracity, "that I am an honest man." "Yes—and how often will you have to repeat it before you believe it yourself?"

IT is said some babies are so small that they can creep into quart measures. But the way in which some adults can walk into such measures is astonishing.

GOLD watches, guitars, pianos, looking glasses beyond a certain size, and dogs are to be placed under schedule A, and taxed, internally and externally.

CHARLES LAMB'S opinion of water cure is, that "it is neither new nor wonderful; for it is as old as the deluge, when, in my opinion, it killed more than it cured."

PRENTICE tells the truth in a nut-shell when he says we are not fighting the Southern States or any other States. We are fighting the rebels. That's all.

A young man will compliment his sweetheart by telling her that her breath has the perfume of roses without being ashamed that his own has the stench of whisky and tobacco.

"JOE, what makes your nose so red?" "Friendship." "Friendship! How do you make that out?" "I've got a friend who is very fond of brandy, and as he is too weak to take it strong, I've constituted myself his taster."

An Irishman in a Telegraph Office.

"An' is this House's telegraph?" asked a Hibernian the other day as he entered the office in the *Traveler* buildings. On being informed that it was, a dialogue ensued, of which the following is as near a verbatim report as our reporter was able to obtain:

Pat—Is Mither House in?
Clerk—No. I attend to business here.
Pat—Och, do ye? Well can ye send to me brother Mick, in New York?

Clerk—Yes. Have you got your message written?
Pat—O, bother! Divil a need of givin' Mick a message in writin', at all at all.—Jist give him this five dollar bill, sure, for to help pay the fine the blackguards put upon him.

Clerk—But we cannot send money by telegraph. Money must go by mail.
Pat—Shure but what 'nd I go buy male for? An' isn't it three pecks of illegit male I have in the house already?

Clerk—No. You don't understand. I mean by post.
Pat—Post is it? In a letter? An' ye can't send it by the telegraph?

Clerk—No. All we can do is, if you have a message, we can send that. That is, we can charge the wire with electricity and make it write in New York whatever you wish.

Pat—Make it right, is it! Well, now, be that, that's the thing entirely. Jist make it right with Mick, and here's the five dollars, avick!

Clerk (slightly vexed).—We can do nothing of the sort! I mean we write—the words you want to say to your brother in New York.

Pat—(scratching his head with a puzzled heir)—If you can do that, jist be after discorsin' wid him soon as ye like!
Clerk—But you must write the message you wish to send upon this bit of paper!

Pat—Och! bad luck to it! I haven't the gift of writin' at all, sure!
(Here the clerk arranges his paper, and prepares to write the message for Pat himself.)

Clerk—What's your brother's name?
Pat—Mick.
Clerk—And what is his other name?
Pat—Same as my own. Sure we're brothers.

Clerk—I know that. But what is he called?
Pat—What is he called? Oh! Well, in the old country they called him "Shillelah Mick," because of the mighty fine taste he had at swingin' that bit of a twig; and many's the sounce he cracked like an old tea-pot, when—

Clerk (exasperated).—I don't care what they called him in Ireland. Give me his other name. It is "Mick" what?
Pat—Och, botheration, no! Mick Watt is my cousin, as lives in the county Kerry, and been dead these five years—heaven rest his soul!

Clerk—Confound it! Can't you tell me your brother's other name? He has one besides Michael hasn't he?
Pat—O, yes! Shure why didn't ye tell me that's what ye wanted before—for faith, as sure's my name is Pat Finnegan you should have been towid the family name of my ancestors, begorra!

Clerk—Ah! Finnegan's the name.
Pat—No, jewel—Mick Finnegan. Divil an R. Finnegan is there in the family, savin' Rory. He is 'listed for a soger.

Clerk proceeds to write a message to "Mick," as dictated by Pat, after which he counts the words in the dispatch, and says: "Here are eighteen words. The first will cost you forty cents, and the others twenty-four, making sixty-four cents in all."

Pat—O bother the first tin works! shure Mick'll never miss 'em. Send the last.
Clerk—We can't do that. You must pay after cents at any rate.

Pat—Sorra a bit can I do that. Shure ye may tell Mick that the reason of his gittin' no message from me, was owing to the occasion of the money it cost, an' that'll explain the reason of his not hearin' from me at all.

(Exit Pat anathematizing the "dirty wire machine of a telegraph;" and followed by a not over friendly ejaculation from the Clerk in attendance.)—*Traveler*.

DEATH OF A GREAT MAN.—When a great man dies, then has the time come for putting us in mind that he was alive. Biographies, sketches, criticisms, characters, anecdotes, reminiscences, issue forth from opened springing fountains; the world, with a passion whetted by impossibility, will yet awhile retain, yet awhile speak with, though only to the unanswering echoes, what it has lost without remedy; thus is the last event of life often the loudest; and real spiritual apparitions (who have been named men), as false, imaginary ones are fabled to do, vanish in thunder.

"Fine feathers make fine birds"—except when applied with tar.

Active Women.

As a rule it may be remarked, that noisy women do much less than they seem to do, and quiet women often do more. But it does not follow that all quiet women are indolent, and work only on compulsion.—Indolent women have their good points, and one of the most valuable of these is their quietness. It is a great luxury in domestic life; but perhaps it is a luxury which is too expensive for a poor man, unless he can get it combined with activity. The wife of a poor man, no matter what his profession or position, ought to be active in the best sense of the word. She ought to rule her house with diligence, but make no boast of it. Her managing powers ought to be confined to her own house, and never be sent out to interfere with her neighbors. Her activity should be kept healthy, by being exercised on important matters chiefly, though the trifles must not be disregarded. A woman who will make herself unhappy because the usual custom of cleaning the house on Friday is, on a particular occasion, inevitably infringed, is inadequate to perceive the difference between the lesser and the greater. Some active women, who pride themselves on their housekeeping, seem to forget that the object in keeping a house is, that human beings may be accommodated in it; the sole idea seems to be this, that the object of keeping a house is that the house may be kept in a certain form and order, and to the maintenance of this form and order they sacrifice the comfort the house was established to secure. Such active women are pests to society, because they want sense to direct and control their energies.

A HEARTY LAUGH.—After all, what a capital, jolly, honest, jolly, glorious thing a good laugh is? What a tonic! What a digester! What an exerciser of evil spirits! Better than a walk before breakfast or a nap after dinner. How it shuts the mouth of malice, and opens the brow of kindness! Whether it discovers the gums of infancy or age, the grinders of folly or the pearls of beauty; whether it racks the sides and deforms the countenance of vulgarity, or dimples the visage, or moistens the eye of refinement in all its phases; and on all faces, conforting, relaxing, overwhelming, convulsing, throwing the human form into the happy, shaking and quaking of idiocy, and turning the human countenance into something appropriate to Bill Button's transformation—under every circumstance and everywhere, a laugh is a glorious thing. Like a "thing of beauty," it is a "joy forever." There is no remorse in it. It leaves nothing—except in the sides, and that goes off. Even a single, unparticipated laugh is a great affair to witness. But it is seldom single. It is more infectious than scarlet fever. You cannot gravely contemplate a laugh. If there is one laugher, and one witness, there are forthwith two laughers. And so on. The convulsion is propagated like sound. What a thing it is when it becomes epidemic.

A KEEN ANSWER.—In the days of Queen Elizabeth a scholar happened to be in disgrace with Her Majesty, but he managed to secure the good offices of one who was in high favor at the Court, with a view to regain his position. The time arrived when he was to be presented to the Queen again. "Well," said the Queen, "I understand you are a great scholar. Shall I ask you one question?" "Anything madame," said he, "that lies within the compass of my understanding to resolve you, I will." "How many vowels are there?" said the Queen. "That, your Majesty," replied the scholar, "is easy known; but as you have asked me I must needs answer. Five." "Which of these five could best be spared?" "Not any of them, madame," replied he, "without damaging the language."—"Then," retorted Her Majesty, "I will tell you differently. We, for our part, can best spare 'e' (you)."

ELOQUENCE.—It is a great pity that the press cannot afford to have reporters constantly in court to gather up and preserve the sweet gems of literature, that often fall from the lips of lawyers in summing up cases to the jury. One specimen: "Gentlemen of the jury, if I stole that watch, shouldn't I have carried it off in my pocket; wouldn't you, gentlemen?—wouldn't any consummate fool have done so?"—*Janesville Standard*.

FIRST IMPRESSION OF A RAILROAD.—Dr. Ruff, speaking of the railroads that have recently been constructed from Calcutta, says that some of the old, incredulous Brahmins in Bengal, when persuaded to be eye-witnesses, have been seen knocking their foreheads in a sort of agony, and exclaiming, as the mighty train rolled swiftly along, that India herself, their god of the firmament, had no such carriage as that.

Instead of saying things to make people stare and wonder, say what will withhold them hereafter from wondering and staring. This is philosophy; to make remote things tangible, common things extensively useful, useful things extensively common, and to leave the least necessary for the last. I have always a suspicion of sonorous sentences.

Why is a man making love to a married woman, like a sheriff levying on the wrong man's goods? Because he is the victim of a misplaced attachment.