Democrat and Sentinel.

THE BLESSINGS OF GOVERNMENT, LIKE THE DEWS OF HEAVEN, SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED ALIKE, UPON THE HIGH AND THE LOW, THE RICH AND THE POOR.

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...ron Bird---An Allegory.

...T. S. W. PATTEN, U. S. A.

...n bird which built its nest
...a corn tree;
...the fastest of the West
...than could the sea.
...ong wolf, both beak and breast,
...a bright could be.

...ous fat purple bird
...again,
...s was averred,
...notes of music rare,
...ar had never heard
...ions of man.

...ed declare,
...ers tell,
...the air,
...the secret spell,
...ers,
...and swift.

...OIL.
...came today,
...to know,
...that way,
...a blow,
...Friday.

...IONS
...Orders

...ad of
...IN.

...ENTS
...ES.

...said,
...was perfect,
...what the arrow says?"
...heart
...pierced his side,
...with his heart,

...RE
...S.

...ANCES,
...INDS,

...ib

The Gleaner.

...MISS M. E. MITFORD.

...ill been tracked, and found
...ected." Shakspeare.

...e to my native village, after an absence of many years from relatives and friends. Thus thought, myself a poor-looking old man, ...leaning over the gate of a ...and where field in the bright, ...afternoon. "One," ex... ...his musings took a turn of ...and broke unconsciously into ...somewhat pettishly her shady, ...ing to her, that as she is ...ly skilled in ...spelled her, spelling! In ...was the little learned ...from the fire-place. A ...ed Lord! What shall we ...Only look at that bird ...seems given like a reminder, her ...and he has stuck out with ...ing to her face, if that be its ...ably manages her glasses and ...with a bell upon her table ...whose dangling above her ...Miss Collins, as she calls her... ...ed to answer to the name of ...twenty years agone—re... ...thanks to acknowledge me! ...for that she had seen me! ...cheat and impostor! wondered ...opulence in attempting to pass ...for her dear uncle, Michael Norris! ...with the stocks and the ...justice and the jail! ...sure! She whom I rescued ...misery and starvation, from living ...woman, half maid, with the ...elegant clear-starcher in Bel... ...—whom I set up in that very ...—perched upon her throne, the ...in the bar! purchased the lease, ...change, the good will! paid her first ...rent, stocked the cellars, clapped a ...pound note in her hand!—And ...to my home, old and lame, sick ...ed, she reviles me as a vagabond ...pastor, and tells me to be thank... ...her tender-heartedness and com... ...that she does not send for the ...able to carry me to jail! Liar that ...base, ungrateful, perjured liar! for ...serve me,—ay, as well as I knew her. ...I'll be glad to be no more altered ...years that have changed her from a ...girl of twenty-five to a bloated wo... ...of three-and-forty, than I, in those ...years, with all my griefs!

...Then her brother—laugh! It mad... ...me to think of their baseness!—her ...sister, whom I educated, and appren... ...ed, finding him money afterwards to ...a share partnership with old Jones ...thriving linen-draper. He, indeed, did not pretend to deny that I might be his uncle:—but grant that I were, what claim had I upon his charity more than any other starving wretch? What was I to him? He pitied me, heaven knew! but what could I expect from him? Oh the smooth-speaking, soft-spoken knave! with his pity and his charity! Hypocrite in look and word! His tone was as gentle as if he had been bidding me welcome to bed and board for my whole life long. What a fawning parasite that would have been now if I had accosted him like a rich man. Well! there is some virtue in these rags, since they teach false tongues to speak truth. Then came my cousin Anthony, whose daughter I portioned, whose runaway son I clothed and sent to sea. And this Anthony is now a great merchman—a rich miser, who could buy up half the country. What said he? Why he was poor himself—the scoundrel! nobody knew how poor, and had been forced to make a rule to give nothing to beggars; ay, he called me a beggar! I might go to the Union, he said; that was the fittest place for me. So the Union! the workhouse! Oh, the precious rascal! The son of my father's benefactor—brought up in my father's house—worth a hundred thousand pounds, and would have sent me to the workhouse—he, his only living kinsman! Oh, this world! this world! Then—for I was resolved to try them all—I sought out my old schoolfellow, Nicholas Hume, the spendthrift, whom I bailed in my young days, when little richer than himself, and saved from prison by paying his debts. What was his gratitude? Why he, forsooth, had never heard my name. Michael Norris! Who was Michael Norris?—Oh, they knew me well enough twenty years ago, when I returned from the West Indies a rich man, husband of a wealthy Creole, master of flourishing plantations, to visit my early haunts, help my poor relations—I found them all in distress, some way or other—and shake hands with my old friends. Nobody had forgotten *them*. But now that I had come back a ragged cripple, houseless and friendless"—And the old man paused, and lifted his wretched hat from his thin gray hairs, and passed his tattered hands reliefover his furrowed brow, with an air that proved that he was as much oppressed by mental suffering, by indignation, and disappointment, as by the sultry heat of an August noon.

"There are none left now," thought old Michael to himself, as, exhausted by his vehemence, he sank into a sudden mood, "none left for me to apply to now, except the three orphan children of my poor nephew William Leslie, the cousin of those hard-hearted Collinses, and their mother—and they, I fear, are themselves in great want and great trouble. He, lately dead, after a series of undeserved misfortunes and a long and wasting disease; and she, working hard as ever woman did work to keep herself and her family out of the workhouse—that Union to whose comforts my precious cousin Anthony so kindly consigns me. Poor things, they may well deny any knowledge of me, for they never saw me: and I have had a good sample of the slight impression that benefits conferred leave behind them! William was only eighteen when I left England and returned to Jamaica after my last visit. A fine, frank-hearted lad he was! I remember wishing to take him with me. But my poor sister would not part with him. She had married again after the death of her first husband, William's father, and a wretched match she made: for this second husband proved to be a habitual drunkard, always half mad when intoxicated, who broke out at last into desperate frenzy, and, but for my interposition, would have murdered the poor boy. I seem to see the struggle now," thought the old man, closing his eyes: "he flinging himself upon William with a table-knife, and I rushing between them just soon enough to receive the blade in my arm. I bear the mark of the wound still. The madman was sent to an asylum, and there soon died. And my poor sister, well off for her station, could not part from this only son. He was a fine lad, was William, spirited and generous: and when she also died, he was already attached to the girl whom he afterwards married. I helped them too, for I loved the boy; I helped on that match, for it was one of sincere affection, and they were in a way to earn a handsome competence: there must have been some imprudence, or great ill-luck, to have them reduced to such poverty." So ran the train of the old cripple's reverie. "I never suspected it: he never wrote to me: and I, engaged in my own affairs, and with children then of my own—— Well, I will see them, however. They are in the field gleaning. So said their neighbor. Yes! This is the field! There they are. I'll see them," thought Michael Norris, "though it is probable that they too will know nothing of me." And, opening the gate, the old man limped slowly across the furrows, and began gathering the scattered ears of corn in his withered hand.

We have said *the field*, although after passing the gate which admitted him between the two high hedges that bounded it on the northern side, the wide expanse from which the wheat had just been carried, assumed the appearance rather of a large open ridge of arable land, bordered by the high road, and terminated by a distant village, than of the small wooded enclosures so common in the midland counties. A pretty scene it was, as it lay before him, bathed in the sunshine: and a lovely group was that in which his attention was immediately directed. A pale young woman, whose regular and beautiful features received additional interest from her close widow's cap, stood before him, holding a fine infant in her arms; a very pretty girl of twelve or thirteen was contrasting a tuft of wheat ears below the baby's eyes, smiling herself at the smile she excited, while her little brother clung to the mother's petticoat in momentary fear of two high-fed dogs attending a gentleman and lady riding slowly along the road.

The poor cripple drew back and sat down under a clump of maple and hawthorn, gay with the purple wild vetch, the white bind weed, and the pretty clematis, known by the still prettier name of "the traveler's joy:" whilst the riding-party called off their dogs, spoke graciously to the child and his mother, and passed slowly out of sight. As they left her, Mrs Leslie, for she it was, approached the old man, to replace her infant in his cradle, recited in the fragrant shade of some overhanging hazel-stems just beside his rude seat. Struck by the evidence of poverty, sickness, and sorrow afforded by his tattered apparel and his wrinkled yet venerable countenance, she took up a pitcher which stood by the cradle, and, with the kindness which the very poor so often show to each other, and a remark upon the heat of the day, offered him a small cup full of the milk which formed the contents of the jug. He took it with a trembling hand, and thanked her with an emotion which our readers will comprehend, but which at once surprised and interested its object.

"Your name is Leslie?" asked he, as, after returning the cup with thanks and blessings, he made room for her beside him on the thymy bank.

"Your name is Leslie?"

"Margaret Leslie. It is so."

"The wife of William Leslie?"

"His widow. Ah, me! His widow!" sighed she within sigh. "The widowed mother of three children." "Michael" added she, as the boy crept near her, "take you the milk pail home to mother and carry a cup full to your sister, and bring what children she and you have gathered to my little heap."

"Michael!" echoed the old man, "your husband's name was William! How came you to call *his* son Michael? but the name belongs to your family, perhaps—your father, or some favorite brother."

"No," replied the widow, "it was for a different reason. A very dear kinsman of my husband's bore that name, and in token of love and gratitude to him, and in fulfillment of an old promise, so our only son was christened."

"I remember," muttered the cripple to himself. "I remember William said that his first boy should bear my name, and I think he wrote to that effect after the child was born: but the letter must have arrived at that time of misery." Then raising himself, and turning to the gentle creature whom a feeling of unusual interest still detained at his side, he added aloud, "I do remember now that William Leslie had an uncle called Michael Norris, but what peculiar cause of gratitude——"

"What cause?" interrupted Mrs. Leslie: "a thousand causes: from a mere infant, when I have heard my husband say that he gave him the first shilling he ever possessed—that kind uncle, absent or present, was his good genius. He insisted upon his being sent to Belford school; paid himself for masters whom his guardians thought superfluous; rescued him from the frantic frenzy of his step-father; saved his life at the most imminent peril of his own from the furious assaults of that wretched madman; placed him in the paper-mill, which, but for the rash speculations of his partner, would have been not merely a comfortable income for himself, but an affluent provision for his family: and, last and dearest kindness, when William, with his characteristic generosity, loved a poor girl, the portionless orphan of a naval officer, when interested connections and officious friends all opposed the union, did not he, from across the wide ocean, send himself not merely his approbation of the destined marriage, but a portion for the destitute bride? I never saw——" continued Mrs. Leslie, in a lower tone than that which had been dictated by her enthusiastic recollection of her benefactor's goodness; "but night and morning I have prayed for him, and night and morning do my poor children join in those prayers: and my dear husband, amongst his latest words——"

"Did he too pray for the uncle who seemed to have forgotten him?" asked the old man, his voice half-stifled with emotion. "Look, Margaret," added he stripping up his sleeve and showing a deep scar extending diagonally across his left arm: "this scar was received from the knife with which his furious and frantic step-father was pursuing William Leslie. I am Michael Norris." You will not disclaim to acknowledge the cripple who comes to your door hungry and ragged. Here too," said he, taking from his pocket a bundle of papers, "are characters that you well know."

Tearfully, yet joyfully, the warm-hearted and grateful Margaret returned the embraces of her venerable kinsman, presented her three children to him one by one, and replied to his questions as to their change of circumstance.

It needed few words to tell the story. Nothing is more rapid than a descent. The rolling of a stone down hill is a true type of falling fortune. Taking advantage of a long illness with which William Leslie was afflicted, his partner engaged in desperate speculations. They failed. The rash speculator absconded, and William remained, a bankrupt without friend or resource. Honest to the last, his wife resigned her small settlement to satisfy the creditors. His debts being paid, he had but a few hundred pounds left, and while he retained his health had supported his family by the most persevering industry; but a fever, occasioned by over-exertion, had come on: his constitution, impaired by anxiety and labor, had been unable to resist the attack, and since that period the wife who had been the faithful partner of his cares and his toils, had at least so far succeeded as to maintain her children without the assistance or charity, whether public or private.

"Why not have written to me when the bankruptcy took place?" inquired the uncle.

"Alas, dear sir! we had before heard of that terrible hurricane in which——"

"In which," said the old man, filling up with stern conjecture the outline passed over from a mixture of delicacy and sympathy had arrested Margaret. Leslie's words—"in which the plantation where I resided was laid waste, my house levelled with the ground, and my wife with four hopeful children buried in the ruins! In striving to rescue them this night,"——striking the withered limb with a hazel-twig——"this thigh was broken. I owe my preservation to the gratitude of an emancipated negro: but for months, for years, all nature was a blank before me! I have sometimes wondered how I could have survived such a blow—for what purpose I was spared! The deadly wound was sinful, and finds its rebuke, its theirs merciful rebuke, in this blissful hour. You heard of my losses then, dear Margaret? Poor William heard of them?"

"We were sure that something must have gone amiss, from receiving no reply to the letter which announced the birth of our boy, and claimed your promise of standing godfather to his christening.—William did not like to write again upon such an occasion; it would have seemed like encroaching upon your too generous spirit. But when the news of that awful hurricane arrived, and Nicholas Hume and the Collinses made inquiries in London and ascertained that your plantation had indeed been amongst those laid waste, then your silence was too well explained. I heard this sad news first, for it arrived during the dreadful illness which prostrated my husband's bankruptcy. And when he regained so much breathing-time after his own misfortunes as to ask news of you, no tidings could be obtained: all trace of you seemed lost. Oh that he had lived to see this day! His will be done! But oh that my poor husband had but lived to see once more the kinsman he loved so well!"

The old man pressed her hand in speechless emotion, and Margaret, smiling through her tears went on:—

"You must live with us, dear uncle, and we shall wait upon you and work for you, and be happy together—as happy as we can be without *him*—after all. My Annie is a good girl—oh such a good girl—oh such a good girl! and pretty, is she not, dear uncle? and poor Michael, your namesake, is a boy of a thousand. We have had much to be thankful for. Farmer Rogers, the overseer, whose books my husband kept (little Michael keeps them now, as well, the farmer says, as his father did,) supplies us with milk twice a day. Mrs. Lascelles, the rector's wife, employs Annie and me constantly in needle-work for her large family; and if we can but keep our pretty cottage—if we can but keep the cottage at whose porch poor William planted the honeysuckle and the China rose, and the vine which now half covers the thatch—that cottage where we worked and wept together, and where he died the death of the righteous—if we can but live together there, within the sight of the turf that covers his dear remains, I should ask for nothing better on this side the grave."

The widow's tears flowed afresh, and once again the old man pressed her hand.

"Is there any doubt of your retaining this beloved habitation, dear Margaret? And does my coming cause that doubt?"

"Oh no! no! dear uncle, not in the slightest degree. The cause of doubt is that we have no lease, and that Miss Collins, as she calls herself, poor William's cousin, wants it for some purpose or other; people say with some view of marrying. But this is idle talk—village gossip. What is certain is, that she wishes to take it, and is willing to give two pounds a year more rent than I now give or can afford to give. If our old landlord, Mr. Godfrey, had stayed, he and lady Elizabeth had promised that I should remain: but the hall, and the village, and the whole estate are sold, and the new lord of the manor is coming this evening. Hark, you may hear the bells ringing even now. Mr. Godfrey and Lady Elizabeth intend staying a few days at the rectory; you saw them ride by with their dogs: they have promised to speak in my favor to the new landlords: they mentioned it even now, and the good rector and his excellent lady will second my petition; still"——

"Be of good cheer, Margaret. Even if you should leave your pretty cottage, I would wager something"—— The old man checked himself, and resumed in an indifferent tone, "Who is this new lord of the manor? What is his name?"

"The property was purchased by a Mr. Price; but he is understood to be an agent, and I have not heard the name of the real proprietor, who is said to be an elderly gentleman, and so rich that he will hardly be tempted to turn an old tenant from her cottage for so trifling an addition of rent. Never theless"——

"Once again, Margaret, be of good heart!" reiterated her uncle.

"That a mistake exists in the name; the farmers and their sons on horseback; the cottagers, women and children, on foot. Ought I to join them? I have no shame in honest labor, but I do dread from meeting the scorn of those purse-proud kindred who"—and to our Margaret's tears fell fast. "Ought I to be there, dear uncle? I will go or stay as you direct."

"Go Margaret! Go, and fear nothing. Gather up your flowers, the fine whose presence thought was the greatest flower queen: the wheat-ears and the cradle with its crowing babe—blessings on its dear head! I will not shame you by these unseemly rags: but will rest a while under the friendly shade of the hazel, while you return home and prepare for the procession. Be sure that you fail not. We shall meet again soon, dear ones. For the present farewell."

And something there was about the old man, ragged, sick, and lame that he was, that Margaret found it impossible to disobey. So, heartened up, she knew not why, she easily have felt, without being able to give the feeling its true name, the mingled power of sympathy and appreciation to comfort and to cheer,) she called about her her blooming children and departed: Annie and herself bearing the cradle between them, and the boy laden with the gleanings of the day.

The setting sun gleamed brightly between noble elms that formed the beautiful avenue to Curston Hall, gilding the rugged branches and turning into pendent emeralds the leaves of the branches which met across the wide carriage road, met and interlaced in a lengthened archway that might well have suggested the rich luxuriancies of a cathedral aisle in the days of Gothic architecture. The village bells pealed again, horses pranced, flags waved, the children of the parish schools strewed the gaudy flowers of early autumn; and as the carriage of the new lord of the manor rolled between the jolly bolers to the grey old hall, a quaint irregular structure of Elizabeth's or James's days with a tame peacock running about it on the stone balustrade, a large old English spaniel basking on the steps, and the tenants in their holiday apparel grouped around the porch, an artist, whether painter or poet, might have envied the accident which produced an arrangement so felicitously picturesque.

Something of this feeling, however unperceived or ungnessed by herself, mingled with the natural emotions of curiosity and interest in our friend Margaret's bosom, as, standing humbly apart between her two elder children, with her infant in her arms under a large sycamore, she gazed around upon the scene, and perceived, gaily adorned in the extreme of the country fashion, the rival candidate for her beloved cottage—the buxom landlady of the Red Lion,—surrounded by the unfriendly kindred of her late husband. Neither Margaret nor her William had ever applied for assistance to these people; and yet she knew instinctively that some from pride and some from shame, felt the silent reproach of her unassisted poverty and her blameless life—that all wished her absence, and would contribute as far as in them lay to turn her from her home: and in spite of the encouraging influence of her lately-known kinsmans cheering forebodings, her heart sunk within her as the door of the carriage was thrown open. An elderly gentleman, very neatly dressed, but pallid, emaciated, and lame, was assisted by his servant up the two low steps that led to the porch. Having ascended them with some difficulty, he turned around, took off his hat, bowed with a gracious smile to the assembly, and then paused, as if in search of some one whom he expected to see.

The effect of this apparition was a start of surprise and horror from the pretty landlady, seldom equalled on the stage or off; her brother the haberdasher, who had just flourished his hat preparatory to the general cheer, let it fall in dismay, scarce repressed: cousin Anthony, the miserable miser, smothered a groan: and Nicholas Hume, in spite of his consummate impudence, fairly stole away.

What in the meanwhile did our friends in their humble nook under the sycamore? Little Michael danced for joy: Annie clapped her hands: and poor Margaret, for the twentieth time during the last six hours, burst into tears—tears this time, however, of unmingled joy.

"Mrs. Leslie! Margaret! my dear niece?" cried Michael or, as we may now call him, Mr. Norris, advancing to meet her: "to you alone of all my relations now living, do I owe any account of my motives for coming amongst you as I have done to-day. With the rest of my kindred I have done for ever. But I also owe some explanation to my tenants and future neighbors. You all know that I left England about thirty years ago, a poor and friendless lad. I returned nearly thirty years afterwards, with riches honestly obtained, the happy husband of a wealthy and excellent woman, and the father of four hopeful children. I came to Corston: found my relations, some indigent, some comfortably situated: did what good I could amongst them, and went back to Jamaica, with the view at some future day of placing my sons at the head of my plantations in that island, and coming home to my native village. A hurricane passed over the estate where I lived, destroying my dwelling, my wife, my children, and almost myself. For many years I was dead to the world: but care had been taken of the large property that remained to me, and also by, God's mercy, I was restored to health, mental and bodily, I found myself rich indeed, so far as money was concerned—richer than ever, but in the blessed charities of life most poor—a childless, destitute, broken old man. I knew that a report had gone abroad that I was ruined by the hurricane, and resolved to prove the relations I had left in England, by coming amongst them in seeming poverty. I have done so, and the experiment has answered well. And now, my dearest niece, I need not tell you that the cottage is yours; but for the second time to-day I throw myself upon your charity. You will not abandon me because I happen to be rich? You will never have the heart to do so. You will remember your promise that we should live together: and come with those dear children, to brighten and gladden the old Hall."

☞ A pedlar being asked by a long, spindle shanked wag, if he had any tin ear-mulls, answered: "No, but I have a pair of candle moulds that will just fit you."

☞ Why should Africa rightfully be considered to rank first of the continents? Because it bears the palm