

spring up in greater luxuriance and beauty, and yield a sweeter perfume from the rankness which surrounds them, so do these virtues show with more grace and attractiveness from the hot-bed of corruption in which they have been engendered. But there has been a sad falling off in America since the last war, which brought in the democratic party with General Jackson. America, if she would wish her present institutions to continue, must avoid war; the best security for her present form of government existing another half century, is a state of tranquillity and peace; but of that hereafter. As for the party at present in power, all I can say in its favour is, that there are three clever gentlemen in it—Mr. Van Buren, Mr. Poinsett, and Mr. Forsyth. There may be more, but I know so little of them, that I must be excused if I do not name them, which otherwise I should have great pleasure in doing.”

The following is worthy of perusal, as presenting an enlightened view of the evils naturally flowing from the universal struggle for political advancement, which is a necessary concomitant of democratic institutions:—

“Although in a democracy the highest stations and preferments are open to all, more directly than they may be under any other form of government, still these prizes are but few and insufficient, compared with the number of total blanks which must be drawn by the ambitious multitude. It is, indeed, a stimulus to ambition (and a matter of justice, when all men are pronounced equal,) that they all should have an equal chance of raising themselves by their talents and perseverance; but when so many competitors are permitted to enter the field, few can arrive at the goal, and the mass are doomed to disappointment. However fair, therefore, it may be to admit all to the competition, certain it is that the competition cannot add to the happiness of a people, when we consider the feelings of bitterness and ill-will naturally engendered among the disappointed multitude.

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Wealth can give some importance, but wealth in a democracy gives an importance which is so common to many that it loses much of its value; and when it has been acquired, it is not sufficient for the restless ambition of the American temperament, which will always spurn wealth for power. The effects therefore of a democracy are, first to raise an inordinate ambition among the people, and then to cramp the very ambition which it has raised; and as I may comment upon hereafter, it appears as if this ambition of the people, *individually* checked by the nature of their institutions, becomes, as it were, concentrated and collected into a focus in upholding and contemplating the success and increase of power in Federal Government. Thus, has been produced a species of demoralizing reaction; the disappointed *units* to a certain degree satisfying themselves with any advance in the power and importance of the whole Union, wholly regardless of the means by which such increase may have been obtained.”

The following compliment to American enterprise is deserving of record:—

“The American government have paid every attention to their inland waters. The harbors, light-houses, piers, &c., have all been built at the expense of government, and every precaution has been taken to make the navigation of the Lakes as safe as possible.

“In speaking of the new towns rising so fast in

America, I wish the reader to understand that, if he compares them with the country towns of the same population in England, he will not do them justice. In the smaller towns in England you can procure but little, and you have to send to London for any thing good: in the larger towns, such as Norwich, &c., you may procure most things; but, still, luxuries must usually be obtained from the metropolis. But in such places as Buffalo and Cleveland, every thing is to be had that you can procure at New York or Boston. In those two towns on Lake Erie are stores better furnished, and handsomer, than any shops at Norwich, in England; and you will find in either of them, articles for which, at Norwich, you would be obliged to send to London. It is the same thing at almost every town in America, with which communication is easy. Would you furnish a house in one of them, you will find every article of furniture—carpets, stoves, grates, marble chimney pieces, pier-glasses, pianos, lamps, candelabras, glass, china, &c., in twice the quantity, and in greater variety, than at any provincial town in England.”

The gallant tourist confesses himself, to have been much pleased with Upper Canada, considering it, “on the whole, the finest portion of America.” As we cannot, however, follow him wherever fancy led him, we will pass over his visit to the sister Province, and rest a moment beside the cataracts Niagara, whose mighty waters appear to have awakened graver thoughts than usual with Captain Marryat:

I had intended to have passed the whole day at the Falls: but an old gentleman whose acquaintance I had made in the steam-boat on Lake Ontario, asked me to go to church; and as I felt he would be annoyed if I did not, I accompanied him to a Presbyterian meeting not far from the Falls, which sounded like distant thunder. The sermon was upon temperance—a favourite topic in America; and the minister rather quaintly observed, that “alcohol was not sealed by the hand of God.” It was astonishing to me that he did not allude to the Falls, point out that the seal of God was there, and show how feeble was the voice of man when compared to the thunder of Almighty so close at hand. But the fact was, he had been accustomed to preach every Sunday with the Falls roaring in his ear, and (when the wind was in a certain quarter), with the spray damping the leaves of his sermon; he, therefore, did not feel as we did, and, no doubt, thought his sermon better than that from the God of the elements.

Yes, it is through the elements that the Almighty has ever deigned to commune with man, or to execute his supreme will, whether it has been by the wild waters to destroy an impious race—by the fire hurried upon the doomed cities—by seas divided, that the chosen might pass through them—by the thunders on Sinai’s Mount when His laws were given to man—by the pillar of fire or the gushing rock, or by the rushing of mighty winds. And it is still through the elements that the Almighty speaks to man, to warn, to terrify, to chasten; to raise him up to wonder, to praise, and adore. The forked and blinding lightning which, with the rapidity of thought, dissolves the union between the body and the soul; the pealing thunder, announcing that the bolt has sped; the fierce tornado, sweeping away everything in its career, like a besom of wrath; the howling storm; the mountain waves; the earth quaking, and yawning wide, in a second overthrowing the work and pride of centuries, and burying