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REMINISCENCES OF PATRICK HENRY.

From my earliest childhood I had been accustomed to hear of the eloquence of Patrick Henry. On this subject there existed but one opinion in the country. The power of his eloquence was felt equally by the learned and the unlearned. No man who ever heard him speak, on any important occasion, could fail to admit his uncommon power over the minds of his hearers. The occasions on which he made his greatest efforts have been recorded by Mr. Wirt, in his *Life of Henry*. What I propose in this brief article is to mention only what I observed myself more than half a century ago.

Being then a young man, just entering on a profession in which good speaking was very important, it was natural for me to observe the oratory of celebrated men. I was anxious to ascertain the true secret of their power; or what it was which enabled them to sway the minds of hearers, almost at their will.

In executing a mission from the Synod of Virginia, in the year 1794, I had to pass through the county of Prince Edward, where Mr. Henry then resided. Understanding that he was to appear before the Circuit Court, which met in that

states of the Union, in all the institutions of social life; in agriculture, commerce, the arts, education, in a word, in all the forms of enterprise. When the Thirteen Colonies achieved their independence, good old George III. thought that he had lost the brightest jewel in his crown. Never did mortal make a greater mistake. The United States are at this moment worth to England a hundredfold more than they ever could have been if they had not broken the tie which bound them to her throne. Managed as Canada has been, is, and will be, so long as she holds the position of a colony, the energies of her people can never have free and full scope; they never can feel that they stand on the same level with their fellow subjects at home; their most important officers will be sent to them from abroad. So with all the other dependencies of the empire. And what after all is the benefit to Great Britain? The costly and barren honour of being a monarchy upon whose possessions the sun never sets.

It would extend this article to an undue length, if we should dwell upon the other points of contrast between ancient and modern colonies. The subject possesses little practical interest to us as Americans, because the policy of our government and the nature of our institutions are alike anti-colonial. We cannot have, we do not desire any such dependencies. Wherever Americans go, they carry along with them the principles of self-government; in whatever regions they may establish themselves, it is not as colonists, but as the founders of new states.

THE WORKING MAN'S AIM.

I have often wished, when I have found myself suddenly overhauled by a gang of roaring boys from the Dry Dock or the Engine-Works on the East river, careering down Chatham street or falling into Broadway, that I could have

their patient ear long enough to say a few words about matters which might do them service. But if so grave a person should come in upon them, amidst their roistering, he would have more of their scoffs than their attention. I have perhaps an overweening admiration for the muscular development and high daring of a bold, dauntless, athletic workman. To see them in the melée of a fire, where their strong points are brought into full play on the side of humanity, or even to observe them in the ranks of our army, is awakening to hope for one's country. But alas! alas! by hundreds and by thousands they are going to ruin; and this chiefly because they set so low a mark in life. It is not the making of a fortune, that I would hold before them; though the way is open to this, and though dissipation and riot are pitfalls in the way. There are better prizes than this, and prizes offered freely to every journeyman and every apprentice in the land; intellectual and moral prizes, inseparably connected with their ultimate happiness. Let no young man say, this is none of my business. As the old playbook says, 'Every thing is my business that belongs to my race.' They are my fellow men and fellow countrymen, and when I see them going post-haste to ruin, I have a right to be in earnest to stop them in the descent. It is an instinctive impulse. Why does a noble fellow plunge into the dock to pluck out a drowning stranger? Why does he even risk something to save a generous horse from rushing headlong over a precipice? When I look at our fine young men of the productive classes, who sustain so large a part of life's burdens by the power of their muscle and the dexterity of their hand, and who have such capacities and such temptations, I own I am prompted—not to flatter, not to fawn on them, as demagogues and social reformers do—but to tell them their faults and point out their dangers.

What the young working-man needs is a high aim. Better aim high, even if you miss. But the most have no aim at all, except that which is barely above the animal instincts.

Such a being was assuredly not made to eat, to drink, to sleep, to grow, to rest, to avoid bodily pain; in other words, he was made for something higher than a horse, cow or dog. The unbridled mirth and indulgence of licentious evenings and nights is only a degree higher. The brutes indeed cannot laugh, blaspheme; or get drunk; but need argue that the creature named Man was made for more than this? It would touch the feelings of an ingenious mechanic to see a beautiful steam-engine driven beyond its strength, or applied to some base purpose, such as cleansing out a common sewer. But this prostitution of a fine mechanism is the merest nothing, when compared with the abuse of a spiritual and immortal creature.

Pride is never right; but there is a feeling sometimes called by that name which is really a proper sense of the dignity of manhood. This feeling may be lawfully appealed to, in the minds of young men, beginning life. Exercised in a right direction it will cause the youth, who has not a dollar that he can call his own, to resolve most solemnly that he will try for a prize which is beyond all that dollars can buy, were they all the dollars of Girard and Astor. In America, certainly, if not elsewhere, though hinderances may exist, and some mortifications may depress, 'a man's a man for a' that.' And every day we are seeing before our eyes cases to show that the genuine man—he who deserves the name—may break his way through all the obstacles. We need not go to such cases as those of Thomas Ewing, or Elihu Burritt. Where is the town or village, in which men are not found who have risen to the post of universal honour and wide usefulness, by intelligence, industry, temperance, public spirit, and benevolent principle?

In this sense, no young man ought to be willing to sit on the lowest round of the ladder. And the way to rise is to stick to regular business; to be great in his own line; to shun every alliance and every practice which offends the wise and good; and above all to look every moment beyond the poor rewards of the present life. Let a young man feel

what the soul is which he carries within him, and he will spurn the baits which are held out by vice. He will regard the comrade who tempts him to idle or vicious indulgence, with as indignant a warmth as if one sought to pick his pocket. He will never be content with his present attainment, in mental or moral pursuit. He will love to believe, that there is that in him which is not to be all spent on the manual arts and slavish toil of his outward calling. These employments indeed are needful, profitable, invaluable to the country, and truly honourable. None but a conceited fool will be ashamed of them ; and the meanest of blockheads is he who is above his business. Yet the business does not, and cannot use up all the faculty, all the energy, all the soul, that is in an immortal being. Think of this, young man ! There is vastly more within you than you seem to have found out. If you did but know it, pinions are springing, with which you may wing your flight to a higher region.

There are lands, I know, where the man of toil is held down all his life ; it takes all his strength, all his days, to keep soul and body together. Such a land, blessed be God, is not ours ! The most industrious may have hours which are their own ; and these are the hours which youth of foresight will deliberately invest, as the miser invests his gains. Begin soon, yes, begin now, to live for something more than meat and drink. Begin to learn something, that your minds may open and enlarge. It is impossible for you to comprehend, before you have made the trial, what a pleasure there is in new knowledge. It is like a new sense. It is opening your eyes on a new world. It is coming out of the coal-mine in which you have lived so long, to the sights and sounds of the upper region, and to the glories of day. Find me, if you can, among hundreds who have thus emerged, one who is willing to go back into ignorance.

Let a friend take you by the hand, and utter a word of counsel, which cannot but be disinterested. If you wish to assert your place in society ; if you wish to establish the

dignity of honest labour: if you wish to gain something more than the reputation of being a clever workman; if you wish to ascend to a higher level; if you wish to possess new delights of which you now have no more notion than the blind have of colours; if you wish to add a serene glory to your fireside, and redouble the sacred joys of love and wedlock; if you wish to have friends worth the name, and the happiness which comes from making others happy; then **AIM HIGH.**

If with God's blessing, you put yourself under a discipline which shall carry on the training of your mind and heart towards their perfection, you will be only doing that for which you were created; and in any other course happiness is impossible. It is infinitely right. You know it, you feel it to be so. Something within confirms every word I have said. A divine sanction is added to the truths which are so familiar. By all the reverence you owe to Him who made you for himself, I charge you to awake and set about it.

C. Q.

TIME'S SCYTHER.

Time once knocked at an old man's door,
(A very old man—he was just five score,)
Glass in hand, which he turned once more,
As he turned it a hundred years before.
He had laid down his scythe,
And the old man trembled in voice and limb,
As he slowly opened the door to him,
Then laughed as he peered o'er his spectacle's rim:
Such a laugh! 'Twas a very curious whim—
So old and so blithe.