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A Few Thoughts on Slavery.*

Congratulating our readers upon the fact that the Nebraska bill has passed the Senate by a majority so overwhelming as to give assurance of its ultimate triumph, we proceed to redeem the promise given in the March number of the Messenger, of adding a few thoughts on the moral, social and political aspects of slavery. We enter upon the task the more willingly because participating in the satisfaction of the South, and of nearly the whole country, at the prospect of the removal from the national theatre of the discussion of this irritating topic, we can speak of anti-slavery and its agitators without undue exasperation, and with only a pardonable pity and contempt.

As in our former article we took the speech of Mr. Chase as our text, we propose now to take the oration (for such we suppose we must call it) of Mr. Sumner as the basis of our concluding remarks. We cannot, in sincerity, say that we intend thereby a compliment to Mr. Sumner, nor that there is much difference in the speeches of free-soilers. The materials are precisely the same. There is a wonderful similarity in the statements and in the mis-statements; there is the same "little hoard of maxims"—the same cut and dried humanity—stale and flat sentiments that even Joseph Surface would have discarded and Sir Peter Teazle have denounced with a heavier objugation—the wearisome repetition of the details of the history of the Missouri question—the ayes and noes called as often as Chronophotonologos called a coach—the Declaration of Independence and the ordinance of 1787. We may well ask with Othello, "what needs this iteration?" These are the stock in trade and in common, the lean larder from which the table must be furnished forth, varying

only in the preparation with the talent of the compounder. Mr. Chase gives us the "*soupe maigre*," after a receipt from Mrs. Briggs' modest cookery book, Mr. Sumner only adding the "*haut gout*" of Louis Eustache Ude, or his brilliant counterpart in Pependennis, Monsieur Alcide Mirabolant. Or, perhaps, we should rather say that Mr. Chase's speech is like the cold rehearsal of a play in the morning, when the men appear in slouched hats and sack coats and the women in faded dresses, while Mr. Sumner's is the same play, re-produced at night, with all the accessories of full costume, of scenic pomp, deceptive gas light, the mimic thunder of rattling sheet-iron and the patent lightning of red signal-powder. Not only their heavier metal, as they would call it, but even their small arms are taken from the same arsenal. Mr. Chase quotes from Milton's Prose Works. Mr. Sumner gives us some time-honored excerpts from the great poem—guided by the fear, no doubt, that Nebraska is about to be a Paradise Lost. Both, too, like Eastern magicians, surround themselves with clouds and darkness at the commencement of their incantations. Both invoke storm and wind. Puff, in the Critic, makes his grand tragedy of the Spanish Armada "open with a clock striking to beget an awful attention in the audience; it also marks the time, which is four o'clock in the morning, and saves a description of the rising sun, and a great deal about gilding the eastern hemisphere." We believe a barometer hangs in the vestibule of the Senate; the sergeant-at-arms should be directed, "without regard to weather," to place the index at "stormy" whenever a free-soil Senator is about to speak; it would save a great deal of windy declamation and cloudy description which has depressed the Senate of late with, what we may call, an oratorical "long season in May." Or better still, perhaps, looking to the "melancholy madness" of these Senators, they should have reserved their speeches till the winds of March came

* Speech of Mr. Sumner, of Massachusetts, against the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise. In Senate, February 21st, 1854.

of Weir; his dreams of cosmogonies, &c., have been tested by the searching light of Eternity's truth; his errors have received the reward that was meet; and we cannot but say, ere we close, peace even to the well-nigh putrid dust of EDGAR A. POE.

EMILY.

HER SECOND BIRTH-DAY AMONG THE ANGELS.

Our sorrows, our joys, our hopes in Christ are one.

Many days have passed, my sister!
Since our loved ones fell asleep,
Many hours of lonely sadness,
Since we first began to weep;
But that early cloud of sorrow
Seems to hang around us yet;
For the heart so sorely stricken,
Cannot easily forget.

We cannot yet forget the hours
That are treasured in the past;
The scenes of love we might have known
Were too bright and pure to last;
They float yet through our memories,
And they mingle in our dreams,
They glance across our musing thoughts,
Like sunlight over streams.

We remember that our loved ones,
Once were with us here below,
But the homes that then they gladdened
Have been shrouded since with wo.
The path of life which once they caused
With flowering hope to bloom,
Has many weary days been palled
With a deep and lonely gloom.

But we know that they were summoned
To a better home on high;
To a joy that never darkens
In the bright enduring sky.
Their mansions are the palaces
That hands have never made,
Where the leaf shall never wither,
And the light shall never fade.

Shall we then repine—my sister!
For the happy ones above;
Who are folded in the fondness
Of an everlasting love?
Shall we murmur at our Father,
Who has kindly called them home;
Where their hearts shall never sadden,
And their feet shall never roam?

No! we will not mourn the blessed,
In the fulness of their joy;
In the rapt, seraphic glory
Of their ever blest employ.
We can never wish to drag them,
From a heritage so glad,
Though our homes be very desolate,
And our hearts be very sad.

We will rather heed the summons,
Calling thus our hearts away,
From the phantoms of this dream of life
To the realms of endless day.
And though earth is darkly shadowed
With the gloomy night of wo,
We'll gaze upon the starry hopes
Thus unveiled to us below.

We will dash the dimming tear drop
From the sad and drooping eye;
And fix its high and earnest gaze
On the things above the sky:
There we soon shall meet the loved ones
Who have only gone before;
And linked with them around the throne,
Shall sin and weep no more.

Then peace be thine, my sister!
On this sad reminding day;
That peace the world can never give,
And can never take away;
That peace that folds with angel wings
The heart with sorrow riven,
And quiets all its throbbing pains
With antepasts of Heaven.

T. V. M.

Editor's Table.

We were greatly surprised to see in an editorial article of "Putnam's Monthly," for March, an unprovoked and wholly gratuitous attack upon the Messenger. In the course of some remarks intended specially "for the people South of Mason and Dixon's line," the editor says—

"We are accused of not being American because we are Northern. The South . . . will not permit us to enjoy the common instincts of patriotism, but will cut us off of our inheritance, because we happen to live on the wrong side of Mason and Dixon's line. It was a son of New England who uttered the patriotic sentiment, 'I know no North, no South;' but our Southern friends say they 'know no North, only a South.' There are numberless publications calling themselves after the South, to indicate their social character and their antagonism to the North. The *The Southern Quarterly*, the *Southern Literary Messenger*, and so on; but if there be a single periodical or other institution North of Mason and Dixon, whose title breathes such an un-American and sectional spirit, we are ignorant of its existence."

Now we must be permitted to say that a greater inconsistency than is involved in the first and last sentences of the foregoing paragraph has never fallen under our observation. Mr. Putnam complains that because he is Northern we say he is not American, and in the same breath accuses us of being unpatriotic for no other reason in the world than because we are Southern. Nor is it true that we call ourselves after the South to