

BY E. B. MURRAY & CO. ANDERSON, S. C., THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 1878. VOL. XIII--NO. 26.

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A PLEA FOR OUR COUNTRY.

MR. EDITOR: The heading of this article would seem to indicate that our country, our State, must be involved in some great physical calamity, involving a great deal of personal suffering, such as war, famine, pestilence. Do not be too hasty, kind reader. Thank God none of these terrible scourges afflict any portion of our common country; and the little Palmetto State is peculiarly favored in all these respects. And yet the heading of this article is peculiarly appropriate in the present financial condition of our State. Debt, like a dark and lowering cloud, hangs over our people, ready to burst at any moment in all its fearful consequences of bankruptcy and ruin. That homestead and bankrupt laws may in a thousand cases come in to the relief of the debtor class does not really mitigate the fearful train of moral consequences, invariably resulting from a resort to these doubtful expedients. Under the old regime it was the proud boast of our little State, and of our people as a community, that we promptly paid our financial obligations to the last farthing. And we were always able to do this because it was a cardinal principle never to contract a debt without a reasonable prospect of prompt payment. Our rates of interest were uniformly low, and our taxes light. Our government and laws were wholesome and invigorating to the entire body politic. Our labor was the most stable and reliable the world ever saw. As a consequence of the war all these necessary ingredients for a prosperous State were completely overturned, and our people left to the mercies of the pitiless storm, without rudder or compass to guide them. With a bad government, high taxes, high rates of interest and a totally demoralized laborer, no wonder that today the farmers, thousands of them, laborers and employees, find themselves engulfed in the maelstrom of debt, unable to meet their obligations. These, in their train, have involved hundreds of our most liberal and patriotic merchants in the same unfortunate predicament with themselves, and unless we are wise belatedly utter financial ruin must overtake us as a people.

We wish calmly to discuss the debt question, without turning aside for a moment to indulge in crimination or recrimination. Indeed, we have no cause for any class of our people in this unfortunate condition of affairs. None whatever. While there may be an isolated few in every community who care for nobody but themselves, and care not who sink or swim, yet the great body of our people, and especially all the leading business classes sincerely desire the entire prosperity of our State, and are willing to make great sacrifices to attain this end. Creditor and debtor alike will strive thereto. The Legislature has done all that it can do, by giving us a wholesome usury law, such an one as stood on our statute books during all the years of our former prosperity. Our representatives have shown, also, a determination to cut down expenses to the lowest possible minimum in amount, so as to lighten the burden of taxation as much as possible. By carrying out this programme even to the verge of stinginess is what they ought to do, and is what the people expect them to do. But still there is a field of operations, the most important of all, which the legislator dare not enter, sacred only to the cultivation of creditor and debtor. If there ever was a time when compromise and forbearance between these parties was necessary to enable our State safely to pass the breakers ahead, that time is the present. With the enlightening prospect of a good government, with our labor system gradually becoming more and more systematized and productive, it does seem that we have arrived at an era in our financial history when it would be well to take soundings and ascertain our exact condition financially. In other words, let past indebtedness be so adjusted between creditor and debtor that each may take courage, reasonably, assured on the one hand that past indebtedness will be gradually but certainly liquidated, and on the other that the debtor will not be driven to the wall in this his hour of extremity. Such a course generally adopted, will ensure the old ship of State a safe passage through the perils of the storm. This done, and a very few years will tell the old, old Bible truth, that the road to prosperity, for States as well as individuals, lies through much tribulation. As an illustration of the practical meaning of this article, permit us to recite the terms of a settlement agreed upon at Anderson recently in a case of debt involving thousands of dollars—probably a hundred thousand on the creditor side, and but two solvent debtors on the other. These gentlemen proposed through their attorney to pay twenty five cents on the dollar of past indebtedness, and with a representation of \$38,000 on the creditor side, all present promptly decided to accept the offer. One of these creditor gentlemen, a farmer, told me that when the proposition was made he reasoned thus with himself: Give these debtors a living chance; bear ye one another's burthens; and so fulfil the law of Christ. Take another. An old and highly respectable merchant of this County—long since dead—in his earlier commercial history, fell in possession of tract after tract of land from his neighbors, who thoughtlessly involved themselves so as to force them to give up even their homesteads and migrate to frontier regions. After an experience of nearly four score years, this gentleman declared that it would have been better for him to have compromised with them and permitted them to remain in possession of their homesteads, to still further contribute to his success as a merchant, and to build up the country.

WOMAN IN MASONRY.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE RICHARD LODGE, NO. 39, ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS, AT THEIR PUBLIC INSTALLATION MEETING, HELD AT ANDERSON, S. C., DECEMBER 27, 1877, BY HON. T. J. MACKER.

WORTHY MASTER AND BRETHREN OF THE MYSTIC TIE: We have assembled to commemorate in due form the installation of St. John the Evangelist into the office of Grand Master of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons. On this anniversary, our brethren, wherever they may dwell, whether amid the hum and stir of populous cities, or the quiet of remote villages, gather around the altar of our order to rekindle their Masonic zeal at its holy and undying flame, while gratefully recalling the pages of sacred history, the traditions of Masonry and of the Christian Church furnish the sources of our information upon this interesting theme.

St. John the Evangelist was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and was born about the year of our Lord four or five. He was the youngest of the disciples. There is a tradition in the church that he was the bridegroom of the marriage at Cana, in Galilee, the occasion of the first miracle performed by Christ, where "The conscious water saw its God and blushed." He was by occupation a fisherman. We learn but little of him until near the close of the Savior's ministry and life, when he had conferred upon him the most lofty and benign distinction of being "that disciple whom Jesus loved." At the last supper he was the disciple who was "leaning on Jesus' bosom" in a posture in the ancient mode of reclining at table that was considered as a mark of the highest respect and confidence. It was to him that Jesus in confident friendship pointed out by a sign the disciple who should betray him. His specially confidential relation to his Divine Master was evinced by the fact that when Christ had said to his disciples, "One of you shall betray me," Simon Peter beamed upon him that he should say to the betrayer, "It is he, who is leaning on Jesus' bosom." He was the only disciple who with the courage of faithful love dared to attend his beloved Master to the cross, and he it was to whom Jesus referred in his final agony he addressed in his mother the words "Woman, behold thy Son!" And lastly, he was the first disciple to reach the sepulchre after the resurrection, and the first to declare that "they have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." The blended qualities of gentleness and courage exhibited in the character of this apostle furnish a striking illustration of a life often observed in the battle field of life.

"The bravest are the tenderest,
The loving are the dauntless."

St. John the Evangelist must have been as pre-eminent among his contemporaries for his eloquence as he was for the gentler virtues, since we are informed by the apostle Mark that he, and his brother, James, the Great, were the sons of their mother, Boanerges, or "the Sons of Thunder," to indicate their power as orators.

In the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletian, about the year 92 of the Christian era, John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, where he remained for seven years, and wrote that awful sublime and mysterious work, the Apocalypse or Book of Revelations.

From the building of the first temple of Jerusalem, one thousand years before Christ, down to the Babylonian captivity, Free Masons' lodges were dedicated to King Solomon; from thence to the coming of the Messiah, they were dedicated to Zerubbabel, the builder of the second temple; and from that time to the final destruction of the temple by the Roman General Titus, at the fall of Jerusalem, in the year 73, they were dedicated to St. John the Baptist. Owing to the

many massacres and disorders which followed that appalling and memorable event, Free Masonry sunk very much into decay. Many lodges were entirely broken up, and but few could meet in sufficient numbers as required by the ancient constitution of the order. At a general meeting of the craft, held at the city of Benjamin, it was concluded that the chief cause of the decline of Masonry was the want of a Grand Master to preside over the order. They therefore deputed seven of their members to wait upon St. John the Evangelist, who was then Bishop of Ephesus, and request him to accept the office of Grand Master. He returned for answer, that although well stricken in years, being upwards of ninety, yet having been initiated into Masonry in early life, and being deeply concerned for the welfare of the order, he would take upon himself that responsible office. He thus completed by his learning and noble example, what the other St. John had effected by his zeal, and thereby drew what Free Masons term a "line parallel." Since that period all Masonic lodges throughout Christendom are dedicated to St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, by the title of the "Holy Saints John."

According to Chrysostom, the golden mouthed, he wrote in the latter part of the 4th century, St. John the Evangelist died in the city of Ephesus, in the year of our Lord 126, at the age of 120 years, having survived all the other apostles nearly fifty years, and performed his apostolic duties for almost a century from the time that he became a disciple at the age of 26. To this seemingly unaccountable fact, the world is indebted for the most simple, sublime and perfect definition of God ever given by mortal hand. For thousands of years the attributes of Deity had been the subject of the prophet's deepest meditation and the poet's grandest song. In the beautiful fragments of Hesiod, the story of Prometheus, the immortal pages; in the teachings of the divine Plato, the lessons taught by the God-like Socrates, or the treatises of the profound Aristotle, we seek vainly for a definition of God which at once satisfies the judgment and the heart of humanity. It remained for this Galilean fisherman to syllable the unuttered thoughts of the human soul by proclaiming that "God is love!"

There are moments in the life of every man when he feels himself nearer the Great Spirit of the Universe, and in such a moment what the Evangelist has caught these words from the lips of the angel, that came to him in the still watches of the night, in the hushed calm that brooded over his lonely boat as it rose and fell on the blue waters of Galilee, while the starlight of Judea gleamed bright on the hills of her beauty.

It may well be asked, "Why is it that an order which boasts such an exemplar of its principles as St. John the Evangelist should rigidly exclude woman from its folds, and while inscribing the golden words, faith, hope and charity, on the walls of its lodges, still denies all approach to the altars to the sex which in the works of daily life, in the highest sense, is the most generous and noble?" The reason for this exclusion cannot be found in any supposed intellectual inferiority which unfits woman to rightly understand the symbolic science of Masonry, or in any known incapacity on her part to practice its tenets. All history and individual experience would alike rebuke such a cruel and ungenerous assumption. Not on the days of Semiramis, the renowned queen of Assyria, whose genius made Babylon the glory of the East and adorned it with structures of such stupendous magnificence as to be classed among the wonders of the world, woman has attested her capacity to sway "the rod of empire," and to administer successfully the governments of mighty nations.

The historic student will recall the triumphant reign of Isabella of Castile, the friend and liberal patroness of Christopher Columbus; the reign of Queen Elizabeth; the reigns of the two Catherine of Russia, and of Queen Anne, while the English-speaking race, when beholding at this day the happy reign of the Empress-Queen, the great Victoria. In the realms of thought, the friend and liberal patroness of Queen Elizabeth, justly termed the golden age of England; the reigns of the two Catherine of Russia, and of Queen Anne, while the English-speaking race, when beholding at this day the happy reign of the Empress-Queen, the great Victoria. In the realms of thought, the friend and liberal patroness of Queen Elizabeth, justly termed the golden age of England; the reigns of the two Catherine of Russia, and of Queen Anne, while the English-speaking race, when beholding at this day the happy reign of the Empress-Queen, the great Victoria. 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