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CONDITIONS OF THE MARYLAND REPUBLICAN.

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All communications (*post-paid*) from literary gentlemen, will be thankfully received; and, if admissible, shall receive immediate attention.

From the *Whig*.

THE MARYLAND ELECTION.

No man can judge of the mighty obstacles lately surmounted by democratic energy, who does not remember the magnitude and vast extent of federal exertions. Zeal, gold, cunning, lying of the blackest dye, were all enlisted and actively employed against the cause of liberty, independence, humanity, and truth; and we overpowered this formidable and satanical host, by the force of truth, reason and fact.

The people of Maryland have acted gloriously; they will find their reward in the preservation of freedom, religion and law. All these would have been endangered by federal success. To prevent them from falling into jeopardy should be the study of every man, but is the peculiar task of our state-men in the legislature. We are not an informed people; we are not generally a reading people; consequently, whatever share of natural talent we may possess, we are not an enlightened people. Let vanity and self-sufficiency frown as they may at the bitter truth, ignorance is omnipotent in many counties of this state. Darkness prevails against light to an extent which makes the friend of freedom shudder, when he reflects how precarious liberty must be in a land of ignorance.—Occasional exertions and individual efforts will not always save us. Though now triumphant, we are not so completely victorious as the patriot could wish; the state of the polls in Frederick, Prince George, and Calvert, shews how difficult it is to efface the deep impression which cunning and falsehood have made on the minds of our too credulous fellow citizens. Perseverance will restore these counties to their former brightness; but when will be expelled the "Cimmerian darkness" which overshadows Montgomery, Charles, St. Mary's, Somerset, &c?

State of Maryland! behold how we are groping and grovelling "for lack of knowledge!" How cheerfully would we bear a moderate tax for the maintenance of schools in every county and district of this state! It is a hard task, I know, to devise a good system, to answer the end proposed; but it is a task that must be executed, or democracy will be in danger even from its friends; for a blind people cannot steer us with safety through the "tempestuous sea of liberty." Educate your people, and you furnish an antidote to the arts of the demagogue; an educated people can judge aright of men and things; an educated people are so humanized, that their passions are under the controul of their reason; and faction labours in vain, to find tools among regulated minds.

It may be said, CONNECTICUT expends near \$80,000 per annum,

and yet that state is not much better than *Venice*, in point of freedom. Granted; but education is not the cause of her degradation. She has no general suffrage law as we have; and, perhaps, learning is often misapplied by the arts of her priests, who have too much to do in the management of schools and colleges. Give Connecticut a general suffrage law, and in one year she will emerge from the clouds of bigotry, prejudice and slavery, and shine forth with a splendor that will shed new glory and radiance on the constellation to which she belongs. At present she, is lame—not blind—for a majority of her people are democratic. We, on the contrary, in part, are blind, not lame. It is only the highway of a suffrage law that keeps us within the proper track. To maintain freedom, our institutions must be seconded by the laws.

Against the disadvantages of *unequal representation*, general suffrage cannot always be victorious—without the aid of education. Let every man reflect on this important subject.

From the *National Aegis*.

THE FALL OF AUSTRIA.

The late news from Europe fulfils all the anticipations of republicans, and falsifies the foolish surmises of British partisans. In opposition to reason, they believed that the archduke would conquer him who never yet was conquered, because they could not endure to think of the reverse. It is hoped they will learn at length that no cause prospers which British gold supports. Heaven seems to follow with its vengeance those infatuated princes who ally themselves with the corrupter and destroyer of nations. No one who looks seventeen years back into the history of Europe, can lament over "the sad ruins of Austrian greatness," or deny that the hand of Providence seems manifested in her ruin.—Austria was a principal party in the ever infamous treaty of *Pilsnitz*—she took the lead in the base attack upon a generous people who had cast off the yoke of the tyrant *Leopold* and his minions, and were gloriously defending the noblest rights of man. What has become of the powers of darkness who leagued in this execrable undertaking? of Austria, of Spain, of Holland, of Prussia, of Brunswick? They are almost annihilated on the map of nations—they are the mere servants and satellites of France, whom they expected to grind to powder! What an exemplary punishment! Even Russia—the mighty empire of "all the Russias," as if voluntarily to atone for its crimes, unobdient, lends its whole strength to assist and swell the victories of Frenchmen! Here have we a lesson also upon kingly pride of birth.—All continental Europe, with its haughty monarchs, and its dynasties, that boast the age of centuries, humbled and subjected to an obscure, low-born Corsican, whose matches and almost supernatural abilities have raised him to a summit of earthly grandeur never before attained by man; have enabled him to trample on the thrones of the weak tyrants who surrounded him!

The federal leaders may cry "French influence" if they please, but we do not pretend to disguise our satisfaction at the result of the great events in Germany. The tyranny of England is no longer to be borne. Yet how can it be arrested but by her depression? and how are we able effectually to accomplish this, without delays and commercial restraints that might again kindle intestine faction to a devouring flame? The more Napoleon reduces her arrogance by cutting up the coalitions which her gold has purchased—the lower she sinks her in the scale of nations, the more will her haughtiness toward neutrals abate, and the greater chance shall we have to obtain our rights, and redress for our wrongs. Suppose her victorious—and what is the certain consequence? that we must not trade at all, or must submit to pursue our commerce by her consent, and under such duties and restrictions as she may see fit to impose? As a nation we are independent of the world, but as traders we must at present be dependent upon events in Europe. A new era, says the *Whig*, will now commence, and we may look for its effects, in restoring justice and maritime freedom.

FAYETTEVILLE, (N. C.) AUG. 4th.
Messrs. Ray & Black.

GENTLEMEN,

In addition to the number of curious phenomena that have appeared in the different quarters of the globe, and which nature seems to have produced for the purpose of exercising the curious and philosophic mind; there is one which frequently makes its appearance on a plantation belonging to Col. Alexander Gray, of Randolph-county, (whereon I now

live) which not only affords my family within doors, and gives me frequent alarms, but also prevents me from receiving nightly visits from my neighbors; for in fact they can seldom pass by the plantation after night has shrouded the world with its sable mantle, without being seriously alarmed, either by real or imaginary phantoms, of such hideous forms and variety of shapes, as frequently makes the hair of their heads stand erect. I have frequently observed it myself, and when settled on the plantation, could, like my neighbors see it in a variety of attitudes, part of which I perceive was produced by my own imagination; It has now metamorphosed itself to my optics in a more regular appearance since habit has rendered it less frightful.

This phenomenon appears in the night, and is more frequent in winter than summer; it rises out of the Earth in a blue blaze like that of brimstone, to the height of five or six feet, and frequently spreads over several rods of ground, affords a light by which you may plainly see any object near to the place: Upon approaching, it gradually vanishes, and nothing of it remains except a smoke, or vapor, which smells strong of sulphur.—It does not always confine itself to one part of the plantation, but is seen sometimes near a spring, but more frequently on the high lands.

A number of persons have been led by curiosity to examine the place where this phenomenon most frequently appears, but their opinions have been various with respect to the causes which hath produced it. Some suppose it to be a vapor produced by the richness of the soil; others, who have dug into the earth, and found stone containing a great number of particles as clear as silver, which being heated in the fire affords a strong sulphurous smell, suppose that it proceeds from the heat of some mineral which lies concealed near the place.

Whether either of these conjectures are correct, I leave to those who are better versed in the mysteries of nature than myself, to determine.

HAMILTON M'VEY.

Miscellaneous.

FROM THE PORT FOLIO.

Wild Cotton, or American vegetable Silk.

The inhabitants of the United States, like the joint heirs of an immense, undescribed property, are not yet acquainted with half the value of their inheritance—the incalculable riches of their country. Its mineral treasures are but little known; its botanical ones are far from being fully explored. Vegetable productions of equal, perhaps superior value with that of the celebrated cotton or tobacco plants, may yet lurk in the obscure recesses of our forests, or even of our fields, waiting only the kindly hand of the cultivator, and the aid of the ingenious and enterprising manufacturer, to usher them into notice and general usefulness. Considering it the duty of every citizen, at all times, more particularly at the present extraordinary crisis, to contribute his mite to promote our national independence, I shall make no apology for introducing, in this place, some account of a plant which grows in great abundance in many parts of the country, as well as in the neighbourhood of this city; and of pointing out some of the useful purposes to which it may be applied.

Those who amuse themselves with a ramble or promenade, along the charming banks of the Schuykill and Delaware, may have observed a plant rising in a single stem to the height of three or four feet, whose smooth oval leaves, when broken, exude a white milky juice in considerable quantities; it bears bunches of blossoms of a dingy purple color, which are succeeded by pods, containing numerous seeds, and a white glistening silky substance usually called wild cotton, or vegetable silk. This plant belongs to a genus called by botanists *Asclepias* from *Asclepius* the god of medicine; and is the *Asclepias Syriaca* of Linnæus, or Syrian Swallow-Wort. The root is perennial, and will last from ten to twenty years. In the month of April it throws out, like asparagus and hops, a great number of shoots; the principal stem is about as thick as a man's finger, straight, round and smooth,

and beset with oval leaves of considerable size, covered on the upper side with dark green, and on the lower side with whitish down. The plant begins to flower about the beginning of June, and continues till the beginning of August; there are often from twelve to sixteen flowers on one stem, each of which forms a bunch, containing from thirty to forty single flowers. Each single flower adheres to the bunch by a long thin stalk, and has a sweetish odour. Each bunch of flowers is succeeded by three, four and sometimes ten long, and rough pods, which enclose several round, yellowish brown flat and thin seeds, wrapped up in a beautiful white shining kind of silk. The seeds are winged, a form which nature has given with great variety to many others, in order that they may be conveyed with more ease, and to a greater distance by the wind.

The silk which covers the seeds in the pods, is the principal part of use. The pods gradually acquire maturity from August to the beginning of October; during which period those who cultivate the plant must watch with great care for the period of their bursting, in order to collect the silk, lest it should be carried away by the wind, or spoiled by the rain. The pods, when collected, should be spread out on a net, or rack, to the height of about a foot, in any airy place, to dry.

The silk, which is of a shining white color, from an inch to an inch and a half in length, and exceedingly elastic, is then taking out, and being freed from the seeds, is hung up in thin bags in the sun, that it may become perfectly dry; and at the same time it is often softened with the hand, or by being heated. The vegetable silk may now be used, without any farther preparation, instead of feathers and horse hair, for beds, cushions, coverlets to beds, bolsters and mattresses. From eight to nine pounds of it, which occupy the space of from five to six cubic feet, will be sufficient for a bed, coverlet, and two pillows; such beds therefore, are exceedingly convenient for travelling. It is not advisable, however, to use the silk in common for beds, instead of feathers, as it is too soft and warm. It requires a little preparation for quilts and counterpanes, and is lighter and warmer than those of common silk. For spinning, however, notwithstanding its fineness, which approaches near to that of common silk, it is not fit, when taken alone, as it is almost too short, and, therefore, must be used with an addition of flax, wool or common silk, but particularly of cotton. One third of this silk, with two thirds of cotton, forms a very good mixture for gloves, stockings, &c. caps. Other mixtures may be used for different kinds of stuffs; but it has been observed, that the cloth is much stronger when the vegetable silk is employed for the wool, rather than for the warp. Many colors have been applied to such cloth with great success; but as each substance requires a peculiar mode of treatment, more experiments on this subject are necessary; a mixture of one third vegetable silk, and two thirds of rabbit's down, form hats exceedingly light and soft to the touch; which have a great resemblance to beaver hats, and are much cheaper.

As soon as the pods have been collected, the stems, which contain a fibrous part capable of being spun, must be cut before they become dry or suffer from the night frost. They must then be immersed for some days, in water, like flax or hemp, and then dried, by being spread out on the grass. Care, however, must be taken by experiments, to ascertain the proper length of time, as too much, or too little, would be prejudicial. In the last case the flaxy part is brittle; and in the former, it loses its strength. After it has been watered, it is beaten and heckled. A mixture of the threads spun from the flax of these stems with the vegetable silk and cotton, produces a kind of cloth very proper for furniture. It has been, however, employed chiefly, with and without an addition of rags, for making all kinds of writing and packing papers, which sometimes is similar to the Chinese paper, and sometimes exceeds in

strength the usual paper made from rags.

Both the inner white skin, and the external green husk of the capsules, which contain the seeds, might be employed for manufacturing the finer sorts of silk paper; and, that as little as possible of this plant should remain useless, nature has provided in the sweet juice of its flowers, excellent nourishment for bees. According to a late German writer, this plant, in the above respect (the lime tree excepted) is superior to all other vegetable productions.

The great utility of this plant has been known in Europe little more than forty years. A manufactory of articles from it has been established at Paris, since 1760; and it has long been employed at Lausanne with advantage for making candle wick; but no one has shown more zeal in regard to the cultivation and preparation of this article than Mr. Schneider of Leignitz, who has recommended it in two different pamphlets. In regard to the application of it to paper making, Mr. Schmidt of Lunenburg has made a variety of experiments, and it is much to be wished that others would imitate his example.

This plant is propagated two ways, either by the seed, or by slips. In the month of March, after the land has been well dug, the seeds are sown thin, and singly in furrows of the depth of an inch, and covered with earth, which is thrown over to the depth of half an inch; they are secured also from the night frost by moss, or a little light dung. In from four to six weeks the young plants begin to appear. The first year they produce flowers; but do not come to full maturity till the third. In the third year they are transplanted. But this method is more laborious and ought not to be recommended, but in particular cases, such as when the roots have degenerated, or when they are transplanted to different climates. The object will be sooner accomplished by slips from the roots. As the plant throws out around it long roots with new eyes, these must be lopped off from the stock, either in Autumn, when the milky juice in the plant has dried up, or in the Spring, before it again flows; and are to be cut into pieces of from four to six inches in length; but care must be taken that they have a sufficient number of eyes. A fresh incision must be made in the root before and behind, and they are then to be planted in the ground to the depth of four or five inches, in an oblique position, with the eyes or buds, upright. Those planted in Autumn will produce seeds the next Summer; and those planted in Spring will bear the second Summer.

The ground, before it is planted, must be dug up to a good depth, and well dunged. It must also be well weeded, and kept exceedingly clean. After the crop has been collected, the stems must be cut close to the ground, and the plants which have died must be replaced by young ones. Towards winter they must be covered with a little dung, which ought to be spread in the Spring. A sufficient space, also, must be left between the plants. They ought to be planted in rows, and at the distance of one foot and a half, or rather two feet, from each other. Of the stems that shoot up, only the best (perhaps about one half) should be left standing, the rest, as soon as the flowers appear, should be cut and placed in sand or earth, to dry up the milky juice that flows from them. Even of the prime plants it will be proper to suffer only four or five of the lowest branches of flowers to come to maturity. By following these cautions, the silk obtained will be of superior quality. The increase is very great. In the year 1785 Mr. Schneider began with six plants; and in 1793 had a plantation which contained 30,000. The first crop produced 8, the second 335, and the third 600 pounds of silk. If the leaves, after the crop has been collected, be thrown together in heaps to rot, they form an excellent manure for future use. In regard to the preparation of silk, little need be said. It may easily be conceived, that it will be of advantage to sepa-