



"If any man attempts to haul down the American Flag, shoot him on the spot."—JOHN A. DIX.

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THE HOMESTEAD LAW.

There are many of our returned soldiers who on being mustered out of service and reaching home, will find it hard to get work—hard at any rate, to get permanent employment. Their places have been filled during their long absence. The sudden end of the war sends hundreds of thousands of men home to compete for employment, and the demand for labor of many kinds ceases almost as suddenly as the number of those who want to labor increases. What are they to do?

We earnestly urge upon all such to turn their faces Westward and colonize the public lands. Thanks to the beneficent policy of the Homestead Law, land is open to all. The poorest citizen can scarcely be so poor as to be unable to acquire a farm, which a few years of industry and frugality will enable him to cultivate and make his own. In the most unfavorable circumstances, a man of energy and good sense will work his way clear of the embarrassments which in a new country and at a distance from markets surround the settler. But many of those obstacles may be avoided altogether. We know of no better way by which new lands can be rendered speedily and sure profitable than by the formation of colonies or associations here in the East which shall settle whole townships together. There is not much difficulty in finding lands suitable for such enterprise, and a community starting thus ready organized transplants at once into the wilderness some of the best helps of civilization. There are many regiments lately disbanded in our State which were raised in adjoining towns or counties, the members of which already know each other, and could easily reunite for Western emigration. Not all of them will want to go, but enough to form a nucleus can be found in every county. Together with some bad habits, they have acquired many good ones in the army, and have acquired also no little experience, which can be turned to use in the pioneer life of the West. Familiarity with headship and the habit of self-reliance have been thoroughly taught, and there is no better capital than character of that sort to start with.

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THE ATLANTIC CABLE.

At length all the preparations connected with the final departure of this great telegraphic expedition are completed. On Wednesday the Amethyst left the telegraph works with the last length of 245 miles of cable on board, and on Saturday the operation of coiling this in was begun. This work will probably last till the 29th inst. Before the following springs tide set in, about the 6th or 7th of July, the Great Eastern will start for Valencia. There she is expected to arrive about the 9th or 10th, and there she will be met by the two ships of war appointed to convey her—the Terrible and the Sphinx. Both these vessels are being fitted with the best apparatus for deep sea soundings, with buoys and means for buoying the end of the cable if ever it should become necessary, and with Bollen's night light naval signals with which the Great Eastern is likewise to be supplied. To avoid all chances of accident, the big ship will not approach the Irish coast nearer than twenty or twenty-five miles and her stay off Valencia will be limited to the time occupied in making a splice with the massive shore end, which for a length of twenty-five miles from the coast will be laid previous to her arrival.

With regard to the process of laying, it is hoped the Great Eastern may be kept throughout the whole voyage at a uniform speed of six knots per hour, faster than which it would not be safe, as a rule, to run out the cable. At less speed than this, however, the big ship would fail of steering way, and with a beam wind would certainly go to leeward without some counteracting influence. This influence will be afforded if necessary by the paddle engines, which are to be disconnected, and the efforts of one wheel at either side would be quite sufficient to overbalance the effects of anything but a very violent storm. The latter risk is now literally all that has to be feared. On this only doubtless point, therefore, it is gratifying to know that Captain Anderson is sanguine of all going well.

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HOW VIRGINIA THANKED GOD.

In the Colonial days, the English Government addressed certain questions to the American Colonies respecting their condition. In answer to one of these, the Governor of Connecticut responded that one fourth of her income was expended in the maintenance of public schools. The Governor of Virginia replied: "I thank God that there are no free schools nor printing, and I hope we shall not have them these hundred years." The fruit has been like the planting. In 1860 three-fourths of the children of Connecticut were attending public schools, while nine-tenths of the children of Virginia were suffered to grow up in ignorance. In the same year, the free States of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois sent seven-ninths of their children to the common schools, while the slave State of Kentucky, but just across the border, out of 492,000 children, educated but 92,000, or a little over one-fifth.

North Adams is known as a pleasant village in the Berkshire section of Massachusetts. A few days since a mysterious gentleman, a stranger, engaged board at the village hotel. He desired that no person would speak to him except the landlady. He was good looking and well dressed. Several ladies endeavored to make his acquaintance, but failed. Finally bold ones appointed a committee of five to visit him. They did so, and stated their business. He eyed them, and replied: "I am a stranger and a criminal. I was convicted in New York of a heavy crime. The Judge sentenced me to eight years in Sing Sing, or to live in North Adams six months. I chose the latter." The ladies retired, and the stranger was not again disturbed.

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FARMERS LABOR TOO MANY HOURS.

Unlike tradesmen and operatives the farmers can adopt no regular system of labor. His hours must vary with the kind, and amount of a kind, of labor to be performed. The weather may retard him at times or again hurry him to his utmost, crowding the proper labor of several days into a few. An exceedingly growing period may force him to strain every nerve to accomplish a given amount of culture; or it may be too late and the advantages of his manipulations lost to the crop. At present, help upon farms is scarce, and early and late he must ply himself to his toil or the season vanishes and has left him no returns. Still there must come the question whether or not a man gains by too great exertion—too many hours labor and too little rest for his strained and wearied physical powers. The man who rises at day break and labors with only his hour's intermission at noon, until the dusk of the evening, then eats his hasty supper afterwards does up his "chores" is certainly overtaxing his system and sooner or later his constitution must give way. Hence we see among our farmers, men permanently old, with the stoop of age, with little physical or mental vitality, no ambition and very often victims of acute disease. Yet properly pursued, his calling could be the most health giving and invigorating—the best calculated to induce longevity, of any pursuit in life.—Toil may sweeten life and lengthen it, or it may render it burdensome, and shorten it. The farmer may well pause as he begins his labor in spring and calculate the extent to which he is taxing himself in laying out the work for the season.

We are not certain that in a given season, in the full vigor of life, a man accomplishes more by laboring from day break to night fall; certain it is that the number of his seasons are shortened by such incessant toil. Not exactly on the principle of "He who fights and runs away May live to fight another day," but on the principle of doing all his faculties justice, he who labors and rests, lives another season with health unimpaired, happy in mind and youthful in feeling. When the field is ablaze with the burning sun of a summer's noon-day a few hours retreat into some shady nook with books and papers, or passed in quiet repose or pleasant conversation; rejuvenates a man, refits him for labor and at evening he retires with just sufficient fatigue to render his slumber pleasant and refreshing, and the morning finds him ready to again keep time to the notes of the lark.

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