

stand the test of truth and reason. * * * If persecuted, it will be generally read. Every man in the United States will think it a duty to buy a copy, in vindication of his right to buy and to read what he pleases. I have just been reading the new constitution of Spain. One of its fundamental bases is expressed in these words: 'The Roman Catholic religion, the only true one, is, and always shall be, that of the Spanish nation.' I wish this presented to those who question what you may sell, or we may buy, with a request to strike out the words 'Roman Catholic' and to insert the denomination of their own religion."

That Jefferson was not a bigot on any side of such questions was evinced by his contributing, the same year that the above was written, \$50 to the American Bible Society, "for the purposes of the society, sincerely agreeing with you that there never was a more pure and sublime system of morality delivered to man than is found in the four evangelists." This was five years after his final retirement, and thus free from all possible suggestion of its having been the act of a demagogue.

John Adams appears to have shared largely the opinions of Jefferson on most subjects save politics. He wrote to his friend: "I am weary of philosophers, theologians, politicians and historians. I think I can now say I have read away bigotry, if not enthusiasm. What does Priestley mean by an 'unbeliever,' when he applies it to you? How much did he 'unbelieve' himself? So far from sentencing you to perdition, I hope soon to meet you in another country. In what sense, and to what extent, the Bible is law, may give rise to as many doubts and quarrels as any of our civil, political, military, or maritime laws, to irritate factions of every sort. I dare not look beyond my nose into futurity."

Adams laments his lack of books, in letters to Jefferson. "I wish I owned this book (D'Argens's 'Treatise on the Universe') and one hundred thousand more that I want every day. Philosophy looks with an impartial eye on all terrestrial religions. I have examined all, as well as my narrow sphere, my straitened means, and my busy life would allow me, and the result is that the Bible is the best book in the world. There is a book which I wish I possessed. It has never crossed the Atlantic. It is entitled 'Acta Sanctorum,' in forty-seven volumes, in folio. What would I give to possess in one immense mass, one stupendous draught, all the legends, true, doubtful, and false."

What an insatiable *helluo librorum* must Adams have been, to long to read that ponderous and inexhaustible thesaurus of ancient theology, the Bollandist 'Lives of the Saints'! Jefferson tells him in reply: "I had supposed

them defunct, with the Society of Jesuits of which they were. * * * Fifty-two volumes in folio, of the 'Acta Sanctorum,' in dog-Latin, would be a formidable enterprise to the most laborious German. I suspect, with you, they are the most enormous mass of lies, frauds, hypocrisy, and imposture, that was ever heaped together on this globe."

Jefferson was an ingrained optimist, looking upon the best side of human nature and human destiny. His faith in the ultimate soundness and good sense of the people was literally illimitable. Asked by Adams if he would agree to live his seventy-three years over again, he answered: "I say yea. I think with you that it is a good world on the whole." Of politics, he says: "I have taken final leave. I have given up newspapers in exchange for Tacitus and Thucydides, for Newton and Euclid, and I find myself much the happier. I am on horseback three or four hours every day."

He looked with toleration, not common among scholars of classic training and severe taste, upon those changes and innovations in language which time and progress bring about. He instanced the modern copious vocabulary of the French tongue, in contrast with the Procrustean dictionary of the French Academy, outside of which no word was to be used or tolerated. "What do we not owe to Shakspeare," asked he, "for his free and magical creation of words?"

At the same time, Jefferson, when asked to approve a scheme for reformed or phonetic spelling, declined, on the ground that Franklin's and other reformed English alphabets had failed to make any lodgment in the public mind. "It is very difficult to persuade the great body of mankind to give up what they have once learned, and are now masters of, for something to be learned anew."

Jefferson's judgments of noted men and books were sometimes sweeping. "Blackstone and Hume have made Tories of all England, and are making Tories of those young Americans, whose native feelings of independence do not place them above wily sophistries. These two books have done more towards the suppression of the liberties of man than the million of men in arms of Bonaparte, and the millions of human lives with the sacrifice of which he will stand loaded before the judgment-seat of his Maker." And to Madame De Stael he wrote: "The day will come when a just posterity will give to their hero the only pre-eminence he has earned, that of having been the greatest of the destroyers of the human race."

He writes that Plato's Republic "was the heaviest task-work I ever went through. While wading through the whimsies, the puerilities, and unintelligible jargon, I laid it down often to ask how the world should have so long consented to give reputation to such non-

sense as this? * * * He is one of the race of genuine sophists, who has escaped the oblivion of his brethren; first, by the elegance of his diction, but chiefly by the adoption and incorporation of his whimsies into the body of artificial Christianity."

And Adams eagerly concurs: "I took upon me the severe task of going through all his works. My disappointment was very great, my astonishment was greater, and my disgust shocking."

Jefferson, many years before it was proposed, even in cultivated Massachusetts, recorded his approval of the principle that no person should ever acquire the rights of citizenship until he could read and write. This was in a letter to Dupont de Nemours, April 24, 1816. And it is to be said, to his immortal honor, that he proposed, as early as the Revolutionary period, a comprehensive system of free common schools for Virginia, from which the best scholars were to be selected for higher education, at public expense. "Worth and genius," said Jefferson, "would thus have been sought out from every condition of life, and completely prepared by education for defeating the competition of wealth and birth for public trusts."

Jacob North &
Co., publishers, of
Lincoln, Neb., will
issue from their

house a work entitled "A Comprehensive History of Nebraska and the Trans-Mississippi Exposition," which is now in course of preparation. That history will contain biographical sketches and photographs of many of the progressive men and representative women of each county in the commonwealth. J. Sterling Morton is editor in charge of the work.

The state of
REAL PATRIOTS. Massachusetts

during the past week has lost two of its most patriotic citizens—John M. Forbes and Sherman Hoar. They represented different generations, and the veteran was old enough to have been the grandfather of the younger man, but Hoar at thirty-eight represented the same type of character and embodied the same devotion to the public interests as Forbes through all his eighty-five years. As types of real patriots, the elder and the younger alike deserve recognition beyond the boundaries of their state.

Mr. Forbes was, by occupation, a business man, but a business man to whom business was always something more than a mere means of making money. Beginning, as a youth, in the China tea trade which his Boston uncles had already built up, he became later a great developer of the railroad system in the West, while Michigan and Illinois were still only emerging from the period of frontier life. It was Mr. Forbes who pushed through a region of straggling