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A VERY excellent piece of "Mormonism," and one that we can unhesitatingly commend to everybody for consideration and especially for practice, is the exhortation to mind one's own business, one's own proper business. A failure to duly regard this exhortation appears to us to be one of the great causes of the very inferior character of much of the administration of government in these United States. It was all very well in some things for a French soldier to think that he carried a possible marshal's baton in his knapsack, but if he was always thinking of the baton, to the gross neglect or perversion of his proper daily duties, the baton idea was a bad thing. So to an American citizen the idea that he carries with him the possibility of occupying the Presidential chair, or at the very least of taking a seat in the federal Senate, is a very good thing if it induces him to a prompt, careful, and faithful performance of his proper current duties, but if he is always thinking of the White House or the Senate, the idea is a bad thing for him and worse for the country, so far as his influence extends.

There is no royal road to true and substantial preferment except by a conscientious discharge of present duties, not as men pleasers, nor as eye servants, but with singleness of heart towards the general good, which must be consonant with the prevalence of that which is right. Only men who pursue this course are really worthy of preferment, and so far as their abilities will warrant it their integrity should be rewarded and encouraged by preferment, not too long delayed, for judicious commendation, especially in the substantial way of an invitation upward, is grateful to all true and faithful workers, and is also a virtual censure of those who do not labor faithfully.

It is cause for deep regret to every true lover of his country that personal or party favoritism has more weight in determining official appointments in this country than personal or official integrity. So long as this state of things continues, official integrity will be of a correspondingly low status, and it is quite low enough, which nobody will deny.

Not only are official duties neglected, perverted, or made subservient to political ambition, but they are made largely tributary to personal gain. Not merely do office-holders, as a rule, endeavor to make their offices stepping-stones to political exaltation, but to personal pecuniary gain. He has come to be considered a fool in his day and generation who fails to make his fortune while in office, so that office-holders have some reason to think that they will certainly be accounted either fools or rogues. Of these two, most men would choose to have the latter reputation, and their aim is evidently directed that way, though unfortunately, in the prosecution of that aim, many of them hit both marks right in the bull's eye, as our readers are well enough aware.

It is a thing to be devoutly desired by every true patriot, by every true lover of his fellowman, that those upon whom rests the high prerogative of the bestowment of authority should make integrity combined with sufficient ability the basis of choice, leaving other considerations in the background, which, as things go, is not extensively done. If it was well understood, as a settled principle of action, that authority would be withdrawn instantly upon satisfactory evidence that an official was not minding his own official business, there would be much more official faithfulness than there is, there would be a most powerful inducement to an official to mind his own business, for he would know that it would pay him to do so, and it would not pay him to mind other people's business to the detriment of

his own. For if a man is busy with other than his own business, the evidence is highly presumptive, indeed almost positive, that he is proportionately neglecting his own, and if he is a public officer, he should be promptly removed and some better man should be put in his place, with the distinct understanding that his tenure of office depends inflexibly on the same rule of action. Were this the case, there would soon be a reformation in the character of some officials with whom we are a little acquainted, the status of officials in this country would rise far higher than it is, and the credit and fair fame of the United States and of various integral portions of the same would speedily be unsurpassed by those of any other nation.

Our readers are aware, from perusing recent dispatches, that Prof. Louis Agassiz and the party of scientists under his direction, who for the past nine months have been making explorations and investigations in the Pacific, reached the port of San Francisco, on the return trip, on the morning of August 31. As the objects of the expedition are regarded as important from a scientific point of view, a brief sketch of its organization, and results as far as known, may be interesting.

The party consisted of Professor Louis Agassiz and wife, Dr. Thos. Hill, Dr. Steindachner, Dr. Wm J. White, and James H. Blake. The object of the expedition was to investigate the theory of ocean currents, the ichthyology of the Pacific, and marine science in general, as its facts and peculiarities might become apparent during the voyage and explorations. Dr. Hill superintended the investigations relating to the temperature, transparency, &c., of the sea; Dr. White had charge of the chemical experiments during the trip; Mr. Blake was the artist of the expedition; Dr. Steindachner, late of the Academy of Sciences at Vienna, having made a specialty of ichthyology, or the life and habits of fishes, during the voyage gave his attention to this branch of the investigation; Professor Agassiz had the general superintendence and direction of the whole.

The expedition was undertaken by the invitation of the government, which would, probably, have borne all the expenses; but the members of the party declining to accept anything beyond the vessel, the *Hassler*, with a handsomely furnished cabin for each of them, was placed at their disposal, and leaving Boston on the 4th of last December, they sailed direct for the West Indies, reaching St. Thomas on the 14th, and Barbadoes on the 26th; thence to Pernambuco, which they reached January 16th, and Rio Janeiro on the 23rd. The expedition left the latter place February 15, arrived at Montevideo on the 22nd, Sandy Point March 12, cleared the Straits of Magellan April 3rd, reached Talcahuana April 11th, Valparaiso May 5th, Caldera on the 16th, Parada Bay 21st, Payta 1st of June, touched at the Galapagos Islands and cruised in the vicinity a few days, and reached Panama June 25th, stayed there a month, reached Acapulco August 4th, sailed thence on the same day for Magdalena Bay, which they reached on the 13th, five days later reached San Diego, left there on the 28th, and reached Mission Bay, August 31st.

The expedition is pronounced a success, the deep sea soundings made during its progress resulting in a large increase of knowledge in relation to the topography of the ocean bottom; extensive surveys were also made of the east and west coasts of South America. Rich acquisitions to natural history are promised as one of the results of this expedition, a collection of some two hundred curious fishes, some of them unknown to naturalists having been forwarded to Boston. One of these ichthyological curiosities seems worthy of special notice, being another of those links between the animal and vegetable kingdoms, which are so close as to sometimes puzzle even scientific men themselves to tell to which they belong. This specimen resembled a weed, with numerous tendrils or branches, and it was at first believed to be a marine vegetable; but close examination under the microscope proved that it was a member of the animal creation.

The photographs of points of interest taken during the voyage are numerous, and pronounced highly interesting.

During her peregrinations, the *Hassler* touched at Selkirk's Island, the barren rock on the coast of Chili upon which the unfortunate Scotch mariner, Alexander Selkirk, spent several years of solitude and misery, in the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The scientists were to proceed east from San Francisco, by rail, and the world will no doubt soon have a full account of their labors, and the pleasure of learning the results of their explorations and investigations.

CONSIDERABLE speculation and discussion have been indulged in of late years concerning the influence of trees upon rainfall and moisture. Statements have been made to the effect that where trees were extensively cleared away the land became subject to lengthy spells of aridity, which resulted in comparative barrenness, and corresponding stat men's have also been presented concerning the beneficial effects of the planting and culture of forests in France and elsewhere in increasing the prevalence of showers and in bringing the land to a higher state of fertility.

On the other hand counter statements, some of them based upon a long series of observations at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, have been published, to the effect that the clearing away of the forests has not made any material difference to the annual rainfall.

It is a well known fact that of late years the summer rainfall and the consequent moisture of the atmosphere in the lower valleys of this Territory have increased largely. Some say that for the last two or three years this has been the case, but this statement does not do justice to the facts, for the increase of rain and moisture in the summer in this vicinity may be dated back ten or a dozen years, if no longer, although the increase has been more marked the last few years of that time. For several years past the rains and the moisture have increased in the winter also, and the consequence is that snow does not lie in our streets so long as formerly, and some winters, the last for instance, our citizens have had little use for sleighs, but much and long use for water-proof boots. Umbrellas too, which once were a drug in the market, when brought here, and the hardest stock our merchants could bring, have of late years come into extensive and frequent use.

Some people have attributed this increase of rain and moisture to one thing and some to another, some to the advent of the railroads, which will not hold good, inasmuch as the increase was manifest long before railroads had penetrated within hundreds of miles of this Territory.

Now it is very possible that the annual fall of rain, or rain and snow, is not materially affected by the presence or absence of trees, though there are some reasons to think that it is. But there is undoubtedly much cause to conclude that the presence of trees and the cultivation of the land do contribute largely to the distribution of the rain in point of time, and to the duration of the effect of rain and to the moisture of the atmosphere and the soil. Any person can soon know for himself that this is the case, by observing how very much longer after rain the ground under trees remains moist than does that which composes the open plain. Besides, in forests the rain does not run away into the creeks and rivers near so fast as it does from the open plain of similar declivity. The culture of the earth, too, has much influence. Cultivated soil draws moisture from the atmosphere and condenses it, also receives rain more readily and retains it longer than uncultivated soil, giving it out again more gradually by exhalation through the vegetation of plants and trees, so that the atmosphere in cultivated and forest regions is naturally more uniformly moist and less subject to extremes than in treeless and uncultivated regions.

To these causes, and the blessing of Providence, do we attribute the increase of summer rain and atmospheric moisture in these regions.

Again, plantations of trees and various field crops, especially the taller ones, besides retaining the rainfall longer, to be exhaled more gradually, rob the hot and drying winds of much of their parching nature, charging them more or less with moisture, and rendering them more healthful and vastly more agreeable than when they rush un hindered over the arid and hard baked plain. In times gone by we have dug two feet or more into the earth in this city for a post hole, and found the soil as dry as snuff at that depth, but we scarcely think that it could have been done this summer, nor in any of our late summers.

What do we learn from this? That

cultivation of the soil and tree planting are very beneficial atmospherically, apart from their other many benefits. It has been urged that one-fourth or one fifth of the entire area of a country should be planted interspersedly with trees. If such were the case in this valley, we are well satisfied that the results would be a summer atmosphere of more uniform moisture and consequently more delightful to breathe, an increase to the general fertility of the soil, an increase to the amount and luxuriance of the various grass crops, and an unspeakable enhancement of the beauty of the landscape. Let one-fourth or one-fifth of this valley be covered with groups of trees and with forests, with the consequent or at least accompanying increase in grass and other crops, and a more enchanting landscape could hardly be found.

As a result of a reconnaissance by competent engineers, says an eastern exchange, it is demonstrated that the Missouri river is navigable above the falls, for a good class of steamers, 275 miles beyond Fort Benton, the present head of navigation. A line of steamers is to be immediately placed on the Upper Missouri, to run in connection with the completed portion of the Northern Pacific Railroad, thus making a direct eastern outlet for the entire trade of Montana.

THE Washington *Star* of August 29 said that the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, on his return to that city, would make preparations for reducing the force of the Internal Revenue Department, as provided by recent act of Congress. The number of assessors and collectors would be reduced from 230 to 80 of each. The reduction of bonded officers would necessitate the increase of assistants. Some few collectors had already resigned, to date January 1, when the new law goes into effect. The law would be applied to Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia first.

IN the Rio Grande part of Texas, in the middle of August, the people were suffering very much for want of rain, and thousands of cattle on the plains were dying through lack of water. It is to be hoped that the recent rain storms, unusually heavy here and exceedingly violent in many of the States east of us, extended to the thirsty land of Texas, to the rescue of the long horns.

THE diamond fields of Arizona appear to be exciting interest and receiving attention in high quarters. According to the Washington *Star* of Aug. 29, Attorney General Williams, in compliance with the request of the Secretary of the Interior, was preparing an opinion on the question, "Has a miner the right to enter on, stake off, and work a claim where diamonds are supposed to be on the same conditions and terms upon which mining claims are entered where gold exists?"

This is a very important question to diamond hunters, that is, when they propose to become diamond diggers, or to make a claim to land on diamond digging account.

OUR friend Geo. Francis met with an unceremonious reception at the Simon Pure Democratic Convention. To be put out neck and heels was certainly an undignified manner of being taught that his room was preferable to his company. What a contrast to his admiring acceptance by the women's women of San Francisco, and their bumper of a farewell to him as the train left the depot with him on board on his return to the east!

THE Louisville convention has come to a final end, which seems something akin to a fizzle, for has not that uncompromising assembly nominated for President a gentleman who declines to accept, and a Vice President who declines to be anything else, and even to be that unless the other nominated gentleman will stand up to his nomination? Well, perhaps it matters little whether the gentlemen accept or decline, so far as their chances for the Presidency and Vice Presidency, under the Louisville nominations, are concerned. Let us drop one tear over the grave of the straight out Democracy.