

OLD CORN-FIELD, March 4, 1823.
Messrs. Editors.

In your paper of the 5th inst. I observe a publication under the head "Emancipation," signed "Franklin," speaking in the highest terms of the last legislature of Indiana as having done more for the cause of Religion, Morality and Humanity, than all the legislatures put together since Indiana has been a state, with a particular allusion to the law of emancipation, *alias*, the law abolishing imprisonment for debt. Such an encomium from the pen of a Franklin, must be very pleasing to those gentlemen who had the honor of being members of that august body, and if properly bestowed, they most certainly have superior claims to the approbation of a free and christian people, and will no doubt, receive the reward of good and faithful servants. In a government like ours, where the people are the sovereigns, and the officers the servants, it is not only the right, but it is the imperious duty of the people to investigate the conduct of their officers, and freely to approve or censure as the justice of the case may seem to require. With this view, although this modern Franklin has honored our late law-makers with the title of the supporters of the cause of Religion, Morality and Humanity, yet I trust it will not be deemed sacrilege in one, who has nothing of the celebrity of a Franklin, to examine the particular law alluded to in that publication, and inquire how far it merits that praise which is so liberally conferred upon its framers. In the investigation of this subject, I have no desire to impugn the motives of those gentlemen who have been selected to wield the powers of government; but will endeavor to render unto Caesar those things which belong to Caesar. The act abolishing imprisonment for debt has not been in force a sufficient length of time to prove its utility by experience—the surest criterion to determine its influence in society, whether salutary or pernicious. In order therefore, that we may judge of the real worth of this legislative act, it becomes necessary for us to inquire what were the laws of Indiana, relative to imprisonment for debt, prior to the last session of the legislature—what were the grievances experienced by the people under those laws, and how far the present law will probably remedy or enlarge those evils.—From the language of this modern Franklin, a person unacquainted with the history and laws of Indiana, would readily suppose that our system of jurisprudence had tolerated the merciless creditor in the odious and barbarous practice of ancient tyranny—that of confining his poor and unfortunate debtor within the walls of a solitary prison, there to linger out the remains of a wretched life, to satiate the revengeful passions of disappointed avarice. But on an examination of our laws from the origin of our government down to the present period, it will be found that a restraint upon the personal liberty of the debtor, has been suffered only for the purpose of compelling him to deliver up his estate, for the benefit of his just creditors,—this object being effected, our laws have ever shielded his person from the incensed feelings of an injured creditor. The framers of our State Constitution have amply guarded the person of the debtor, after surrendering his estate for the payment of his just debts against restrictive imprisonment. In addition to this constitutional barrier against the personal oppression of the debtor, the humanity of our laws long prior to the session of this "Franklin's" favorite legislature, secured the debtor in the enjoyment of personal property to the value of one hundred dollars, against the rapacity of an injured and perhaps necessitated creditor. Here, "Franklin," I would ask, what were the evils arising from those laws regulating the collection of debts? Did they sufficiently protect the rights of the creditor against the fraudulent designs of the debtor? If not, then the last legislature have increased the evil by weakening that protection. Did they afford too great facility to the creditor in enforcing his just demands? If so, then the law of the last legislature remedies the evil, for it surely renders the collection of debts more difficult and less certain. Did the old law enable the creditor to pursue his debtor with too much vigor, for the use of Religion, Morality and Humanity, proper in our beloved country? *how*—is Religion wounded by enforcing justice? Cannot moral obligation

be legally enforced without ignoring the use of morality? Or must the path of justice be obstructed to force the cause of Humanity? If the cause of Religion, Morality and Humanity, continue to be supported by such new laws and legislators, will not "many good men" shortly have an inviolable desire for the services of the slaves of Kentucky, instead of their "emancipation," and will not men soon dare to be dishonest?

PLUGHBOY.

LITTLE JACK.

Or the substance of a story related by the Rev. Mr. S—d at a meeting of the Young Men's Bible Society, in the city of Baltimore, in March, 1822.

I should not, said Mr. S. have mentioned the fact, I am going to relate, had it not been brought to my recollection by a remark in the report of the Young Men's Bible Society, (which he quoted, and which purported that the value of one soul would more than compensate for the trouble and expense of all the Bible societies in the world.) For the truth of the fact as far as relates to the communication I vouch, said Mr. S. for I was present and heard it myself.

At a meeting of the Bath (England) Bible Association, the weather proving to be uncommonly inclement, the speakers who were expected, living at some distance, did not attend.

The president of the meeting fearing a disappointment might have an unfavourable effect on the assembly, gave an invitation to any person who would relate any thing connected with the interests of the Bible Societies, to come forward. A well dressed, decent looking man advanced to the platform, and with much apparent modesty & humility proceeded, in an artless and simple manner to relate the following fact:

In the country of Devon there lived a man dejectedly and notoriously wicked, and of so cruel and ferocious a disposition, as in some instances to extinguish his natural affection for his own offspring.—One day taking his little son by the hand who was big enough to walk, he strolled towards the cliffs, which in those parts overhang the sea and laid himself down upon the grass; his little playful son in the mean while amused himself with picking up pebbles and throwing them down at the feet of his father, who in a churlish mood, having two or three times bidden him to desist, without being obeyed, gave vent to his rage, and with a kick, which prostrated the child upon the ground, left the poor creature screaming with anguish, and walked away. The unhappy little sufferer having so far recovered as to get in his feet, wandered so near the cliff as to fall over, & was precipitated into the sea, but the air in his petticoat, for he still wore that, the infantile garment broke the force of his fall, and prevented from immediately sinking. It happened that at that time a man of war, which was lying in the offing was just then returning from a watering place, and seeing an object floating upon the water, rowed up to it, took him and carried him on board the ship.

The sailors made a pet of him and called him little Jack; and when he became old enough for service, made him a powder monkey (a title given to those who carry cartridges to the gunners.)

This ship with some others of inferior size, having had a severe engagement with the enemy, and many being wounded, Little Jack the powder monkey, was employed in waiting on the surgeon.

Among the wounded who were brought from the other vessels for surgical aid, was a man, both of whose legs were shot away by a chain shot, and the bone so shattered as to prevent any cure from amputation.—Death had indeed already begun to play about his heart: while he lay in the mortal agonies, he fixed his eyes steadfastly upon Little Jack, and having yet power to speak, asked the boy who he was, and whence he came? He told him what he had heard the sailors relate, and which was all that he knew of himself.

The wounded man who recognized the features of his son in the boy, was now convinced it must be him.

I am, said he, that ugolly brutal father, who left you upon the cliff, (relating the particulars,) from whence you must have fallen into the sea.

Beginning to grow uneasy, I returned to the place where I had left you; but you had disappeared—all my researches proved in vain; I could gain no tidings of you. Supposing that you perished through my cruelty, I became frantic with grief, and was on the point of putting an end to my existence; but, finally in hopes of finding some relief from my misery, I entered on board a ship of war.—Having returned from a cruise, while laying in port, a gentleman (a member of a Bible Society) came on board and asked permission of the captain to distribute some bibles among the ship's company.

It fell to my lot to receive one, which became the means of my conversion to God; and now I have redemption in the blood of Jesus Christ, even the forgiveness of all my sins. I have but a few moments to live, the hands of death are upon me; I have no will to make, not having any thing to leave you save the Bible, taking it from his bosom and presenting it to him in the language of David to Solomon. "And thou Solomon my son know thou the God of thy fathers; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; and if thou forsake him he will cast thee off forever." As he ended the quotation his voice faltered, and he sunk into death.

The speaker said Mr. S—d, admitted that so strange a story might seem incredible, but the tears starting from his eyes, he put his hands into his bosom, drew out a book, and said this is the Bible, and I am Little Jack.

One of the Hearers.

By the following extract from the Columbian Star, it appears that the Freemasons are disposed to unite in the great and noble employment of sending Missionaries to Foreign parts:—"The Freemasons in New-Haven, (Conn.) have formed an association, termed "The New-Haven Masonic Palestine Missionary Society," for the purpose of advancing the progress of Gospel light in the Holy Land. This is the second association of the kind with our knowledge.—The Masons are a numerous, rich, and respectable body; & might most essentially aid the great cause of truth—an object coincident with their professed aims, and congenial with the principles on which their order purports to be founded."

By an arrival at New-York.

ERUPTION OF MOUNT VESUVIUS.

The Gazette of Naples, of the 25th of October, mentions that the Churches of the capital were crowded with its inhabitants, returning thanks to God for having preserved it from the danger with which it was threatened, by one of the most terrible eruptions of Mount Vesuvius that ever occurred. On that day only, the columns of fire, stones, and ashes which the volcano threw up, had begun to diminish. Several thousands of the inhabitants of the neighborhood had taken refuge in Naples; the roads were blocked up with stones and ashes.—The noise of the several explosions was tremendous, and the shock of each, as the mountain rocked, was felt on every side for miles. The torrent of lava in the direction of Resina, covered at once more than a hundred acres, and about two hours after sunrise, on the 21st October, it was seen rolling onward about a mile in width. Ashes fell in the streets of the city of Naples.

Terrible Earthquake.—The London papers, by the James Cropper, contain the particulars of a most dreadful earthquake in Syria. It happened on the 18th of August, and slight shocks continued to be felt till the 9th of October. Aleppo, Antioch, and every village and detached cottage in that district or province, were in 10 or 12 seconds reduced to a heap of stones and rubbish; 20,000 human beings, constituting one-tenth of the population were destroyed, and an equal number maimed or

wounded! The shock was experienced at Damascus, Adana and Cyprus. "It was felt at sea so violently within two leagues of Cyprus, that it was thought the ship had grounded. Flashes of fire were perceived at various times throughout the night, resembling the light of the full moon; but at no place has it left a chasm of any extent, although in the low ground slight crevices are every where to be seen, and out of many of them water issued, but soon after subsided. The awful darkness, the continuance of the most violent shocks at short intervals, the crash of falling walls, the shrieks, the groans, the accents of agony and despair of that long night, cannot be described. The imagination must be left to picture to itself these awful and dreadfully magnificent scenes of horror and human suffering.

SPRING GOODS.

JAMES RIDGE

Has just received a large and splendid Assortment of

SPRING GOODS,

together, with a complete Assortment of

HARDWARE,
QUEENSWARE,
GLASSWARE,
GROCERIES,
LIQUORS,
HOLLOWWARE,
SALT,

UPPER AND SOAL LEATHER, Eastern tanned. &c. All of which will be sold low, at wholesale and retail, at my Store, in Jeffersonville.

N. B. The highest price, for any Quantity of good

BACON,

will be given. Apply as above.

J. RIDGE,

March 5, 1823.

238—H.

100 Dollars

(IN COMMONWEALTH'S PAPER)

REWARD.

Ran off from the subscriber on Sunday last, the 2d instant, a Negro Boy, named,

DAVY,

nineteen or twenty years of age, about five feet, seven or eight inches high, has rather a down look, slender made, uncommonly black; his clothing, as well as can be recollected, are a blue cloth Coat and light blue Pantalons; his other clothing are not particularly recollected.

The above reward of One Hundred Dollars, will be paid to any person, who will deliver said Negro to the subscriber, living on Harrod's creek, Jefferson county Kentucky, or confine him in any jail in the United States, giving me information thereof immediately, so that I get him again.

GEORGE F. THORNTON.

Jefferson County, (Ky.)

March 4, 1823

N. B. The Editors of the "Indiana Republican," printed in Madison, are requested to insert the above three weeks, and transmit their account to

G. F. T.

SHERIFF'S SALE.

BY virtue of a writ of *Fieri Facias* issued from the Clerk's office of the Floyd Circuit Court, I shall expose to public sale at the door of the House now occupied by Gabriel J. Floyd, in New Albany, on Saturday the 22d inst. a LOT, lying near the town of New Albany, and bounded as follows, to wit: on the north and west by lands owned by Jacob Marcell, on the north and east by the line of the Illinois Grant, on the east and south by lands owned by Joel Scribner, and on the south and west by the Vincennes road, containing five acres.

Out Lot, letter A, between Lower Spring and Lower Market streets, 130 feet in front and rear, and 352 feet deep. Also, Lot, letter C, between Lower Spring and Lower Market streets, 160 feet in front and rear and 352 feet deep. Taken as the property of Wendelen Wustefeld, to satisfy the aforesaid execution.

JAMES BESSE.

Sh'ff Floyd county.

New Albany, March 5, 1823.