

Caldwell sat in his door at the cool of the day and breathed the wonderfully bracing mountain air; and great marches of mountain and valley spread out before him.”

I lay down my pen with a feeling that I have not done justice to my subject, and with a regret that the work had not been wrought by an abler hand. I trust, however, and believe, that the simple facts I have related will be found to carry the highest eulogy in themselves, and fully justify all I have written.

DR. EDWIN JAMES.

BY L. H. PAMMEL, PH. D.,

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(Concluded from October *Annals*.)

Doctor James was considered excellent authority upon all matters relating to the American Indians, and Mr. Bancroft, in preparing his *History of the United States*, relied greatly upon the articles by him which appeared from time to time in various periodicals. In the twentieth edition of the history, acknowledgment, in the form of marginal notes, is made of this debt. An article published in the *Philadelphia Transcript*, for instance, was the source of the following in Bancroft:

Materialism contributed greatly to the picturesque brilliancy of American discourse. Prosperity is as a bright sun or a cloudless sky; to establish peace, is to plant a forest tree, or to bury a tomahawk; to offer presents as a consolation to mourners, is to cover the grave of the departed; and if the Indian from the prairies would speak of griefs and hardships it is the thorns of the prickly pear that penetrate his moccasins. Especially the style of the Six Nations was adorned with noble metaphors, and glowed with allegory.*

The grammatical formation of the Indian languages differs greatly from that of English. In an article in the *American Quarterly Review*, Doctor James speaks of the difficulties encountered in arranging the paradigm of a Chippewa verb. Bancroft draws largely from this paper in the following,

*Bancroft's *Hist. of the U. S.*, vol. 3, p. 257.

which we quote in order that we may estimate more clearly the task which Doctor James had undertaken :

There are in the American dialects no genuine declensions: it is otherwise with conjugations. The verbs have true grammatical forms, as fixed and as regular as those of Greek or Sanscrit. The relations of number and person, both with regard to the agent and the object, are included in the verb by means of significant pronominal syllables, which are prefixed, inserted or annexed. The relations of time are expressed by the insertion, in part, of unmeaning, in part, it may be, of significant syllables; and, as many supplementary syllables may not always be easily piled one upon another, changes of vowels, and elisions, take place; and sometimes, also, unmeaning syllables are inserted for the sake of euphony. Inflection, agglutination and euphonic changes, all take place in the conjugation of the Chippewa verb. Of varieties of terminations and form the oldest languages and those of the earliest stage of development, have the most.

But not only does the Algonquin verb admit the number of forms required for the diversity of time and mode; it has also numerous conjugations. An action may be often repeated and a frequentative conjugation follows. The idea of causation, which the Indian does not conceive abstractly, and can express only synthetically, makes a demand, as in the Hebrew, for a new conjugation. Every verb may be used negatively, as well as positively; it may include in itself an animate object, or the object may be inanimate; and whether it expresses a simple action, or, again, is a frequentative, it may have a reflex signification, like the middle voice of a Greek verb; and every one of these accidents gives rise to an entire series of new forms. Then since the Indian verb includes within itself the agent and the object, it may pass through as many transitions as the persons and numbers of the pronouns will admit of different combinations; and each of these combinations may be used positively or negatively, with a reflex or causative signification. In this manner, changes are so multiplied, that the number of possible forms of a Chippewa verb is said to amount to five or six thousand; in other words, the number of possible variations is indefinite.

Such are the cumbersome processes by which a synthetical language expresses thought. For the want of analysis, the savage obtains no mastery over the forms of his language; nay the forms themselves are used in a manner which to us would seem anomalous, and to the Indian can appear regular only because his mind receives the complex thought without analysis. To a verb having a nominative singular and an accusative plural, a plural termination is often affixed.*

In his description of the manners, political institutions and religious faith of the Indians, Bancroft, using Doctor James'

* Bancroft's *Hist. of the U. S.*, vol. 3, p. 261.

article on Tanner as the source of his material, writes as follows:

The hunting tribes have the affections of men; but among them also, extremity of want produces like results. The aged and infirm meet with little tenderness; the hunters as they roam the wilderness, desert their old men; if provisions fail, the feeble drop down, and are lost, or life is shortened by a blow.* * * *

Solemn rites precede the departure of the warriors; the war-dance must be danced and the war-song sung. They express in their melodies a contempt of death, a passion for glory; and the chief boasts that "the spirits on high shall repeat his name." And with the pride which ever marks the barbarian, each one adds, "If any man thinks himself a great warrior I think myself the same."† * * *

The woods, the wilds, and the waters, respond to savage intelligence; the stars and the mountains live; the river, and the lake, and the waves, have a spirit. Every hidden agency, every mysterious instance, is personified. A god dwells in the sun, and in the moon, and in the firmament; the spirit of the morning reddens in the eastern sky; a deity is present in the ocean and in the fire; the crag that overhangs the river has its genius.‡

These excerpts from Bancroft indicate clearly the reputation that Doctor James had established as a close observer and reliable authority in regard to all pertaining to Indian life.

CHANGE OF LOCATION AND MORE ABOUT THE CHOLERA.

In those days as now, it was necessary for appointments in the army to come from Washington. Doctor James wanted to be stationed in the east, and the following letters have to do with this desired change:

Annapolis, Aug. 4th, 1832.

My Dear Brother:

Yours of July 27th gave me great satisfaction. We have felt the deepest anxiety for you, knowing that you must be called to very severe trials whilst the pestilence is at work in your city and in the midst of your friends and associates. We rejoice to hear that in your own case it has been mild, and we infer that our other relatives have escaped it altogether. I hope you will soon find yourself so much at leisure that you can favor me with farther hints of practice as I cannot and do not expect that we shall be exempted altogether from its visitations at this place. You will probably have observed that it has broken out with

* Bancroft's *Hist. of the U. S.*, vol. 3, p. 273.

† *Ib.*, vol. 3, p. 281.

‡ *Ib.*, vol. 3, p. 286.

great violence at Portsmouth and other places on the shores of the Chesapeake southward of us. Baltimore is yet free of it, also Washington, Alexandria and the other towns immediately about us. Annapolis at this time is entirely healthful and the weather so extremely warm that I find myself almost induced to abandon it at all risks. It is one of those arid and scorched sand beds of which there are no doubt a number along the alluvial border of the Southern States, any of which a man would abandon in these days of dog-days if he could. But as I cannot, I am induced to seek occupation as the only source of relief from that horrible depression which results from the state of the atmosphere. I cannot expect you to turn aside one moment from your duties, but I will thank you to direct your boy to pack all my Indian manuscripts and the few classic and Hebrew books which I left at your house in the small box with the uniform, coat, hat, spurs, sword, and knives and forks and if there is any space remaining with bed, table or other linen or any such articles from the large box as would be useful for housekeeping, and let it be directed to me here. I find I can print the N. T. in Chippewa here for about 800D. of which I think 600 are already pledged. Would you not under these circumstances and considering our pressing need of something to do, advise me to go on even with the prospect of some small loss? Or rather I might say on the plan of casting my bread upon the waters. I shall wait for your advice, at all events I cannot well proceed until the MSS. arrive. All letters which may be therefor could be put into the box with the books. I have never heard a word more in relation to the Temperance Agency mentioned by Mr. Delavan in his letter to me. I conclude the pestilence has suspended everything of that kind.

Dr. Smith, whose place I fill here for the time, is gone to the Indian wars, where for many reasons I would not wish to be; he may I think return within two or three months. If he does I expect to go to Philadelphia but I have had doubts since coming here whether that climate is not a little too ardent for me. I am willing however if I live to give it a trial and perhaps I may exchange for a northern station if I find it too warm.

I imagine you have little time to read long letters. This is one of business and to urge you to write often however short. We wish to hear from you *very often*, and it is our constant prayer that as your day so may your strength be.

My wife and sister who are with me wish to be very affectionately remembered.

As ever,

E. JAMES.

Annapolis, Aug. 23, 1832.

My Dear Brother:

You need not doubt my disposition to admit your apology for not having attended to the troublesome commission contained in my last letter, and I beg you will give yourself no manner of concern or anxiety in relation to those things either now or hereafter. So great and absorbing is the anxiety and distress of the time that I cannot proceed with the printing of the Indian Testament and I must perforce turn my thoughts to other subjects. Yours of the 15th which was written in a moment of great depression has given us occasion to sympathize most deeply with you in the trying scenes which you are called to witness, and we tremble for you lest your strength should not be adequate to sustain you in all the emergencies which your professional and other relations must render unavoidable. That letter I should have answered much sooner, according to the regular course of the mails, but I did not receive it until last evening on my return from Baltimore where I have been spending a few days for the purpose of observing cases of cholera, the treatment adopted, &c. The disease there in the situations where I witnessed it (the New Alms House and the Cholera Hospital) surpasses in malignity all that I have heretofore seen and if possible what I have imagined. But it is there of course in a mass of materials most completely ripened and ready for its reception. In my own little territory here I have for some time been skirmishing with the enemy's pickets and I apprehend he will soon be here in force. The only favorable augury I have yet been able to make for this place is derived from the fact that the usual endemic diseases of the season are becoming clearly developed as I have now under my care well marked cases of remitting and intermitting fever. On the other hand I have noticed an extremely sickly and dejected look among the dogs, and accounts of sickness and mortality among hogs (whether true or false I know not) are frequent. As to treatment of cholera, it appears to me thus far not difficult in the forming state, but after collapse all the methods I have seen appear equally inadequate and hopeless. Dr. W——— at the New Alms House, bleeds, gives calomel, opium, stomachics, quinine, the vapour bath (of burning spirits) &c. &c. Dr. J——— at the Cholera Hospital, commenced with large doses of brandy and laudanum; has broached a pathological system which assigns the kidneys as the seat of the disease and *ureah* in the brain as the exciting cause of the collapse or asphyxia and in accordance with this view has given Tinct. Canthar. and the like, but as far as I can see none are well satisfied with their own views of the disease or its treatment. I confine this remark of course to the intelligent and ingenuous part of the profession.

In relation to the more immediate business of your letter, the proposition to resign and come to Albany, I am unable without further reflection and deliberation to give a definite answer. I fear greatly,

that the duties of your station are becoming too onerous for you. If this is indeed the case and if you can certainly foresee that my presence and assistance will afford you any relief, any exemption from cares and toils, you have only to say the word and I will come to you. I give myself no anxiety on the subject of business arrangement. My situation in the army affords an humble independence with a remarkable exemption from many of the cares and annoyances attendant on private practice, while on the other hand there is the unsettled way of life, the chance of unpleasant stations, disagreeable commanding officers and the like, all of which you are pretty well able to estimate, and I am well assured you would not desire any arrangement unless it were on the whole judicious and advisable for both of us. At the present time I have my settled dislike to alluvial districts, southern climates and a zealous detestation of miasms, urging towards the measure you propose—and *per contra* the promise of a station at Philadelphia where by the way the heat of summer is very intense, and the consideration that my long period of service entitles me now to some of the customary advantages of age and *rank* in the small way of the Medical Dept. These considerations are however nothing when compared with the preservation of your health and the enjoyment of that exemption from toil to which your claim is certainly better than mine. I hope you will write me immediately and very frankly and particularly on this point. If I can strengthen your hands and encourage your heart in any considerable degree I ought to be there and of this you can probably judge better than I can. I would be found in the way of duty, and at present do not feel that I must give myself much anxiety in relation to those things which perish on the using.

We are here as yet in good health, though my little boy acknowledges the effect of the climate in his peaked looks and languid movements and I myself having constantly the fear of miasm before my eyes am becoming more and more attenuated. I am alarmed almost at your three attacks of cholera. Are you in every possible respect prudent and cautious? As I am like Queen Elizabeth *of the just stature* I will tell you how I live. I sleep in a chamber with free ventilation, on a sack-ing bottom; for breakfast black tea without milk, very stale bread toasted, fresh butter, sometimes half an ounce of beef or mutton steak rare; at dinner mutton broth with a little okra or gumbo and rice, stale bread, rain water for drink; tea, same as breakfast but without animal food of any kind. All garden vegetables and fruits of every description which are abundant and very good here are proscribed as are pump and spring water and all other fluids of every name and nature. Living thus I have thus far enjoyed a total exemption from abdominal derangements which is what I did by no means expect, after the many changes of climate, and place, and a sea voyage of ten or twelve days with 200 boxes of decaying lemons. I hope you will give careful atten-

tion to all the minutiae of diet and regimen, and avoid entirely as I do exposure to the direct rays of the sun by the use of an umbrella, covered gig, &c.

My wife wished to be particularly remembered. We regret to hear of the misfortune of Mr. Spilman, and we hope and pray that a time of rest for your devoted city may be near at hand. Let us hear often if you have only time to write ten words, for we are uneasy when we do not hear from you often. Love to all. As ever.

E. JAMES.

Annapolis, Nov. 1st, 1832.

My Dear Brother:

The account of your visit to Vermont is to me something like a vision of the world before the flood. My early impressions are certainly not obliterated, and perhaps not much impaired, but between me and Vermont there is so long a succession of perplexed and intricate passages, that I seem to remember things here as a distinct vision, rather than as part and parcel of my present existence. And Felix Benton and Dunning are still among the living. When we were children, they had children of adult age. They must be old, or we ourselves are younger than I imagine. I was last night visited by one of those clear, distinct and unpremeditated dreams which I am superstitious enough to consider ominous of something, but I never pretend to say what. Brother Daniel and yourself arrived at Annapolis to make me a visit and I looked with much astonishment upon your two clear, bright curly heads and endeavored to account to myself for the venerable grisly hue of my own which I was determined to consider physically premature, and only an indication of ripened wisdom. I am half in love with those old well remembered mountains in Vermont, but I must confess also a growing partiality for the milder climates of our more temperate regions. Is there no part of the mountainous district of the Southern States or of Arkansas that would suit us better for an asylum in our old age than the low alluvial of Georgia or Florida? To answer this question you should have the opportunity for personal exploration, which I am anxious to do all in my power towards giving you, but as yet I know not whether I have any prospect of coming to Albany this winter. The Surgeon of this Station is expected daily. He was at Cincinnati with the detachment from Fortress Monroe (near Norfolk, Va.) on the 14th Oct. The march from Gyandot to Richmond should have been made in about 15 days from Richmond here by steambot about 4. I have letters often from my family in Philadelphia and have the satisfaction to hear that my little son has recovered his usual health. The croup was succeeded by an inflammation of the kind you mention terminating in suppuration in one or both ears. This latter affection, not preceded by croup is extremely common among the children in the Northwest but I have never observed that the organs of hearing are

permanently injured by it. Is it or is it not seated without the tympanum, and analogous to the inflammation of certain mucous membranes? I mean does it not occasion a purulent discharge without any mutilation? * * * We have at last (on the 29 Oct.) had a smart frost and our autumnal fevers are disappearing. They have here a malignant form of bilious fever which though often possibly intermittent proves fatal at the second or third paroxysm. It is a good deal like the Cholera as it appeared in Baltimore that is in pathological condition. But on the whole I should think this climate even here in the alluvial region more healthful than almost any part of New England. The alternations of temperature and of moist and dry are not so great and frequent. At this time potato vines and other tender plants such as tobacco and beans are merely nipt and not killed to the ground and in some years they have not a frost before Christmas. The heats of summer are also greatly modified by the diurnal winds and the proximity of large bodies of salt water. But the soil is thin and meagre and Slavery the great abomination which maketh desolate is like a mildew upon everything. I have written to Henry touching the Florida project (he having informed me that he is one of those principally connected) and dwelling somewhat at length upon the difficulties we shall have to encounter principally in consequence of the slaveholding in the South. I suppose you have reflected upon all these difficulties but I think you are not and never will be fully aware of the evils of a slave population until you come to hold property and have business to do in a slave country. Everything which is left to the care of slaves seems to go to ruin. Take an instance, a gentleman here has a herd of cows and proposes to himself to make money by supplying the market with butter. His pastures are two or three miles from town, and on my way out in my afternoon walk I commonly meet a negro bringing them in to be milked. He rides a smart trotting horse and comes in at a brisk trot which gait the cows have so well learned that they trot as naturally and about as well as the horse and it probably never enters the head of the master or man that any other gait would be better for them. In consequence of management like this butter is commonly 31 cents a pound in market and not always to be had at that price. In Florida I conclude everything must be done by slave labor, for even here free blacks, and laboring whites (or whites who should labor and would, were it not slavish) are a little worse than the slaves themselves. A way of remedying this evil might be to take mechanics and laborers from the East and this would I apprehend be cheaper than to depend upon such as could be had in the South. You cannot I think be fully aware of the semi-barbarous manner in which [most?] of the Southern people live, even the wealthy [living?] in the cities, and it must be much worse with the agriculturalists. Your semi-annual colony of invalids and idlers would however take this entire domestic establishment with them, and this would be indispensable to

secure their comfort. Eastern people particularly those in bad health could not live on bacon and hominy cooked by the most approved wenches of the South, and they would not go intending to depend altogether upon the Southern people for society which constitutes so important an item of the wants of so many persons. I may be fastidious or I may have fallen generally among bad specimens but to me the manners of the Southern people seem like everything else about them spoiled by Slave-holding. You will however make your explorations either by yourself or an agent before you come to any definite settlement of your plan. In the meantime let me know what your means and intentions are and rely upon my co-operation and assistance so far as it shall be in my power to render them. As the momentous Electoral election will soon have passed I shall be hoping for an answer to my application for Albany or Watervliet but my expectations are not high, though I was never more desirous of the arrangement than at this time.

Remember me to all friends.

As ever,

E. JAMES.

Philadelphia, Nov. 16, 1832.

My Dear Brother:

I arrived here yesterday from Washington where I was not able entirely to complete the business on which I went in consequence of the absence of the Secretary of War. I have however received assurances from the Surgeon General which induces me to consider it nearly certain that I shall be stationed at Albany. He gave me however one hint which may be useful and I am sorry that it has not occurred or been made to me before. It is that I should be careful not to have it understood or said at Albany that I am applying to come there as a Surgeon of the Army. He is apprehensive of memorials from the friends of the citizen who has heretofore been employed there which would embarrass him in effecting the final arrangement. This may possibly have occurred to you or for other reasons you may not have made your intentions known to the party concerned. I hope you have not but the purpose of my writing at this time is principally to caution you on this head. Since it appears that something like trick or finesse is required in gaining a clear and acknowledged right, it may be proper to keep my plans altogether in the dark, or if I should come to Albany in about a week from this time, it may be said that I am on a visit and do not know where I shall be stationed, which will indeed be the truth, until I receive my order. In the mean time I shall wish to hear from you immediately (please direct to 175 Walnut st.) in relation to arrangements for living. Shall we come immediately to your house, breakfast, tea and sleep there, dine at an eating house or shall we take furnished lodgings, board out or how? I have stated to the Surgeon General that the arrangement if effected is to be a permanent one, and that prospectively I decline

promotion being now first on the list in order that I may be permanently established with you.

I find my family who as you recollect have been more than a month here, in good health, but the air of the city is rather trying to Edwin as I find it also to me. It must be cooler here than at Annapolis, and as I have been exposed to the autumnal air in that low and warm situation it may not be amiss for me to remain here in an intermediate climate some short time before proceeding to Albany. As however the season is now so far advanced I should rather not remain long.

I have nothing to add, at present, having written this time principally in consequence of the hint above alluded to which I received at Washington.

I remain as ever Dear Brother,

Yours very affectionately,

EDWIN JAMES.

MADE A SURVEYOR.

Doctor James entered into the agreement with Silas Read, Surveyor General of the public lands in Illinois and Missouri, to survey six townships of land in that district, and with his son, to survey nine other townships for the sum of \$300.00 for every mile of line run and marked. The work was completed but it seems that not enough money had been appropriated to pay for it. Doctor James and son, therefore, presented a memorial to the Commissioner of Public Land, praying compensation for loss sustained in the abrogation of contracts in the survey of public lands. The commissioner* recommended that the same be not granted.

The following letter touches somewhat upon his work in surveying. It is addressed to John James, Upper Alton (Ill.), for Dr. Fitch.

St. Louis, July 3d, 1844.

Dear Sister Mary and Brother John:

I have your note of this date. We are sorry to hear that Sister M. has been and is unwell. Should perhaps visit you now but that little Edwin Reeve is at present quite sick; teething and Summer complaint—So that we should feel very uneasy about him were we absent. As you say nothing to the contrary we conclude that Brother John is well.

I have been at home about eleven days. Having finished surveying on June 8th. I compute that between Feb. 26th when I left St. Louis and my return, I walked upward of 1000 miles. My health has been

*Rep. Comm. 358, U. S. Senate, 2d Sess. 32d Cong.

good. Edward Junior, I left on the west of the Missouri River at Fort Osage, 400 miles from this place waiting the falling of the water.

Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis.

He wishes to go to Iowa with the waggon and team which we were using in surveying, and as was often the case with us was water bound. I hope however he will be in Iowa about the 14th of this month when I expect to meet him there, and then perhaps he will return with me, but this is not yet fully determined on nor indeed that I shall return immediately.

We consider that the period of our sojourn in St. Louis is rapidly drawing to a close and our attention is more and more directed homeward.

Hennelton and the Doctor and children, except Edwin, are well. We remain in the little attic room where Brother John saw Clara and think it scarce worth while to seek a change. Have you abandoned the idea of coming to St. Louis to live? We would be very happy to see you here but know not what to advise. Accept much love from us both. Clara would write but she thinks she is not literary enough. The appropriation for copying field notes this year is smaller than usual but I think there is no doubt you will get your pay for what you have written within the year, say at the end of September or December. I shall have to wait the same length of time that you will but in the end it will come to us both; unless some unforeseen casualty changes the powers that be the money will come to us or our assigns in due time. I am very little aware of the movements of the great world without, having been very closely occupied with the field notes of the surveys since my return. I grieve that your state has adorned herself with another plume of infamy by the murder of the Smiths. All the world will cry shame upon the Suckers! Bloody Carthage, Bloody Alton!! Good men will shudder and turn pale years to come when they read the names of places where the prisoner of the state is not protected by the arm of the state and where men are butchered because they claim the right to speak their own thoughts and have their own opinions. You will have noticed the action of the Methodist general conference in the case of Bishop Andrews and the split in the Baptist church on the same question and will have been aware that these things are nuts for me. Perish the Union! has long been my most fervent prayer, believing that no mild remedy can bring us to our senses or rebuke effectually the murderous spirit of mob despotism under which we groan. Blood may and must flow to the horses bridles, for it is so predicted, but beyond that sea of blood there is a rock of peace. We or our descendants will reach it and then our feet shall be firm planted upon the Rock of Ages and

O'er our ransomed Nature
The Lamb for sinners slain.
Redeemer, King, Creator
Return in power to reign.

Excuse tediousness. I cannot speak here, those to whom I can write must expect to suffer accordingly but there is one remedy for them, I cannot make them read.

As ever yours affectionately,

EDWIN JAMES.

VIEWS ON JOHN BROWN.

In the following letter Doctor James expressed himself in vigorous language on the John Brown affair. The Mrs. Callahan mentioned was his housekeeper:

Burlington, Decr. 14th, '59.

My Dear Niece:

Your kind letter of November 29th is most thankfully received and affords me the highest satisfaction. It reads like a hymn of praise and thanksgiving to God for raising up among us so great a man as John Brown and giving him grace and strength to carry through to the end and finish with such admirable completeness his great and certainly not unavailing sacrifice. Oh that we white people may be benefited! The emancipation of the negroes was bound to come. It was not and could not be made possible for their slavery long to continue amid those great advances in productive industry possible only among free men, but every where among them in such triumphant progress. Slave driving and even slave breeding are too unprofitable to last long in the 19th century of Christianity, but I have had and still have my fears that the leprosy of this sin has so deeply polluted the blood and destroyed the moral stamina of the white race that our restoration is impossible. This mission of John Brown may awaken us. The Divine voice plainly has said to him "Son of man can these thy bones live?" He answered as *he* only could among us "Lord thou knowest." "Here am I send me." And that he was *God-sent* and *God-sustained* for the salvation of the most abandoned race of sinners earth ever saw—to-wit, the race of northern apologists for slavery. I have no doubt. Will they heed their emphatic warnings? Will they know in this, their day, the things that belong to their peace? Alas! Alas! How few Cheevers! How few to lift up their voice like a trumpet to show my people their transgression and the house of Israel their sin! How few like yourself to take the harp as did the Hebrew prophetess of old to call down curses on those who refuse like Meros to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty! Yet am I hopeful. There are throbbings as of life here and there among the people—indications that the public conscience will at some future time awake from the deathly torpors induced by narcotics administered in our infancy, the Godfrey's Cordial, the poppies and Madragoras of the constitution and its compromises and that we shall come forth a people worthy to stand up under the sun of the 19th century. I am aware if you judge our case by the Republicans we send to



Jamesia Americana named by Drs. Torrey and Gray, the genus.
Commemorating Dr. Edwin James

Congress and the Legislatures there is no hope for us. The door to hell the lowest and hottest stands open night and day, the infernal pit yawns just before us and down we must go unless God in his infinite compassion give us grace and wisdom to decline as did John Brown the leadership of such statesmen and such priests as are left to us in these degenerate days—unless we sternly resolve with leaders or without to do the thing that ought to be done. You will not understand me to approve John Brown's *war making*. Tho with his principles—his way of reading and understanding the Bible he was right and the only consistent man I know of. And the same praise belongs to the few that were his companions if they held his views. But such have never been my opinions of Christianity. I have supposed the anti-slavery weapons *not carnal*, have always maintained that the slave-holders may kill me if they like but I will never harm a hair of their heads. Such is still my way of thinking. But an anti-slavery man that votes and thinks cases may arise when he would fight, must, it seems to me, give John Brown his highest and most unqualified praise and if much developed in conscientiousness he will be likely at some time to rise up, go and do likewise. It is one of the worst omens of the times that Captain Brown could before his defeat at Harper's Ferry find so few to sympathize with him in politics, since that time, so few in religion, so few worshipers of John Brown's God. Truly I am afraid we are a God forsaken set. As to the negroes I am quite sure they must soon be free whether as a dominant caste as in Hayti or as co-ordinate, co-equal, co-religionists with their some-time masters I do not know or care because I think one race as good as the other.

Mrs. Callahan requests to be respectfully remembered to you and your father as one who has a sincere regard for you both and would consider it a great pleasure to see either or both of you again.

With cordial affection and esteem, I remain, your uncle,

E. JAMES.

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC WORK.

Doctor James shows fine literary ability in the works compiled and edited by him, also in his letters which are written with precision. In few instances do they show any erasures or corrections.

The literary spirit has appeared frequently in succeeding generations of the James family—a nephew, Henry James, was sent by the *New York Herald* as a staff correspondent to Brazil. His early death cut short a career of unusual promise. A grand nephew, Edwin James of Jamestown, Ia., but recently deceased, has done editorial work in St. Louis and Davenport,

and a brother of the latter, Henry James, of the *Philadelphia Daily Ledger*, who began his literary career as a reporter for the *Rocky Mountain News*, has acquired a reputation as a forceful thinker and editorial writer on papers of the far west—notably in San Francisco and Tacoma.

Doctor James was a keen observer as his volumes on the Expedition show. He made careful notes of all the conditions surrounding the different places along the route. Much of his time was given to the geology of the Expedition; his account of geological formations do not always conform to present designations, but it must be remembered that less was known of geology than botany in those days. He discovered several new species of plants, the *Aquilegia caerulea*, the Rocky Mountain columbine, which is the state flower of Colorado, also the *Pinus flexilis* found at the timber line on James' Peak. One Rosaceous plant is named after him—*Jamesia*. Of the columbine he says:

From our encampment we traveled nearly south, and, crossing a small ridge dividing the waters of the Platte from those of the Arkansas, halted to dine on a tributary of the latter. In an excursion from this place we collected a large species of Columbine, somewhat resembling the common one of the gardens. It is therefore unknown to the flora of the United States, to which it forms a splendid acquisition. If it should appear not to have been described, it may receive the name of *Aquilegia caerulea*. In a foot note the species is described as follows: "Leaves twice ternate; flowers terminal, remote; nectaries straight and very long. It inhabits sandy woods of pine, and spruce within the mountains, rising sometimes to the height of three feet."

He refers to other plants of the region in the following way:

In passing from the headwaters of the branch of the Platte called Defile creek, to those of one of the northern tributaries of the Arkansas, we notice some change in the soil, and soon met with many plants we had not seen before. Several of these, as the common juniper, and the red cedar (*Juniperus Virginiana*, Ph.), the black and hemlock spruce (*Abies nigra* and *A. canadensis*); the red maple (*Acer rubrum* Mx.); the hop-hornbeam (*Ostrya virginica* L.) the *Populus tremuloides* Mx. *Pinus resinosa*, *Pyrola secunda*, *Orchis dilatata*, etc., are common to mountainous districts in all the northern parts of the territory of the United States. A campanula, probably the *C. uniflora*, bearing a single flower about as large as that of the common hare-bell, occurs very frequently. Many others are here found which require more careful and extensive

comparison with the plants of Mexico, Siberia, and other countries than we have yet had the opportunity to make.

There is neither an *Abies nigra* nor *Canadensis*, he probably observed the *Picea Engelmanni* or the *Picea Parryana* and the Douglas spruce. The red maple referred to here is undoubtedly *Acer glabrum*. Hop-hornbeam does not occur. *Pinus resinosa* undoubtedly is *Pinus scopulorum*. The *Populus tremuloides*, *Pyrola secunda*, *Orchis (Habenaria) dilatata* and *Companula uniflora* are known to occur in the region visited by James. In another connection he refers to the description of a collection of fine plants in the following footnote:

One of these is a large and conspicuous plant of the natural family of the Cruciferae, which may be referred to the new Genus *Stanleya* of Nuttall, and distinguished as *S. integrifolia*. Stem simple, leaves entire, ovate, oblong, tapering to both ends; stem angular; flowers in a terminal raceme, which is a little branched below; about six inches in length. Stipe of the Siliqua, about as long as the pedicel. Flowers large, yellow. The whole plant seen at a little distance, has a remote resemblance to *Lysimachia thyrsoiflora*. The leaves are five or six inches long, two or three wide, glaucous and veined, in surface and color, nearly resembling those of the common cabbage which they are not wholly unlike in taste. The calyx is large, and of a brighter yellow than the other parts of the flower. It inhabits the summits of the sandstone ridges along the base of the mountains. The *S. pinnatifida*, N., the original type of this genus was found by its discoverer, Mr. Nuttall, to act as a violent emetic. It had been eaten as a substitute for cabbage by several of the party who accompanied him.

The *Stanleya integrifolia* James is recognized by botanists as a valid species.

He was interested in plants all through his life. The following is a letter from John U. Rauch to C. C. Parry:

Yours of June 20th reached me in due time, and was very sorry indeed to hear that you could not visit Burlington. Mr. James was very much disappointed, and begged me to assure you, that he would be happy to see you at any time. He was in my office on Saturday and in looking over the *Plantæ Wrightianæ* he was considerably amused to see that his opinion with regard to the *Cucurbita perennis* of Gray, he calling it *Cucumis perennis* was marked doubtful. He still thinks he is right, he told me Dr. Torrey first differed with him. He is as enthusiastic and ardent as ever, and remarked to me that he could walk one hundred miles to see a new plant, but would like to take the steam-

boat back. You would have been delighted with him. He has his peculiarities, and the masses cannot appreciate him, he is at least two hundred years ahead of the time in many things.

Think I shall not be able to attend the meeting of the American Scientific Association at Cleveland, as I intend going east in December, I shall have to remain home. Have not the least doubt that I would be gratified, and should be pleased to make the acquaintance of those who attend.

It shall afford me much pleasure to collect the fish and reptiles found here for the Smithsonian collection, also serve Prof. Baird in any capacity that I am able.

I am now engaged in preparing the proceedings of our State Society for publication, and I find it to be considerable of a job, fortunately for the honor of the Society, I was ordered empowered to correct, improve and revise them. The business and everything is mixed, owing to the neglect of the former officers. It is really discouraging, all the work falls on a few, and I for one am getting tired. I am hoping, however, that a better state of things will occur in a few years. This is all that buoys me up. Few will sacrifice a little of self, for the good of the profession. Hoping soon to hear from you, I am, yours truly,

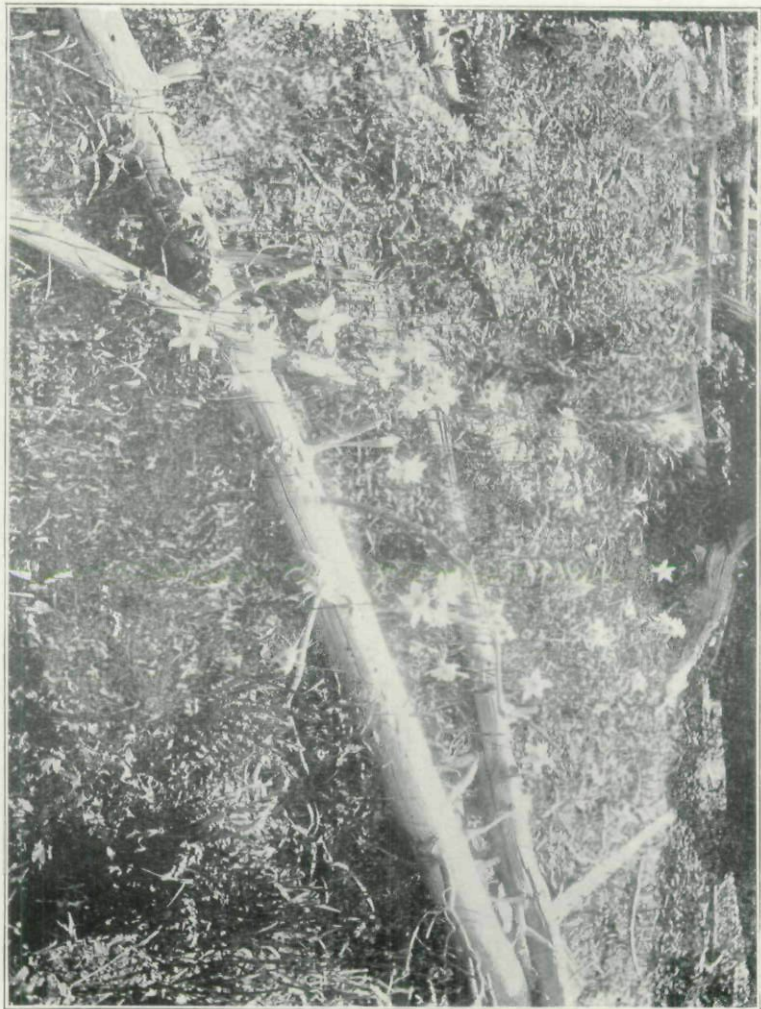
JOHN U. RAUCH.

References to the work of Thomas Nuttall and other early American botanists show that Doctor James was a student. So far as accuracy is concerned his notes are better than those made on the natural history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and stand as a monument to his indefatigable labors. They form the best account we have of early western explorations. It is to be regretted that his manuscripts, collections and papers were destroyed. After the death of his wife, orders were given to his housekeeper, Mrs. Callahan, to burn them. As has been previously stated his name should have been perpetuated in the mountain peak which for a time bore his name; it will be remembered, however, as long as *Jamesia* blossoms and the study of systematic botany engages the attention of man.

Dr. William Salter, of Burlington, writes as follows:

The life of Edwin James is worthy your thorough study. He was a remarkable man in many respects—personal, scientific, historic, moral and religious—a unique character.

Personally I only knew him as a mystic, a recluse, an abolitionist, a come-outer, an underground conductor for men “guilty of a skin not colored like his own,” a non-resistant, in fact a “John Brown”



The Rocky Mountain Columbina (*Aquilegia caerulea* James)
Photograph by Clements.

man, but never to the extent of taking up arms, more perhaps like a Tolstoi of to-day. I could never draw him out on his past life. He would not talk about himself. The last talk I had with him was about the beginning of the civil war. He was disturbed about it, and touching his bosom said he would gladly give up his own life rather than it should be. * * *

I was in Middlebury, Vt., last year, and passed by the "old James place" where some of his ancestors or kin once lived, and also the monument of Silas Wright, his honored friend, who was one year before him in college, afterwards Governor of New York, etc.

I copied from a letter of E. J. in *Vermont Hist. Magazine*, p. 113, the following written under date, Nov. 19, 1859: After speaking of his vigor and almost life-long virtue of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks, tea, coffee, tobacco, and bolted wheat flour, he says, "My native State has always had a large share of my regards, and as fears and forebodings for the south and west, at times come over me, I have looked back to her hills for a home, should a just retribution overtake us.

"The Vermonters are in all countries, south and west, and are mostly men one is glad to see and proud to take by the hand as fellow countrymen. Martin Scott of Bennington, found in the wilds of the west many sons of his boasted native State, worthy the grasp of a strong friendly hand—few nobler than himself. All are not like him. Here and there a 'pious Jones' is dealing faro at Chicago." He added, "Years ago the small pirogue of this writer collided with the powerful argosies of Princeton and Andover not much to the manifest damage of either, on the question of the miracle at Cana. Our moral intuitions, said I, are like our intellectual, both veritable, and of more authority than the text of Knapp or Griesbach. 'You are an ignoramus and a liar to boot,' said they."

A biographical sketch of Edwin James written by Dr. C. C. Parry, prefaced with a note by Dr. Asa Gray, appeared in the *American Journal of Science*, 2d ser., vol. 33, pp. 428-430, from which the following extracts are made. The last paragraph was contributed by Dr. Wm. Salter:

Dr. Edwin James died at Rock Spring, near Burlington, Iowa, on the 28th of October, 1861, at the age of 64 years. As the earliest botanical explorer of an alpine region, in which Dr. Parry has recently much interested the readers of this journal, it is with peculiar propriety that the following biographical notice of this pioneer of Rocky Mountain botany is furnished by Dr. Parry.

A. G.

* * * The efficient labors of Dr. James in this arduous trip, may be readily inferred from the published scientific results. Interesting additions were made to our knowledge of the botany of the great plains, at that time but imperfectly known. The elevated peaks, forming the outliers of

the Rocky Mountain range, rivaling in altitude the snowy summits of Mt. Blanc, revealed a flora of exceeding richness, and attracted the attention of botanists both of this country and in Europe. We can easily imagine the enthusiastic ardor with which the young naturalist, treading for the first time these alpine heights, gathered up its floral treasures, and scaled the snowy peak, which ought properly to bear his name. It is still unexplained why the recommendation of Col. Long, applying to this mountain the name of James' Peak, has not been adopted, by modern geographers. Amid the great number of elevated landmarks, of this region, some other peak, fully as appropriate, might have been selected to bear the name of the enterprising Pike.

On returning from this expedition, the attention of Dr. James was occupied, for about two years, in compiling the results of the same, which were published, both in this country and in Europe, in 1823. The work elicited no little interest, and is now a valued fund of historical and scientific facts.

On the completion of this work, Dr. James was for six or seven years connected with the United States army as surgeon, serving in that capacity at several of the extreme frontier posts. During this period, aside from his professional duties, he was occupied with the study of the native Indian dialects, and prepared a translation of the New Testament, in the Ojibwe language; subsequently published, in 1833. He was also the author of a life of John Tanner, a strange frontier character, who, was stolen when a child from his home on the Ohio river by Indians, among whom he was brought up, developing in his future eventful history a strange mixture of the different traits pertaining to his early life, and savage education.

On the reorganization of the medical department of the U. S. army in 1830, Dr. James resigned his commission, and returned to Albany, N. Y., where for a short time he was associate editor of a temperance journal, conducted by E. C. Delavan, Esq.

After leaving this, he concluded to make his home in the far west, and in 1836 he settled in the vicinity of Burlington, Iowa, where he spent the remainder of his life, devoted mainly to agricultural pursuits.

It was about this time that some peculiar traits, which distinguished Dr. James as a strange man, became more conspicuous. His mode of life, his opinions, and his views on moral and religious questions generally, were inclined to ultraism. Failing to find earnest sympathy, among those with whom he was thrown in contact, he gradually assumed the habits of a recluse. Indifferent always to public opinion, he marked out, and pursued his own course, without regard to the views of others. Strictly honorable in all his dealings with mankind, and naturally kind-hearted, he did not care to waste his sympathy where it would not be appreciated. With him to espouse a cause, was to carry it to the farthest possible extreme, often erroneous, and it is to be feared at times posi-

tively wrong. In full justice, however, to his many amiable traits, it must be admitted that his errors were on the side of goodness, and in all his waywardness, he never forfeited his self-respect, or the attachment of those who had known him in early life. In his personal appearance, Dr. James was tall, erect, with a benevolent expression of countenance and a piercing black eye.

“On the 25th of October, 1861, he fell from a load of wood, the team descending a small pitch of ground, near his house, and both wheels passed over his chest. He at once said that he was a dead man. He lingered, much of the time in great pain, until the morning of October 28th, when he expired at the age of 64 years.”

ANNALS OF IOWA—A committee of Publication, consisting of Rev. E. Oliver, E. Spencer, President of the State University, William Crum, Treasurer of the University, and George H. Jerome, Editor of *The Iowa City Republican*, appointed by the State Historical Society, have announced that they will publish during the month of April two numbers, and thereafter one number quarterly of a periodical, entitled “Annals of the State Historical Society of Iowa.” Each number will contain not less than fifty pages, making two hundred pages in the four numbers for the year 1863. Price 15 cents per number or 50 cents per year. All communications and subscriptions to be addressed to the “Librarian of the State Historical Society at Iowa City, Iowa.”

The object of this publication is to collect and preserve in a permanent form, facts connected with the early history of Iowa, before they are lost from the memory of observers of events, together with such biographical sketches and reminiscences of prominent citizens of the State as would otherwise fail to be recorded. Any persons having material or authentic manuscript of this kind will confer a favor by forwarding them to the Librarian of the Society.—*Iowa Religious Newsletter, Dubuque, April, 1863.*

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