

THE BANISHED BRITON  
AND  
NEPTUNIAN:

BEING  
A RECORD  
OF THE  
LIFE, WRITINGS, PRINCIPLES, AND PROJECTS

OF  
ROBERT GOURLAY, Esq.  
NOW  
ROBERT FLEMING GOURLAY.



"Oh that I were as in months past, — as in the days when God preserved me: — When his candle shined upon my head; and when, by his light, I walked through darkness: — As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle, — When the Almighty was yet with me, — When my children were about me. — But, now, they that are younger than I hold me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock." — Job xxix and xxx.

BOSTON:  
PRINTED BY SAMUEL N. DICKINSON.

1843.

*Sup. copy for  
Columbian*

to, Doctor Shurtleff  
with

*Mr. Everett's respects*  
*Marlboro Hotel - Sept. 2<sup>d</sup> 1844*  
**THE BANISHED BRITON**

AND

**NEPTUNIAN.**

**No. 1.**

*+ L. 53.124*

*To the Honorable House of Representatives of Massachusetts, in General Court assembled:*

**THE PETITION OF ROBERT FLEMING GOURLAY,**

**Humbly Sheweth,**

THAT your Petitioner is a native of the Parish of Ceres, in the County of Fife, Scotland;

That, he was employed by the British Government in the years 1800 and 1801, to travel through certain parts of England, and report as to plans for bettering the condition of the laboring Poor;

That, he did report in the month of March, 1801, and that, soon after, a Bill was brought into the House of Lords, by the President of the Board of Agriculture, to accomplish what your Petitioner had proved beneficial; but the Bill was thrown out, and for ten years thereafter the Poor were despoiled of their property and rights, till, in fact, the greater part were reduced to hopeless pauperism;

That, your Petitioner, foreseeing miserable consequences, did, in the same year, 1801, devote his life to bettering the condition of the Poor of England: has con-

tinued true to that resolve; nor has he yet abandoned his object.

That, in the year 1817, he, with others, had a petition presented to the House of Commons, exhibiting a scheme for relief of the Poor; but complete fulfilment requiring EMIGRATION, your Petitioner left home the same year, intending to land at New York, there to establish an Emigration Society, and to explain to the people of the United States his projects; but accident landed him in Canada, and gave rise to other projects for the same end;

That, in prosecuting these objects, your Petitioner stirred up jealousy in the Province, and was driven out of it;

That, he went on petitioning the British Parliament, during seven years, viz. from the year 1820 till 1827, inclusive, to draw attention to his benevolent designs, without avail, and did, thenceforth, turn his attention again to America for countenance;

That, he recrossed the Atlantic, 1833, again intending to establish Emigration Societies, but political ferment did then and till now render all hopeless;

That, the late treaty with Great Britain has once more revived hope, and he would be happy to lay his projects before the people of the United States, still,

That, the sole object of this Petition is, to record the above facts, with a view to after reference, and he now respectfully entreats your Honorable House will receive and preserve this Petition in order thereto:

And he will ever pray.

ROBERT F. GOURLAY.

*Marlboro' Hotel, Boston,* }  
*February 20, 1843.* }

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N. B. Presented same day, by OBED BARNEY of Nantucket, and received.

## TESTIMONIALS.\*

### TO CULTIVATORS OF WILTSHIRE.

Mr. Gourlay, late of Deptford Farm, now a candidate for the Chair of Agriculture in the Edinburgh University, invites the Cultivators of Wilts, to consider whether he may be qualified to fill that honorable situation.

*Published in Salisbury Journal, January 17, 1831.*

We the undersigned, Cultivators of land in the County of Wilts, to the extent written opposite our names respectively, are of opinion, from all we know and have heard, that Mr. Gourlay is well qualified to discharge the duties of the above-mentioned very important and highly honorable situation.

H. Biggs of Stockton House, occupying	1,200 acres.
John Davis of Bapton,	1,200
John Davis, Fisherton Delamere,	1,800
Robert Pinckney, Berwick St. James,	1,800
John Marsh, Heytesbury,	1,500
James Slade, Codford St. Peters,	800
Thomas Chandler, Ashton Gifford,	700
Ambrose Patient, Corton,	1,000
John Lush, Warminster,	800
John Bennet, Codford,	1,200
Thomas Bennet, Stockton,	600
William Bennet, Codford,	500
James Maton, Maddington,	1,500
John Perrior, Wily,	
William Futcher, Tevant,	400
Morgan Blandford, Sutton,	500

All residing within ten miles of Deptford Farm.

#### NOTE.

Finding, on my return from Upper Canada, that my whole property was out of possession, I resolved to enter as a student of Law in London; but on consulting my friend, now (1836) Sir John Campbell, Attorney-General of England, (now 1843 elevated to the Peerage, and sitting in the House of Lords,) he told me that the Benchers would not admit me, because of the sentence of banishment from Upper Canada.

In the year 1823 I was advised by a friend to lecture in London on Rural Economy; but, then, tortured with lawsuits in the Court of Chancery and House of Lords, I could not give steady attention to anything.

When the London University was erecting, I wrote to Mr. Hume, one of the Directors, offering myself for a Chair of Agriculture; and, under date July 27, 1827, wrote, thus, to a friend in Scotland (*the letter is printed in the Record of my private affairs*):—"as soon as my affairs are settled, I mean to start as a Land Agent; and my plan is to cross the Atlantic annually. Joined to that, I desire to be Pro-

\* Two hundred copies of these and other testimonials were printed in Scotland, in 1831. One copy was brought to America, and a selection reprinted at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1836, with the above note.

fessor of Agriculture in the London University, and shall, this day, dispatch for my daughters a newspaper, containing a letter of mine on that subject, which I wish published in the Fife Herald. I have been a constant student in this place, (*Cold Bath Fields State Prison*,) and am really better qualified than ever for any undertaking. I have kept up correspondence with the United States and Canada, where my present persecution will be even beneficial to me; and an Assemblyman of the latter country, now in London, gives me good assurances." Mr. Hume inquired and informed me, that there was to be no Chair of Agriculture in the London University.

The day that the death of Doctor Coventry, who had been Professor of Agriculture in Edinburgh from the foundation, nearly forty years, was announced in the newspapers, (December 22, 1830,) I addressed a letter to the Lord Provost, offering myself as a candidate, and requesting him to lay my letter, with accompanying documents, before the Council.

Immediately after this, I had various articles printed and circulated among the Cultivators of Fife and Wiltshire, that they might judge of my qualifications for the Professorship:—further, I dispatched, and had published, in the *Salisbury Journal*, what appears above; and the testimonial, signed by the Cultivators of Wiltshire, reached me on the 5th February, 1831,—the day after a Professor (Mr. Low) was elected by Delegates from the College, Town Council, and Court of Session.\*

Will it be believed, that these gentlemen, met thus early and before it was possible for candidates rightly to appear in their own behalf; nay, when many, qualified, throughout the Island, had scarcely time to apply for the Chair;—will it be believed, that such grave personages could meet and settle this point, of which not one of them could be a competent judge without much consultation with others;—will it be believed, that they could meet and record, in their minutes, that "*Mr. Low*" was "*the most accomplished and best qualified of the candidates*" (six in number);—will it be believed, that they could do this, and not even look into the documents sent by me for inspection;—will it be believed, that the Lord Provost suppressed my letter till members of the Town Council had pledged themselves to other candidates;—will it be believed, that my documents were returned to me *unopened*!!

It is all true, as I can prove by official correspondence; and it was to expose this shameful conduct that I then applied to my friends for certificates of character, of which I obtained *ten* from University Professors, *one* from a Civil Engineer, *seven* from Clergymen of the Church of Scotland, *three* from men of business; besides many from Agriculturists of the highest reputation, both in Scotland and England; and, lastly, from old servants, to whom I give the first place. I applied for the Chair, chiefly, that I might have opportunity of putting to shame the infamous scandals against which I had so long, and am still, contending—thinking there might be a comparative trial, before actual Cultivators. Even had I obtained the Chair, I should not have given up my present pursuits; and having *thus* lost it, may I hope, that, I shall be yet better for the loss,—more disentangled for the pursuit of greater objects.

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\* The Chair of Agriculture was endowed by Sir William Poulteny Johnson;—the same who began the settlement of the Genesee country (Western State of New York) by his agent, Captain Williamson. He ordered, that three Deputies from the Court of Session—the Town Council, and *Senatus Academicus*, should meet—nine in number—to elect the Professor. No doubt, concluding, that justice would thus be secured, and the public best served. Behold the practical issue!!

## FARM SERVANTS.

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I was bred to husbandry in Berwickshire, and before taking a farm for myself, went to England in 1813, for the purpose of acquiring more correct knowledge, and was two years in the service of Mr. Gourlay, on Deptford Farm, Wilts. I first hoed turnips, and a premium of ten guineas was gained for a field of twelve acres of Swedish turnips, the greater part of which was hoed by me. I afterwards held a plough, and gained the highest prize at a ploughing match.

Mr. Gourlay was much respected in Wiltshire, and well liked by his servants, although they did more work than those on any other farm. Deptford Farm was cultivated in a very superior style, and every operation upon it was most correctly performed. Indeed, in no part of the kingdom, have I seen some operations so well performed; nor could I have been master of them without practising, as I did, in Mr. Gourlay's service.

JAMES RENTON.

*Beechwood, near Edinburgh, Feb. 15, 1831.*

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I was bred to husbandry labor under my father, who occupied a small farm in the parish of Ceres, Fifeshire; and, in 1809, engaged to go with horses and implements to Deptford Farm in Wiltshire, where I remained in the service of Mr. Gourlay till October 1818. At first I held a plough, but for the greater part of the term superintended the farm operations.

Deptford Farm was very foul and irregularly laid out when we took possession, but was improved to the utmost by Mr. Gourlay; and I have never seen, either in Scotland or England, any farm so clean as it became, or so systematically managed. The Scotch plough was found not to answer. Mr. Gourlay then introduced into Wiltshire a wheel plough, which was afterwards very generally used in that country. With this plough many of Mr. Gourlay's servants, both English and Scotch, gained premiums for him and themselves, at the ploughing matches of the Bath and Wiltshire Agricultural Societies.

As I lived under the same roof with Mr. Gourlay seven years of my service in Wiltshire, I can safely affirm that his whole establishment, in and out of doors, was conducted in the most orderly manner. He was generally held in high respect by all classes, and particularly well liked by his servants.

Mr. Gourlay left home for Canada in 1817, all his affairs being then in the best possible order, and not a farthing due to any one in Wiltshire, so far as known to me. In the month of October following, agents of the Duke of Somerset beset the farm, unexpectedly demanding a half year's rent, just then become due, and greatly alarmed Mrs. Gourlay, by threatening to distrain on the furniture of the house.\* This half year's rent could have been paid from sales of grain in a few days, there being two threshing-machines on the farm; but the Duke's people would not suffer the grain to be threshed, and obliged Mrs. Gourlay to satisfy them otherwise, which greatly distressed her; and, in continued alarm, she abandoned the farm before another half year's rent became due. To all this I am ready to give my affidavit if required.

JOHN MUIRIE.

*Auchtermuchty, Ath March, 1831.*

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*Farnborough Park, Hampshire, 9th May, 1831.*

I was bred to husbandry labor in Fifeshire, and was in the service of Mr. Gourlay on Deptford Farm, Wilts, six years. That farm was managed in the most perfect manner, and there I learned much. The Scotch plough taken to England by

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\* The Duke owed me a balance of £385 when I left home, considerably above the amount of rent, and that not due till six months after my departure for Canada.

Mr. Gourlay, was found not to answer; and Mr. G. adopted an English plough of improved construction, with which I, and others of his servants, gained premiums at the ploughing matches of the Agricultural Society; and this plough was thereby introduced into very general use in Wiltshire.

I never saw labor conducted better, or laborers more cheerful and obedient, than all were on Deptford Farm; and, undoubtedly, if Mr. Gourlay had enjoyed quiet possession, he would have had a profitable concern of it. When he was abroad, agents of the Duke of Somerset frightened Mrs. G. about the payment of half a year's rent, which could have been obtained from sales of produce in a few days; but the agents would not suffer the threshing to proceed, and the farm was given up to another tenant, when it was in the highest condition.

I continued in Mr. Gourlay's service till October 1818, and with Mr. Andrews (the sub-tenant) till October 1819.

If required, I am quite willing to attest what is here written on oath.

ROBERT KENINMET,  
Bailiff to George Morant, Esquire.

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## PRACTICAL FARMERS.

*April 11, 1831.*

We, the undersigned, were well acquainted with Mr. Robert Gourlay in early life. His conduct was then that of a gentleman; and though we have been in his company at all hours, we never for a moment saw him out of humor.

His father being without question the most public spirited proprietor of land in the county, and most extensive improver, he had great advantages as to instruction; and was, before he left Scotland, generally allowed to be a good practical farmer.

Within the last three years he has often visited us; and after all the harsh treatment he has met with, we find him of the same amiable disposition as formerly, and still glowing with the spirit of philanthropy.

Respecting his abilities to have filled the honorable and important situation of Professor of Agriculture, we are of opinion, that after his many experiences in England and America, few indeed could be better qualified.

JOHN PITCAIRN, *J. P. Kinnaird,*  
FRED'K JOHNSTON, *Nisbetfield.*

*9th April, 1831.*

We, the undersigned, were intimately acquainted with Mr. Robert Gourlay, when he rented Pratis from his father, living, as we still do, within three miles of that farm. All of us then regarded him as an intelligent and enterprising farmer; and he was much esteemed in the neighborhood.

Within the last three years he has often visited us; and upon every occasion we have found him friendly, agreeable, and well informed. Considering his very liberal education and rare experiences, we are of opinion, that he might have filled the Chair of Agriculture with honor to himself and benefit to the public.

WM. BALFOUR, *Bandkhead.*  
JAMES LESLIE, *Largo.*  
ALEX. LESLIE, *Largo.*  
HALL PRINGLE, *Hatton.*

*Blaconhall, February 14, 1831.*

I have been intimately acquainted with Mr. Gourlay, now a candidate for the Professorship of Agriculture in the University of Edinburgh, for upwards of twenty years. I have staid weeks together with him while he occupied Deptford Farm in Wiltshire, and he has frequently since then staid equal periods of time on my farm near Chester.

In the year 1825 I surveyed Deptford Farm along with Mr. James Smith, an intelligent farmer of Hampshire, and made affidavit, along with him, that the remainder of Mr. Gourlay's lease was worth £1,200.

Mr. Gourlay made very great improvements on that farm; and, considering all that I know of him,—his liberal education, his practical experiences as a farmer in Fife and Wiltshire, his travels in America, and mature years,—I should think him well qualified to fill the important situation of Professor of Agriculture.

WILLIAM MURRAY.

*Bower Lodge (Irvine, Ayrshire), 19th February, 1831.*

Mr. Gourlay, late a candidate for the Chair of Agriculture in the University of Edinburgh, having applied to me some years ago for a certificate of character, I wrote thus: "I have known Mr. Gourlay since the year 1799, when he staid with me some months on the farm of Granton near Edinburgh, in order to notice the general practice of husbandry in Midlothian. In the year 1800 we travelled together through a great part of England and Wales, and ever since have kept up correspondence. I have found him on all occasions to possess a shrewd and intelligent mind, and of a gentlemanly mild temper, and most peaceable habits.

Respecting his ability to perform the important duties of an Agricultural Professor, I am confident that few men have more information on the subject, have seen more actual operations in farming, or, are more able to impart ideas in that complicated science.

He has frequently been with me in the course of these last three years, and though hard borne down by untoward circumstances, yet his judgment appears to be as vigorous and unimpaired as ever.

GEORGE ROBERTSON.

*N. B. I have more testimonials from Practical Farmers, but the above suffice.*

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## CIVIL ENGINEER.

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For two years I have been in habits of intimacy with Mr. Robert Gourlay, and during that time enjoyed many conversations with him on a great variety of subjects, as agriculture, emigration, poor-laws, tythes, American colonies, &c. &c. On all such topics he manifests a vast fund of information, and a strong devotion to the best interests of humanity. I have also read a variety of productions of which Mr. Gourlay is the author, in which he has displayed a powerful, versatile, and penetrating mind.

To a vast range of other accomplishments, Mr. Gourlay adds comprehensive ideas on inland communication, and great ingenuity of conception in combining utility with the grand and the beautiful. His plans for the improvement of Edinburgh, are at once striking and original; presenting the most eligible lines for intercourse yet pointed out.

Mr. Gourlay's amiable disposition, agreeable address, his perseverance under all discouragement, and his whole deportment cannot be advantageously stated in any encomium of mine. I, therefore, only add, that I feel much gratification in having intercourse with such a man.

JAMES FLINT, *Civil Engineer.*

*5 Terrace, Edinburgh, }  
24th March, 1831. }*

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## MEN OF BUSINESS.

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*N. B.—James Lawson, W. S., Edinburgh; John Fergusson, Wine Merchant, Leith; and, John Baird, Shotts Iron Works—all of whom being conversant with my private affairs, gave testimonials as to these.*

## MINISTERS OF THE KIRK OF SCOTLAND.

*Carnwath Manse, March 3, 1831.*

That, Mr. Robert Gourlay has been known to me since the year 1793, when we met at St. Andrew's College:—that, though not attending the same classes, so as to be able to form a judgment for myself, I always understood him to hold a high place among those of his own standing; and, that, I know his manners were those of the most prepossessing character.

That, after his leaving college, I had occasion to know, from residing near him, that he was a most intelligent and enterprising agriculturist, and held in high esteem by those of the same profession in his neighborhood.

That, I had not met him for many years till 1829, when we renewed our acquaintance; and, since that year, that I have spent days in his company, which has completely dissipated the prejudice I had imbibed against him from the accounts given of him in the newspapers. That I have no hesitation in now stating, that I consider him one of the most pleasant and most intelligent men I have met with:—that his fund of information respecting the state of England and America, is more ample than that of any individual I have known; and that his conduct and character have been such as becomes a gentleman,—is attested by

JA. WALKER, *Minister.*

Some years ago Mr. Gourlay applied to me for a certificate of character, and I wrote to him as follows:

“From what I knew of you, when I studied at the University of St. Andrews, and lived in your father's family during the summer season at Craighrothie, thirty years ago, I should never have anticipated the events which have befallen you since, and far less, that your judgment would have been called in question by any individual or set of men, among whom you might be placed. Though your opinions on all subjects might not entirely coincide with mine, yet I always entertained a high respect for your judgment, which I considered sound and vigorous, tempered at the same time with much candor and modesty.”

Within the last three years, Mr. Gourlay has repeatedly visited me at Libberton, and I have enjoyed a good deal of his society both here and elsewhere. The result of these interviews has impressed me with a still higher opinion both of his head and heart, than I had formed beforehand, favorable as my sentiments respecting him have always been; and I can say, with truth, that I have met with few or none in my intercourse with mankind, who seem to have profited more by the varied scenes through which he has passed, or to have surmounted the many severe trials and difficulties which have assailed him, with such conduct, courage, and constancy, as Mr. Gourlay. Besides the advantages of natural talents and a liberal education, his understanding has been subsequently much strengthened and enlarged by travel, and extensive intercourse with men and manners, which have increased his store of knowledge, and furnished him with a fund of information, a command of language, and a vigor of thought not often to be found. In a word, he appears to me to be a man of amiable dispositions and superior talents, who, by some untoward destiny, has not hitherto met with his due desert. The above is attested by

ALEXANDER CRAIK.

*Libberton, (Lanarkshire) Manse, March 4, 1831.*

*Manse of Falkland, March 4, 1831.*

I hereby certify, that I was at school and college in St. Andrews with Mr. Robert Gourlay seven years; that he was then, so far as my recollection goes, lively and agreeable in his manners, beloved by his companions, and respected by his teachers;—that, during his residence in England and America, strong prejudices were generated against him by newspaper reports;—that, having often seen and conversed with him during the last three years, I have much pleasure in stating,

that these prejudices have been removed from my mind; and that I have been impressed with a favorable opinion of the kindness of his disposition, the warmth of his heart, and the variety and extent of his information.

WILLIAM THOMPSON.

*Manse of Kirkaldy, March 28, 1831.*

Robert Gourlay, Esq., son of the late well-known Oliver Gourlay, Esq., of Craighrothie, has been known to me for many years. My first personal acquaintance commenced in the year 1804, when he became a member of the Stratheden troop of Royal Fifeshire Yeomanry Cavalry, to which I then belonged. In that and the two following years, I had frequent opportunities of meeting with him both at drill and in the mess-room. He was then chiefly distinguished by the pleasantness of his temper, the vivacity of his spirit, the activity and energy with which he went through his military exercises. His conversation and manners were always those of a well-bred and well-informed gentleman.

As he left the Yeomanry Cavalry (I believe) in 1806, and, in no long time after, went to reside in England, and afterwards in Canada, I had few opportunities of meeting with him again, till within about three years past, in the course of which, he has been frequently in my house, and I have had many conversations with him. Though he has come through many hardships, and has met with much harsh treatment, I have the pleasure to see that he retains much of his original good-humor and cheerfulness of spirit. I have often admired the forbearance with which he speaks of those from whom he has suffered most. No tincture of rancor or revenge appears to stain his mind. His range of knowledge is extensive, and, on some subjects, far more full and accurate than ordinary. The benevolence and amiableness of his disposition, seem to me unquestionable. I know not whether Mr. Gourlay has any particular object in view, in requesting me to state my opinion of him,—but, if I shall be of any use to him, I shall be much gratified.

JOHN MARTIN, *Minister of Kirkaldy.*

I attended the University of St. Andrews along with Mr. Robert Gourlay for several years, and was well acquainted with him. His attention to his studies, the strict propriety of his behavior, his pleasing manners and amiable disposition, then rendered him a general favorite, and inspired the highest hopes of his success in life. These hopes, however, have been blasted. I grieved to hear of his misfortunes, the more so, as I had, from various newspaper reports, been led to believe that they had a ruinous effect upon his mind. As to this, however, I was most agreeably disappointed, upon my having the pleasure of a visit from him about two years ago. I was then delighted to find in him the same intelligence and amiableness, that had marked the character of my early friend. If he spoke with natural feeling of his reverses and sufferings, it was unmingled with any expression of hatred towards those whom he considered as having partly occasioned them, or of envy towards those who, with less bright prospects in early life, had been more successful in the business of the world than himself. His conversation was both instructive and interesting, and if there was an appearance of keenness in it, that keenness was on the side of justice and humanity. I believe it may with truth be said of him, that "even his failings lean to virtue's side."

A. G. CARSTAIRS,  
*Minister of W. Anstruther.*

*April 8, 1831.*

*Abercrombie Manse, May 4, 1831.*

There having existed an intimacy of long standing between the family of the late most respectable Oliver Gourlay, Esq. of Craighrothie, and that of my father, I have of course been acquainted with Mr. Robert Gourlay from his earliest years. He was always beloved as an amiable and ingenuous boy; and grew up to be a lively, acute, and well-informed young man, whose acquirements, disposition, and manners made him be well received in general society. His eventful history removed him for many years from his friends in this country; but, within these three years, he has repeatedly visited me; and, though I cannot say that I have implicitly gone along with him in every point which came under discussion betwixt us, I have found him possessed of most extensive and accurate knowledge, diffusive and ardent philanthropy, and altogether unimpeachable integrity.

ROBERT SWAN.

More than thirty years ago Mr. Robert Gourlay was my fellow-student at the University of St. Andrews. He was then distinguished by the amiableness of his disposition, and superior talents and acquirements as a scholar. Our intercourse was long interrupted by his removal, first to England and then to Canada; in both of which countries he was subjected to severe trials and sufferings, the effect of which, heightened by the often false and exaggerated accounts of newspapers, might have produced an unfavorable impression. Since Mr. Gourlay's return to Scotland, I have had frequent opportunities of meeting and conversing with him for three years past, by which every unfavorable impression has been removed from my mind. I have found in him the same agreeable and estimable qualities which rendered him so interesting in youth, while by much experience and intercourse with the world, he has acquired a great fund of most interesting and useful information. I have no doubt that he would act with honor to himself and credit to his employers in any situation suited to his talents and acquirements.

ANDREW MELVILLE.

*Manse of Logie, May 9, 1831.*

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## UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS.

*St. Andrews, 28th February, 1831.*

I hereby certify, that I was well acquainted with Mr. Gourlay, lately a candidate for the Chair of Agriculture in the University of Edinburgh, when he was a student at St. Andrews, 1792 till 1796; that he applied himself to his studies with diligence and success, and was well esteemed by his fellow-students.

That he has visited me repeatedly within these last three years, when we conversed freely on various subjects; and that, from these conversations, I have been impressed with the opinion, that he is a liberal-minded, well-informed man, of honorable sentiments, and of humane and benevolent dispositions.

JOHN HUNTER,

*Emeritus Professor of Humanity, St. Andrews.*

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*St. Andrews, 25th February, 1831.*

More than thirty years ago I was a fellow-student of Mr. R. Gourlay at the University of St. Andrews, and am happy to say, that while he was highly respectable for his attainments as a scholar, he was distinguished by the propriety of his conduct and the kindness and gentleness of his manners.

Within the last three years I have had several long conversations with him; and found him clever, intelligent, well informed, and agreeable.

THOMAS DUNCAN,

*Professor of Mathematics.*

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*St. Andrews, 25th February, 1831.*

I hereby certify, that many years ago I was acquainted with Mr. Robert Gourlay when he was a student in the University of St. Andrews; that he was then a fine, sprightly young man, and a diligent, attentive, and respectable student; that, since his return from Canada, I have had the pleasure of being in his company three or four times, and from his manners, conversation, and general deportment, I have seen no reason to alter the favorable opinion I entertained of him when I was first acquainted with him.

JAMES HUNTER,

*Professor of Logic.*

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I hereby certify, that I have been long acquainted with Mr. Robert Gourlay; and that I have always considered him a person of good talents, of amiable disposition, and gentlemanly manners.

JOHN MITCHELL,

*Professor of Divinity.*

*St. Andrews, 21st March, 1831.*

This is to certify, that Mr. Gourlay was well known to me upwards of thirty years ago as a good-tempered, sprightly young man, as well as a diligent and successful student when he attended the different mathematical classes for theory and practice in the University of St. Andrews, in the years 1793, 4 and 5;—that for these last three years, I have had very frequent opportunities of conversing with him; and for intelligence, good-humor, and equanimity, under all the changes of fortune, I have the best reason to consider him the most interesting personage of my acquaintance;—of unblemished integrity, with the sentiments and manners of a gentleman; completely informed in all the branches of agriculture, in theory and practice; as well as in political economy, poor laws, emigration, &c.; and one of the most ardent and enlightened philanthropists ever I saw:—that he has laid before me his early publications in Scotland and England, his controversial writings in Canada, and his later productions on the most interesting questions in political economy; which, considering their variety and extent, the extraordinary excitement, and even persecution, under which many of them were written, the honest and liberal convictions which actuated them, and the information and ability he has brought to the discussion, I regard as some of the most wonderful performances I ever perused; not merely in regard to the clearness and force of the composition, but in the reasonings by which he supports his views, in the elevated tone of patriotism and humanity, which he every where discovers, and in the temper, and spirit, and perseverance, and intrepidity, with which he maintains positions of the highest import to the prosperity and happiness of every nation; and, that, besides his superior information and other talents, he is possessed withal of so much acuteness, vivacity, and ready elocution, that I know no man better qualified to give a complete and instructive course of lectures on agriculture and its kindred subjects.

*Edinburgh, 24th March, 1831.*

JAMES BROWN,

*Retired Professor of Natural Philosophy, Glasgow.*

*St. Andrews, 29th March, 1831.*

I was intimately acquainted with Mr. Robert Gourlay when he was a student at the University, five and thirty years ago. We attended several of the classes together, in which he distinguished himself by his talents, his diligence, and by his successful application to his studies:—and, while his attention to his academical duties and the propriety of his deportment recommended him to the esteem of his masters, his amiable dispositions conciliated the affections of his fellow-students. There were few young men with whom I was acquainted, that appeared to me to have a fairer prospect of rising to high eminence and respectability in the department at which he aimed. Since that period I have had but few opportunities of conversing with Mr. Gourlay; but upon such occasions I have ever found him to be a shrewd, an intelligent, and an agreeable companion.

GEORGE BUIST,

*Professor of Church History.*

Mr. Robert Gourlay is greatly my junior, and, as both of us passed many years abroad, I had no opportunity of forming any particular intimacy with him until his return to this country from Canada.

I had read his account of that colony, containing a dissertation on the poor laws, which appeared to me to be a work of uncommon merit. I was anxious to cultivate his acquaintance, and I have had the gratification to enjoy it.

Mr. Gourlay has requested a testimonial from me. I am sensible, that it can but little avail; but I may with confidence say, that his moral conduct has been irreproachable in all the vicissitudes of his life: that his manners are unassuming, and those of a gentleman; and that his talents and acquirements will enable him to execute with honor whatever may be committed to his management.

*Wakefield, 30th March, 1831.*

HUGH CLEGHORN,

*Retired Professor of Civil History, St. Andrews.*

*St. Andrews, 17th February, 1826.*

“My Dear Sir—I can assure you that I received your interesting letter of the 6th February, with no slight emotion of kindness and respect, having ever regarded you as one of the ablest of my fellow-students at St. Andrews; and who, if human

life had not been the lottery which it is, would have earned by his talents, and merited by his friendly dispositions, a place of high and honorable distinction in society. \* \* \* \* \*

THOMAS CHALMERS."

"ROBERT GOURLAY, Esq."

*Edinburgh, April 5, 1831.*

Mr. Robert Gourlay has visited me within the last three years, conversed and corresponded with me, and I have found no reason to alter the favorable opinion formerly expressed. (Referring to the above extract.)

THOMAS CHALMERS, *Professor of Divinity.*

*Aberdeen, April 8th, 1831.*

I hereby certify, that I was acquainted with Mr. Robert Gourlay when he was a young man, and that I formed a very favorable opinion of his abilities and acquirements, and was much pleased with his modest, unassuming, and gentle behavior; that, since his return from Canada, I have had very little opportunity of seeing him, but, from the short time he was with me, I found no reason for altering my former favorable opinion, as his manners then were those of a gentleman, and his conversation was unobtrusive, while it was general, amusing, and instructive.

JAMES DAVIDSON, M. D., *Hist. Nat. Pr.*

*Coat's House, May 6, 1831.*

Having been long intimately acquainted with his father's family, I have known Mr. Robert Gourlay from his childhood. He seemed then a very promising boy, of an open disposition, and of frank, sprightly manners. He pursued his studies with great ardor; and gave promise of talents and varied acquirements. Having gone through the ordinary course of philosophy at St. Andrews with applause, he was desirous of completing his education, by availing himself of the advantages which Edinburgh affords. At this University, he passed two years, and attended the lectures on chemistry, and on agriculture, to which latter subject he more especially directed his application in the view of embracing it as a profession.

After an interval of several years, I met with Mr. Gourlay in London, early in 1801. He was then employed by the Board of Agriculture to inquire into the benefits of the practice (so much commended at a period of great distress) of letting portions of land to poor and industrious cottagers in the eastern counties of England. The Secretary was delighted with the Report, but disgusted Mr. Gourlay by straining it to suit his own preconceived notions, and by printing it without the author's consent or revision.

He returned soon afterwards to Scotland, and occupied one of his father's extensive farms, which he cultivated with great skill, spirit, and taste. During this time, I frequently saw him, and found him ardent as usual in his pursuits; his attention being turned wholly to rural affairs, the bettering the condition of the poor, and the evolutions of the yeomanry cavalry. He never then appeared to think of general politics till his eyes were opened by the insolence of some of the Fife aristocracy, and his biting opposition to them was ridiculously magnified by such alarmists into a conspiracy against the State.

For some time previous, Mr. Gourlay had resolved to farm on a larger scale, and thought that England would afford a finer scope for his exertions. An offer was now made to him of an extensive tract in one of the best parts of Wiltshire. There he set an example of improved husbandry which was greatly admired. Though he generally followed the Scotch system, he had the liberality and discernment to adopt many parts of the English practice, as better suited to the climate, and more in accordance with the habits and prejudices of his laborers. But he successfully resisted the rapacity and despotism of his landlord, and roused his neighbors (by whom he was highly respected) to assert their independence.

At this epoch of prosperity, he was tempted, in an evil hour, to go out to Canada, in order to claim some lands, which belonged to his wife. With his characteristic ardor he ranged over that vast country, and collected a mass of very important statistical information.

But his activity and influence in the colony drew on him the resentment of the petty judicial tyrants, and he was treated with cruel oppression; and by a stretch of law was finally driven out of Canada. On his arrival in England, he found his

family ruined, and all his prospects blasted; yet he bore the sad reverse with fortitude, and, after all these trials, he has regained his elastic disposition and the full energy of intellect, while the strength of his constitution is but little impaired. For the last three years I have very frequently seen Mr. Gourlay, and his visits have been always acceptable. I find his conversation lively, judicious, and replete with various information.

Such being his sterling worth, I trust that some public situation will soon occur in which his talents and matured experience may have due scope. I am sure they would be honorably directed—and would, if rightly appreciated, prove both useful to himself and advantageous to the public.

JOHN LESLIE, *Professor of Natural Philosophy.*

Sir John Leslie, who in Paris was styled "*Leslie Le Grand*," is now no more. I asked him for a certificate, and he sent me this memoir, infinitely more valuable. Written from memory, and at a distance, there are some mistakes, but these are trivial, while the pleading in my behalf against power and oppression, by one so universally known and respected, cannot be too highly appreciated. In Fife, Wilts, and Canada, I became, successively, the butt of brute ignorance and illiberality; and it is curious, that the first burst of feeling in my behalf, at home, should come from the greatest philosopher of the age, whose name will go down to posterity, linked with those of Euclid and Archimedes, Lavoisier and Black.

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#### NOTES.

*Boston, March 16, 1843.*

Reprinting these testimonials here, it may be well to close with a few observations:

LESLIE was the son of a carpenter in Largo, Fifeshire; and a most extraordinary genius. He was first employed as Tutor to one of the Randolph family, and came to America some time, with his pupil. Afterwards, in like capacity, employed by Mr. Wedgewood, famed for his pottery, he had good opportunities, at Etruria in Staffordshire, to make experiments on heat. His book on LIGHT and HEAT stirred up a bitter controversy, forty years ago, in Scotland, in which narrow-minded ministers of the Kirk were beaten by Mr. Dougal Stewart, Dr. Thomas Brown, and others. Dr. Brown's pamphlet in this controversy, laid the foundation for that gentleman's celebrated work on metaphysics. The Professor is wrong in saying that I "resolved to farm on a larger scale, and thought that England would afford a finer scope." My object in going to England was to study the Poor-law system. In Scotland, I had *finer scope*,—my father having twenty ploughs going on his own property.

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Dr. JAMES BROWN, whose certificate appears above, would have been at the head of the science and literature of Britain, but for bodily infirmity, which caused his retirement from the chair in Glasgow, and continued till his death, a few years ago. He was teacher on board a frigate at the battle of the Dogger Bank; and, as secretary, noted the engagement for the captain. This he told me. Afterwards, Minister of Dinino, and Assistant Professor of Mathematics, St. Andrews. He gained the chair in Glasgow, by competition, before the year 1800.

It was under his tuition that Dr. Chalmers first distinguished himself, in an exercise of mathematics; I remember it well, being a fellow-student. Ten years ago, Professor Duncan dedicated to Dr. Brown a volume on Mathematics, expressing regret that he was "*too little known*." Alas! it was so, indeed.

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Mr. CLEGHORN, while Professor of Civil History, was engaged to travel with a nobleman on the Continent; and, there, was employed by the British government. By his dexterity, the island of Ceylon became British; and the transaction made his fortune. He was a pupil and relative of Adam Smith, Author of the *Wealth of Nations*; and the first who taught the doctrines of that philosopher. He was a man of astonishing mental vigor, till the last, under the severest bodily afflictions—one of Scotland's brightest sons. He, also, is gone, since my departure for this country. Most men believe that they are to live after death:—Mr. Cleghorn once told me, that he sometimes imagined that he had lived before his birth.

To Captain David Baker, Messrs. George G. Folger, and Obed Barney, of Nantucket; Silvanus Dunton, of Hubbardston; Thomas H. Wetherby, of Milbury; Milo I. Smith, of Northampton; Alexander Ingham, of Middlefield; Nathaniel Brooks, of Worcester; Ethan Taylor, of Longmeadow; and William C. Dunham; — REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

GENTLEMEN: —

I came here to be at the nearest point for correspondence with my family in Scotland,—knowing no one, and having introduction to none.

In this comfortable mansion I became acquainted with you; and your friendly regards induced me to petition the Honorable Body of which you are members.

After six weeks cordial and frank intercourse; and, after you have had submitted to your inspection all my publications from the year 1800, till now, substantiating the allegations of my Petition, I venture to throw this NUMBER of the NEPTUNIAN, before the public, as introduction to more, should public patronage be obtained; in which case, I would go on,—NUMBER after NUMBER, to unfold my principles and projects, through a period of forty-two years, devoted to the cause of humanity.

Following up the great object of my life, I have been persecuted to the death, a common consequence to all who stand out for truth, apart from worldly interests. In fact, these last thirty-four years, I have stood alone and undaunted, in Scotland, England, and America:—have endured till endurance has become habit, and made me independent, even of Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep; yet, at the age of sixty-five, you see me at all times collected, consistent, and composed.

In my petition, I pray only, that it may be received and preserved:—first, because, an entire stranger, it would have been presumption to expect immediate notice, so as to have a committee appointed to examine and report:—and, second, because, even were a committee appointed, full justice could not be done to the subject, at present. A liberal and patient hearing by the public, can only lead to this, through the medium of a PERIODICAL; and I now earnestly solicit assistance in establishing such.

I disclaim all personal advantage from any thing of the kind;—desire not to pocket a single dollar from the establishment; and think it possible that the machinery may be worked by a committee of citizens, regularly chosen by friends of the cause. I desire only to be heard, and have opportunity given to others for questioning me, in order the better to satisfy all:—I desire only to secure the highest objects of benevolence.

The People of the United States possess the finest portion of the habitable globe, and they enjoy the most perfect liberty. As a People, they average the highest in point of intelligence; and, they are the only People who understand how to combine,—how to organize and carry measures into effect.

They have it, at this moment, in their power to communicate the blessings of liberty to other nations, and to make the starving millions of Europe partakers in like enjoyments with their own:—Nay, more, by a wise exercise of their power, they may not only enrich themselves, but eradicate from the Union its greatest curse—Slavery. These are mighty assertions, but, with fair opportunity to communicate, I shall prove them to be true.

And now, Gentlemen, I shall close with some facts regarding myself.

I left Deptford Farm, in England, April 2, 1817, on a visit to friends and property in Canada, intending to be from home only six months.

At Liverpool, being disappointed of a passage to New York, I sailed for Quebec; but before embarkation came to know, that even had I landed at New York, and established an Emigration Society there, nothing great could then be done in this way for relief of the poor, because of a law—now repealed—which barred the sailing of mechanics.

On my voyage to Quebec it occurred, that something might be done by circulating queries for information necessary to emigrants. These were then drawn up: afterwards circulated; and thence was procured the best information yet published—my statistical account of Upper Canada, Vol. I.

After travelling in the Province and the Genessee country, I resolved to establish a Land Agency, at once, for my own benefit, and to promote emigration. By and bye it appeared that obstacles retarded settlement in the Province. To remove these I advised sending Commissioners to England, there to represent the truth to the Supreme Government. The people upheld this measure, and chose Delegates to meet in convention for carrying it into effect. Those who profited by abuse took alarm: gave out that my design was to alienate the Colony from Britain, and caused me to be twice arrested for trial.

The Delegates met July 6, 1818. I advised adjournment till after my trials, and till opportunity was afforded the parliament, to do the needful. I was tried at Kingston in August, honorably acquitted, and had a public dinner given me;—tried a second time at Brockville, again honorably acquitted, and had another dinner offered. This, however, I could not accept, having to hurry off for New York, where letters from my family had been detained, for months, during my villainous arrests.

Finding all my affairs at home in the best possible order, and deeming myself now safe in Canada, to proceed with Land Agency, I employed Andrew S. Garr, Counsellor at law, to draw up a Power of Attorney for winding up my business in Scotland and England, having property in both kingdoms;—which Power was forthwith dispatched.

I then made a tour through this country; and it is essential to mark impressions then prevailing here.

Not only had false alarms been given out by enemies in Canada from the beginning; but, at my trials, Counsel for the Crown dared to work on the Juries by signifying it as my intention to dismember the Empire, and add Canada to the States. A consequence was, that all over the Union, my name was trumpeted forth, as may yet be seen in newspaper files of the day; and, on the south bank of St. Lawrence, I was called “the Washington of Canada.”

Landed at New York, I bespoke lodgings at the City Hotel, and immediately walked out, without knowing a single citizen there. Turning to the right, I was soon charmed with the glorious prospects at the Battery; and, questioning two bye-standers, as to names of places, they perceived I was a stranger, and asked, when I had arrived? My reply was, “Just now, by the North River.” “Have you come from Canada?” “Yes.” “What is that Gourlay now doing there?”—“No harm at present;” and, shortly, I made myself known.

We conversed of the late war, and I expressed my regret for that. "That," they said, "was the best thing we ever did;"—they thinking of the naval war; I, of the invasion of Canada.

After a week's sojourn, I came here and staid a week. Introduced to Mr. Shaw of the Athenæum, that gentleman showed me much attention; gave me leave to look into any book; and I did lounge there an hour or two every day, searching for causes which led to the Revolution.

Mr. Shaw wished to see some of my writings in Canada, and I gave him the pamphlet for publication of which I was arrested and tried. Next day he said, "I thought you were for us."—"No, I was for Canada."

On my way to Albany, being informed that an agricultural meeting was about being held at Pittsfield, I resolved to attend; and, after visiting the Shaker settlements, I returned to that place on the first day of meeting.

Live stock were penned in the Square; and, these, I minutely examined, as a farmer. After that, I sat down with a large company to dinner. By and bye, a secretary came round, taking down names; and hearing mine, he asked if I "was Mr. Gourlay of Canada." *I believed so.*

On presenting the list to the Chairman and pointing to my name, that gentleman immediately eyed me, filled his glass, and announced me to all. All drank my health, most cordially, an honor I little expected. On being called to give a toast, I gave what has escaped my memory; but, took occasion to state, that, great mistakes were abroad as to my designs in the Province; that, I was a British farmer, and had no intention whatever, but to make Canada useful to the mother country. This did not in the least lessen attentions. A member of Congress, sitting opposite, invited me to Washington; and there, he said, they "would give me a seat on the floor of the House, as was done to Lord Selkirk." On my right sat the venerable father of the present Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts, who was especially kind, and invited me to his house in the neighborhood.

Next day, I was made a judge of ploughing; was delighted with an exhibition of domestic manufactures; walked in procession to the church, and there heard discourses on agriculture, read by the President and Vice President of the Society. After that, we again sat down to dinner. This time, I was better prepared; and having coined a toast for the occasion, gave, "COMMERCE FREE, AND NATIONS FRIENDS." Finally, I was invited to a ball; and, all concluded harmoniously.

Not so in Canada, whither I went without further delay. There, on my arrival, parliament being met, a law was proposed to prevent the people from meeting by Delegate. The people's own representatives sanctioned this. It was enacted; and, as soon as enacted, I was ordered to leave the Province. Refusing, I was imprisoned without benefit of bail, eight months, and at last banished for no crime whatever but refusal to obey the order, now declared by the unanimous vote of United Canada, to have been "*illegal, unconstitutional, and without excuse or palliation.*" Gentlemen! from that day to this, I have been out of house and hold of my own, save a log house erected within the last two years on my lands in Canada; and, I am very sure, that there does not exist an individual who has endured such continued persecution, during thirty-four years—all originating in what has been stated, in the memoir of my life, by Professor, Sir John Leslie—aristocratic ire!

I am anxious to make my experiences, during that persecution, available to my fellow men; and ask you and others, here, to assist in gaining for me a hearing.

Believe me ever most sincerely yours,

ROBERT F. GOURLAY.

*Marlboro' Hotel, Boston, March 21, 1843.*



MAN IS A RECORDING ANIMAL ; and this indeed is the best definition of him. Inferior animals communicate, by voice and by signal, over space ; but, through time, have no medium of intelligence, and from generation to generation remain the same. They are indeed the beasts that perish ; but man is the aspirant to excellence and the candidate for immortality. His spirit, though cradled in weakness and surrounded with difficulty, is destined to gain the ascendant and to triumph over every ill,—to enjoy a rational millenium on earth and at last to hold converse with Heaven.

Such has been my fate, during the last twenty-one years, that I should not even know myself, but for records ;—should not distinctly remember where I have been, how employed, who with, and of what thinking ;—should never be able to maintain my rights and manage my affairs ;—should never be able to correct my errors or accomplish my undertakings. Persuaded of this, I began, many years ago, to preserve my papers ; and, in 1826, to print them, regularly classed, lettered, and numbered, for after reference. What is contained within this cover is a continuation ; and should I live to have peace and freedom, these documents, however worthless by themselves, and disjointed as at present, may enable me to mature projects of mightiest moment to humanity.

Even at present my records are consolatory. They are the clue to reflection on past life ; and this reflection gives assurance that the chain of causes and effects proceeds from Almighty power :—gives assurance that there is a Providence—a Disposer of Events—a Superior Intelligence, whose ways are not as our ways ;—who can guide us through darkness into light, and over rugged paths to tranquillity.

It is nearly twenty-nine years since I engaged in the service of laborers. For this, I was maltreated at home : for this, I went to England and was persecuted there : this kindled my zeal in Canada ; and for this, I was banished : in the gloomiest stage of existence, this was ever in view ; and this made years of imprisonment pass swiftly away : this has deprived me of all property, separated me from my children, and left me alone in the world ; but, my records give assurance, that every misfortune has been only a step towards good ; and, that up to the present moment, all is for the best. I believe, indeed, that no other train of events could have prepared me to assert, with growing confidence, what no other man has thought of or dared to do, that, “without altering a single statute, changing a single institution, or interfering with property, the whole system of the Poor laws and rates may be dispensed with in twenty years, while the National debt may be paid off, within fifty years, from sales of colonial lands.”

ROBT. GOURLAY.

2, BRIDGE STREET, LEITH, Nov. 26, 1829.

THE  
NEPTUNIAN.

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No. 9.

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COPY-LETTERS.

No. 1. To HIS HONOR, THE MAYOR OF BOSTON.

SIR: Having resided in this city four months, and had much enjoyment, with improved health, walking in your glorious Common, I would now, about to depart, gladly leave behind a token of gratitude and usefulness.

The accompanying Testimonials shew that I was once a Farmer: and, assured of this, you will be more disposed to listen to what follows:

The Common, I understand, was once pastured with cows, and a friend tells me he used to have pleasure looking at them: nevertheless, they were objected to and excluded. I would substitute sheep,—ewes and lambs; but all exclaim against this. Sheep, they say, would never do: boys and dogs would chase them; they would run off; they would soil the paths, and bark the trees. No such thing. I would construct a moveable fold, elevated six feet, with an inclined gangway for entrance. The floor should be perforated for drainage of all moisture; and hatches made for the ready discharge of dung. Near the Common is a depot for street-sweepings. Over these, I would place the fold, moveable at pleasure, on rails, so that droppings would be mixed with these as manure, economically. In England, I had five hundred ewes and upwards, with their lambs, which, from the middle of March till the second week of May, were fed on fifty-two acres of water-meadow, and folded on arable land preparing for a crop of barley. The sheep were let run from the fold towards 11 o'clock, and driven back from the meadow about 3. Evening and morning they had hay in cribs; but, of this, they ate little,—their principal food being the grass, on which they thrive surprisingly. Hastening to the meadow they dropt nothing; and, returning, swelled like full blown bladders, they let little fall by the way,—the food in their stomachs being yet too crude for discharge. Thus no filth was to be seen.

Ewes and lambs let run twice a day on the Common, three hours each time, would need no hay. A man, with a dog, would manage all, and protect them from annoyance. Citizens, both old and young, would admire the animals, and hold them sacred. Let out to pasture hungry, the sheep would not loiter on paths to soil them; and the few trees, yet of tender growth, could be fenced in; although, in fact, the flock, having abundant grass, would touch none of them.—Ewes with lambs could be purchased when required; the lambs, when fit for the butcher, sold off gradually; and so, afterwards, the

ewes, till the whole concern was closed with the season. Any American Farmer can calculate the profit : I would guess, at least a thousand dollars a year. Sometimes, in England, I have let my water-meadow, for spring feed, as it was called, from the middle of March till the second week of May, for £2 sterling per acre. The owner of the pasturing stock found hay, and I had the manure, to boot, from his sheep folded on my land. — To the city of Boston profit is a secondary concern : but, by pasturing only, can the Common be most beautified. Look, at this moment, to the mowing system, and see how objectionable it is. No where is the mowing well done : in some places, as ill as possible ; and, in other places, the grass, run to seed and wirey, cannot be mowed. The hue of the verdure is not uniform, nor, so pleasant to the eye, as it may be, by pasturage. Under the mowing system, the grass is never fit for walking on ; certainly not when wet with rain or dew : nor, thus treated, is the Common available for fetes, and reviews. Let it be pastured with sheep, levelled where required, weeded, top dressed, and rolled, — I shall engage that, in a few years, the surface may be trod on, at all, times with comfort ; and rival, in appearance, the finest carpet.

Having read this letter, may I beg of you to honor me by laying it before the Board of Aldermen.

Most respectfully yours,

ROB. F. GOURLAY.

*Marlboro' Hotel, June 15, 1843.*

No. 2.

SIR : Understanding that you laid before the Board of Aldermen, my letter of June 15, I now beg you will do me like honor, by laying this, with the accompanying Map of a Pagoda and Flower Garden, before the same.

When summer set in, nothing seemed to me so unaccountable as the Common not being frequented by Ladies. By and by, it occurred, that want of proper resting places caused this ; and seated, daily, on the eminence beyond the Big Tree, at once to rest and enjoy the delightful prospects — the stirring scenes on the railways, and beautiful country beyond, — Roxbury, Brighton, Brookline, &c. &c. it struck me, that, a Pagoda erected on that spot, with a Flower Garden adjoining, and a Refectory, would supply every want.

For some weeks, I have been employed drawing, and submitting Plans to my friends. All pronounce the idea a happy one ; but some say it cannot be executed, because of an ancient charter, which forbids building on the Common. This I hold at naught, assured that it never could be contemplated to bar out what would promote the chief end of the Common, — recreation and enjoyment to the citizens at large. Such objection might be urged against gates, fences, and fire-works.

My plan would not be costly ; nay, I would ensure ten per cent. on any outlay of money, for any term of years.

The first floor of the Pagoda I would make free to all ; and exact payment from those choosing to ascend the Pagoda, or walk in the Garden.

People, with whom I have spoken on the subject, say that nothing, in Boston, would be so profitable ; and, that cash would readily be advanced to the

City Authorities, for execution : certainly, nothing could contribute so much to health, and happiness.

Mounting the State House, or the Monument, thence to view scenery unrivalled on this continent, is toil — disagreeable toil ; and, at the top, there is no comfort. The Pagoda, having an easy stair, might be ascended, even by the old and infirm, resting stage after stage, and, tempted on, by the growing glory around. At the top, the view would be little less extensive than from the State House or Monument : otherwise, it would be superior, — free from giddiness, and fringed below, on the foreground, with foliage. The Telescope, too, would be an attraction, to be used either for the survey of the earth or the heavens.

It has been hinted, that, my being a Foreigner will militate against adopting the Plan. Surely not. Successors of the Pilgrims will ever keep in mind that they were Foreigners. Besides, were my history known, it would be allowed that no one has better claims to nursing in the Cradle of Liberty, — a martyr to freedom, since the year 1808.

I have been detained here months beyond expectation ; but, the more am I attached to your famed city, and the more am I disposed to contribute my mite towards its improvement.

Your obed't and very humble servant,  
ROB. F. GOURLAY.

*Marlboro Hotel, July 11, 1843.*

No. 3.

Sir : — It was not my intention again to trouble you ; but, the wretched appearance, — the "*green and yellow melancholy*," of the Common, at this time, urges me to write, and to say that it might be otherwise. In short, Sir, I would engage, as an AGRICULTURIST, that its verdure could be kept bright all summer ; and more, that you may have grass in Spring earlier, and, in Fall, later, — thus increasing the enjoyment of citizens — objects, surely, worthy of consideration.

I came to Boston, solely to be at the nearest point, in the United States, for correspondence with my family in Scotland ; and, same time, to be in the line of communicating with Canada, where I have property and business. In Boston, I have had much satisfaction every way, and infinite pleasure walking in the Common. To Boston and its people, I have become attached ; and, confident that my suggestions may be made available for the improvement of the City, I hereby offer my services to realize the same.

FIRST : — I will engage, by pasturage, to make the Common, instead of a bill of expense, profitable ; while the surface shall, at all times, be in the best condition for walking on.

SECOND : — I will ensure ten per cent, interest, on any money judiciously laid out on a Pagoda and Flower Garden, as planned by me.

THIRD : — I will engage to effect what is above set forth, as to the verdure.

As I am to remain here till Saturday, the Authorities may, if they incline, see and converse with me, on the whole matter : — and, meantime, you will honor me by laying this letter before the Board of Aldermen.

Respectfully yours,

ROBERT F. GOURLAY.

*Marlboro' Hotel, July 17, 1843.*

*To the President of the Common Council of Boston City :*

TO BE COMMUNICATED.

Sir: — Probably, all communications, laid before the Board of Aldermen, are submitted to the Council; but, as I am little known here, and my letters, written at different times, might not be attended to, in connection, I have thought it well, to write out the above copies, together; begging you will, in this form, present them to the Council.

It was my wish, also, to annex a corrected Plan; but feeble health forbids.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your obed't serv't,

ROBERT F. GOURLAY.

*Marlboro' Hotel, July 19, 1843.*

*City Hall, Boston, July 21, 1843.*

Sir, — I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your several communications, in relation to the Common, in this City, which I have laid before the Committee on the Common, &c. I am directed to inform you, that the Committee do not consider themselves, or the City Government, authorized to place a building of any kind on the Common,—the citizens having especially reserved that power, in their own hands. The Committee do not deem it expedient to keep sheep on the Common.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

M. BRIMMER, *Mayor.*

R. F. GOURLAY, Esq.

It now appearing, that the Citizens at large have to determine, the whole, is respectfully submitted to their deliberate judgement.

ROBERT F. GOURLAY:

*Marlboro' Hotel, July 21, 1843.*

## SLEEPLESSNESS.

*To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.*

Sir, — As you desire, for publication, an account of my extraordinary sleeplessness, I make you welcome to what follows:—

During three periods I have been bereft of sleep:—first, in 1833, for six weeks; again in 1837, for five months; and, now, these last four years and five months.

Prior to the first period, I never suffered from want of sleep; although, at times, little sufficed, for refreshment. My constitution, naturally sound and vigorous, was, till forty years of age, sustained by healthy exercise, as a farmer—riding and walking much; indeed, walks of thirty or forty miles a day, in no way distressed me. In the year 1819 I was cruelly imprisoned in Canada, ('*illegally, unconstitutionally, and without excuse or palliation,*' as the present Legislative Assembly has declared,) during eight months; the last of which, in solitude and stifling heat, undid me; and, for three years thereafter, I was debilitated; nor should I ever have regained energy, but for a resolution to go to hard labor, which I did for upwards of three months,—breaking stones for the roads in Wiltshire, England, and living on the earnings,—sixpence a day; viz. from September 9, till December 23, 1822, as minutely detailed in Parliamentary Journals.

