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men, at least, of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts subscribed to an enlistment specifically under the original statute of July 22, 1861, which made no distinction of color, though doubtless contemplating only whites. The statute of July 17, 1862, authorizing the employment of "persons of African descent," and fixing their pay at $10, was ambiguously worded, and left plenty of ground for hair-splitting as to the nature of "any military or naval service for which they may be found competent" in addition to "constructing entrenchments, . . . or any other labor." Senator Wilson said that "some of the best lawyers in the country. . . . think the distinction in the act of 1862 applies to men working for the Government, not soldiers"; but a good lawyer and good Republican like Senator Fessenden thought otherwise, and he could point to his ineffectual effort at the time to put the colored soldiers on a level with the white. We were in error in saying that Secretary Stanton's authorization to Gov. Andrew *preceded* the statute of 1862. It bore date, as Col. Higginson points out above, January 26, 1863, and curiously testifies to the Government's timidity with regard to colored enlistments by being general in terms, and only incidentally conceding that the volunteers in question "may include persons of African descent, organized into separate corps."—Ed. Nation.]

GEOMETRY NOT MATHEMATICS.

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: A dissatisfaction with the method in which geometry is at present taught finds frequent expression, a case in point being the review of Mr. Halsted's translation of Lobachevsky in the last number of the *Nation*, and, by a peculiar coincidence, in the communication by Mr. Stillé on "Science in America," in the same number. In the one case, the author desires to have geometry attacked by the beginner from the point of view of perspective; in the other, criticism is not aimed at the elementary presentation of the subject, but a spirit of discontent is visible which expresses itself in the demand that more students should go beyond the dull elements and breathe the purer air of the "modern geometry" of Jacob Steiner.

Does not the difficulty lie deeper than is suggested by either of these two writers? There seems to be a fundamental misconception of the nature of geometry in the minds not merely of the general public, but also of almost every teacher of the subject. "Mathematics is the science which draws necessary conclusions," so wrote the late Prof. Benjamin Peirce in 1870, and no clearer and more accurate definition could be imagined; and yet it has produced but little effect as yet on students of geometry. Geometry is the simplest of the natural sciences to which, owing to its simplicity, mathematics (*i. e.*, the methods of formal logic, either with or without the assistance of symbols) has been applied with such wonderful success, and which of late years has so richly repaid its debts to mathematics in the hands of Riemann, Clebsch, and others still living. We should laugh at the idea of teaching the mathematical theory of electricity before the student knows in a qualitative way what electricity is, either by a description of the phenomena or, better still, by actual laboratory contact with them. Why should not the same rule apply to geometry? Even then logic need not be entirely discarded, but let it assist the learner, not clog his progress. It is not a perfectly safe guide, as history tells us, even in the hands of a master, and the learner is almost as safe in trusting to his "common sense" as to his own unaided deductions.

The training of the logical faculty is, moreover, of far less vital importance than the development of the mind which results from this first real draught from the cup of science, which strengthens a healthy imagination, and should even yield an æsthetic enjoyment. If we could lead the student first to see the truth of a proposition, and then, perhaps much later, to prove it, we might hope in time to have mathematicians in America. For every mathematical discovery is made in this way, let the mathematician conceal his footprints as he will; it must come as an intuition, and the man to whom it has thus come is its discoverer, even though he never succeed in finding a proof.

Of course there will still remain innumerable points of detail to consider. The wonderful geometric developments of the last hundred years should not be completely ignored; "projective" rather than metrical properties of figures might be brought to the front; but this will all regulate itself when once it is really understood that geometry is not mathematics, but is a physical science to which mathematics may be applied. Maxime Böcher.

Cambridge, February 13, 1892.

AN HISTORIAN'S SLIPS.

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Lovers of chess will be surprised to learn on page 495, vol. v., of Schouler's 'History of the United States of America under the Constitution' that (1859) "Paul Morphy, the *English* chess-player, was one of the latest foreign celebrities who catered to our entertainment."

May I also point out that "one Barney" (a favorite way with Mr. Schouler of expressing contempt), by whose hand Mr. Monroe sent to the French Convention an American flag (vol. i., p. 319), and "who, in the name of the American people, tendered it with some inflammatory remarks of his own, prompted by the recollection of a personal outrage he had borne from the British fleet off the West Indies," was the same individual as "Commodore Barney, our renowned privateer officer" (vol. iv., p. 408)? I add the "inflammatory remarks" of Captain Barney, styled by Monroe "an officer of distinguished merit, who has rendered us great services by sea, in the course of *our* Revolution." They are taken from a transcript of the proceedings of the French Convention, September 25, 1794, to be found in an appendix to 'A Biographical Memoir of the late Commodore Joshua Barney,' by Mary Barney (Boston: Gray & Bowen, 1832):

Speech of Capt. Barney, bearer of the colors.

Citizen President: Having been directed by the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to present to the National Convention the flag demanded [asked] of him, the flag under the auspices of which I have had the honor to fight against our common enemy during the war which has assured liberty and independence, I discharge the duty with most lively satisfaction, and deliver it to you. Henceforth, suspended on the side of that of the French republic, it will become the symbols of the union which subsists between the two nations, and last, I hope, as long as the freedom which they have so bravely acquired and so wisely consolidated.

Respectfully, Basil Sollers.

Baltimore, February 8, 1892.

THE TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR IN 'CRANFORD.'

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: The note from "A. B. N." on "A Typographical Error in 'Cranford'" is interesting, and there is fortunately evidence to show that his happy emendation is really a restoration of the author's text. 'Cranford' appeared piecemeal in *Household Words*, and a reference to the number for May 7, 1853, will show that it was not *loin*, but, as "A. B. N." supposes, *lion*—the pudding originally "made in most wonderful representation of a lion *couchant* that ever was moulded," and served up a second day—"a little of the cold lion sliced and fried." Through how many editions this printer's error—turning *lion* into *loin*—has run, I do not know; but it is found in the only two at the moment accessible, recent ones published by Macmillans and Smith & Elder, respectively.—Yours truly,

William E. A. Axon.

Manchester, England, January 27, 1892.

THE WASHINGTON PEDIGREE.

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: I have found a letter from George Washington to a nephew, Col. William Augustine Washington (a son of the General's brother Augustine), dated October 3, 1798, from which one or two facts of interest may be drawn. An extract is as follows:

"I thank you for the old documents you sent me respecting the family of our ancestors, but I am possessed of papers which prove beyond a doubt, that of the two brothers who emigrated to this country in the year 1657, during the troubles of that day, that John Washington, from whom we are descended, was the eldest. The pedigree from him I have, and, I believe, very correct; but the descendants of Lawrence, in a regular course, I have not been able to trace. All those of our name in and about Chotank are from the latter. John was the grandfather of my father, and uncle and great-grandfather to Warren [Warner] and me. He left two sons, Lawrence and John, the former, who was the eldest, was the father of my father, Uncle and Aunt Willis. Mrs. Hayward must have been a daughter of the *first Lawrence*, and thence becomes the cousin of the second Lawrence and John."

In the *Nation* of October 15, 1891, was printed a letter from John Washington (a son of the immigrant and of the Chotank branch) in which he mentions an Aunt Howard who died in 1697 or 1698. Mr. Waters suggested that this aunt was Martha Washington, a sister of the immigrants, who had been assisted by her brother to remove to Virginia. Is it possible that Aunt Howard and Mrs. Hayward are one and the same person? The objection to putting her where Washington suggests is that the immigrant John had only one daughter, who died when very young. The wife of John (a widow) had three daughters when he married her, names unknown, and it may be that Mrs. Hayward was one of them. John, the son of John (the immigrant), had but one daughter, whom he lost early. So it is reasonable to decide that if Mrs. Hayward was of the Chotank branch, she belonged to the generation previous to that assigned her by Washington.

One bit of evidence may assist a determination of the matter. The will of John, the immigrant, was proved in 1677, and in it provision was made for Martha's removal to Vir-