

## The Press.

BY HORACE GREENLY.

Long slumbered the world in the darkness of error,  
And ignorance brooded o'er earth like a pall:  
To the miter and crown men added them in terror,  
Though polling the bondage and bitter the thrall;  
When a voice like the earthquake's revealed the di-  
lusion—

A flash like the lightning's unseal'd every eye,  
And o'er hill-top and glen floated liberty's banner,  
While round it men gather'd to conquer or die!

'Twas the voice of the press—on the startled ear break-  
ing.

In giant-born prowess, like PALLAS of old:  
'Twas the flash of intelligence gloriously waking  
A glow on the cheek of the noble and bold;  
And tyranny's minions, o'erawed and affrighted,  
Sought a lasting retreat in the cloister and cowl,  
And the chains which bound nations in ages benighted  
Were cast to the haunts of the bat and the owl.

Then hail to the Press! chosen guardian of freedom!  
Strong sword-arm of justice! bright sun beam of truth!  
We pledge to her cause, (and she has but to heed them.)  
The strength of our manhood, the fire of our youth:  
Should despots e'er dare to impede her free soaring,  
Or bigot to fetter her flight with his chain,  
We swear that the earth shall close o'er our deploring  
Or view her gladness and freedom again.

But no!—to the day-dawn of knowledge and glory,  
A far brighter noontide-refulgence succeeds;  
And our art shall embalm, through all ages, in story,  
Her champion who triumphs—her martyr who bleeds,  
And proudly her sons shall recall their devotion,  
While millions shall listen to honor and bliss,  
Till there bursts a response from the heart's strong  
emotion,  
And the earth echoes deep with "Long life to the  
Press!"

The following interesting sketches  
and reminiscences of the old sugar house in  
Liberty street, New York city, used by the  
British in the Revolution as a prison for con-  
fining American prisoners, and in which the  
most painful and appalling sufferings were  
endured, have been published in a communi-  
cation in the New World, from Grant Thor-  
burn, otherwise known as Laurie Todd:—

### The Old Sugar House Prison.

When ages shall have mingled with those  
who have gone before the flood, the spot on  
which stood this prison will be sought for  
with more than antiquarian interest. It was  
founded in 1769, and occupied as a sugar  
refining manufactory till 1776, when Lord  
Howe converted it into a place of confine-  
ment for the American prisoners. At the  
conclusion of the war for Independence, the  
business of sugar refining was resumed and  
continued until 1839 or '40, when it was  
leveled to the ground to make way for a  
block of buildings wherein to stow Yankee  
rum and New Orleans molasses. Pity it was  
ever demolished. With reasonable care it  
might have stood a thousand years, a monu-  
ment to all generations of the pains, pen-  
alties, sufferings and deaths their fathers met  
in procuring the blessings they now inherit.  
It stood on the South-East and adjoining the  
grave-yard around the Middle Dutch Church,  
and said church being now bounded by Lib-  
erty, Nassau and Cedar streets. But, as it  
is said, this church is soon to become a post  
office. The leveling spirit of the day is  
rooting up and destroying every landmark  
and vestige of antiquity about the city, and  
it is probable that in the year 2021 there will  
not be a man in New York who can point  
out the spot whereon stood a prison whose  
history is so feelingly connected with our  
revolutionary traditions.

On the 13th of June, 1794, I came to re-  
side in Liberty street, between Nassau street  
and Broadway, where I dwelt forty years.  
As the events recorded in the history had  
but recently transpired, I had frequent oppor-  
tunities of seeing and conversing with the  
men who had been actors in the scenes.  
Some of the anecdotes I heard from the lips  
of Gen. Alexander Hamilton, Gen. Morgan  
Lewis, Col. Richard Varick, the venerable  
John Pintard, and other revolutionary wor-  
thies, then in the pride of life, but now all  
numbered with the dead.

Till within a few years past there stood,  
in Liberty street, a dark stone building,  
grown gray and rusty with age, with small,  
deep windows, exhibiting a dungeon-like ap-  
pear, and transporting the memory to scenes  
of former days, when the revolution poured  
its desolating waves over the fairest portion  
of our country. It was five stories high;  
and each story was divided into two dreary  
apartments, with ceiling so low and the light  
from the windows so dim, that a stranger  
would readily take the place for a jail. On  
the stones in the walls, and on many of the  
bricks under the office windows, are still to  
be seen initials and ancient dates, as if done

with a penknife or nail; this was the work  
of many of the American prisoners, who  
adopted this among other means, to while  
away their weeks and years of long monotonous  
confinement. There is a strong jail-  
like door opening on Liberty street, and an-  
other on the South East, descending into a  
dismal cellar, scarce allowing the midday  
sun to peep through its window-gratings.

When I first saw this building—some  
fifty years ago—there was a walk nearly  
broad enough for a cart to travel round it;  
but, of late years, a wing has been added to  
the northeast end, which shuts up this walk  
where, for many long days and nights, two  
British or Hessian soldiers walked their  
weary rounds, guarding the American pris-  
oners. For thirty years after I settled in  
Liberty street, this house was often visited  
by one and another of those war-worn veter-  
ans—men of whom the present political  
worldlings are not worthy. I often heard  
them repeat the story of their sufferings and  
sorrows, but always with grateful acknowl-  
edgments to Him, who guides the destinies  
of men as well as of nations.

One morning, when returning from the  
old Fly market at the foot of Maiden Lane,  
I noticed two of those old soldiers in the sug-  
ar house yard; they had only three legs  
between them—one having a wooden leg.  
I stopped a moment to listen to their conver-  
sation, and as they were slowly moving  
from the yard, said I to them:—

"Gentlemen, do either of you remember  
this old building?"

'Aye, indeed; I shall never forget it,' re-  
plied he of one leg. 'For twelve months,  
that dark hole,' pointing to the cellar, 'was  
my only home. And at that door I saw the  
corpse of my brother thrown into the dead  
cart, among a heap of others, who died in  
night previous of jail fever. While the fe-  
ver was raging we were let out, in companies  
of twenty, for half an hour at a time, to  
breathe the fresh air; and inside we were  
so crowded that we divided our number into  
squads of six each. No. 1 stood ten min-  
utes as close to the window as they could  
crowd, to catch the cool air, and then step-  
ped back, when No. 2 took their places;  
and so on. Seats we had none; and our  
beds were but straw on the floor, with ver-  
min intermixed. And there' continued he,  
pointing with his cane to a brick in the wall,  
'is my kill time work—'A. V. S. 1777,'  
viz: Abraham Van Sicker—which I scratch-  
ed with an old nail. When peace came  
some learned the fate of their fathers and  
mothers from such initials.'

My house being near by, I asked them to  
step in and take a bite. In answer to my  
inquiry as to how he lost his leg, he related  
the following circumstances:

'In 1777,' said he, 'I was quartered at  
Belleville, N. J., with a part of the army,  
under Col. Cortlandt. Gen. Howe had pos-  
session of New York, at the same time, and  
we every moment expected an attack from  
Henry Clinton. Delay made us less vigi-  
lant, and we were surprised, defeated, and  
many slain and made prisoners. We march-  
ed from Newark, crossing the Passaic and  
Hackensack rivers in boats. The road  
through the swamp was a 'corduroy,' that is,  
pine trees laid side by side.'

In September, 1795, I traveled this road  
and found it in the same condition.

'We were confined,' he continued, 'in this  
sugar house, with hundreds who had entered  
before us. At that time, the brick meeting  
house, the North Dutch Church, the Protest-  
ant Church in Pine street, were used as jails  
for the prisoners; while the Scotch Presby-  
terian Church in Cedar street, (now a house  
of merchandise,) was occupied as a hospital  
for the Hessian soldiers, and the Middle  
Dutch Church for a riding school for their  
cavalry. I well remember it was on a Sab-  
bath morning—as it in contempt of Him  
whose house they were desecrating—that  
they first commenced their riding operations  
in said Church. On that same day a ves-  
sel from England arrived, laden with pow-  
der, ball and other munitions of war. She  
dropped anchor in the East River, opposite  
the foot of Maiden Lane. The weather was  
warm, and a thunder storm came on in the  
afternoon. The ship was struck by a thun-  
derbolt from Heaven. Not a vestige of the  
crew, stores or equipment was ever seen af-  
ter that. The good Whigs and Americans,  
all over the country, said that the God of  
Battles had pointed that thunderbolt.'

'We were crowded to excess,' continued  
the old veteran; 'our provisions bad, sooty

and unwholesome, and the fever raged like a  
pestilence. For many weeks the dead cart  
visited us every morning, into which from  
eight to twelve corpses were thrown, piled  
up like sticks of wood, with the same clothes  
they had worn for months, and in which they  
had died, and often before the body was cold.  
Thus, every day expecting death, I made up  
my mind to escape, or die in the attempt.  
The yard was surrounded by a close board  
fence, nine feet high. I informed my friend  
here of my intention, and he readily agreed  
to follow my plan. The day previous we  
placed an old barrel, which stood in the  
yard, against the fence, as if by accident.  
Seeing the barrel was not removed the next  
day, we resolved to make the attempt that  
afternoon. The fence we intended to scale  
was on the side of the yard nearest to the  
East River; and our intentions were, if we  
succeeded in getting over, to make for the  
river, seize the first boat we could, and push  
for Long Island.

'Two sentries walked around the build-  
ing day and night, always meeting and pass-  
ing each other at the ends of the prison.  
They were only about one minute out of  
sight, and during this minute we mounted  
the barrel and cleared the fence. I dropped  
upon a stone and broke my leg, so that I lay  
still at the bottom of the fence outside. We  
were missed immediately and pursued. They  
stopped a moment to examine my leg, and  
this saved my friend; for by the time they  
reached the water edge, at the foot of Maiden  
Lane, he was stepping on shore at Brooklyn,  
and thus got clear. I was carried to my old  
quarters, and rather thrown than laid on the  
floor, under a shower of curses.

'Twenty-four hours elapsed ere I saw the  
Doctor. My leg, by this time, had become  
so much swollen that it could not be set.  
Mortification immediately commenced, and  
amputation soon followed. Thus, being dis-  
abled from either serving friend or foe, I was  
liberated, through the influence of a distant  
relative, royalist. And now I live as I can,  
on my pension, and with the help of my  
friends.'

In 1812, Judge Schuyler, of Belleville,  
showed me a musket ball which then lay im-  
bedded in one of his window shutters, which  
was lodged there on that night thirty-five  
years previous.

Among the many who visited this prison  
forty years ago, I one day observed a tall,  
thin, but respectable looking gentleman, on  
whose head was a cocked hat—an article  
not entirely discarded in those days—and a  
few dozen snow-white hairs gathered behind  
and tied with a black ribbon. On his arm  
hung—not a badge, or a cane, nor a dagger;  
but a handsome young lady, who I learned  
from him was his daughter, whom he had  
brought two hundred miles to view the place  
of her father's sufferings. He walked erect,  
and had about him something of a military  
air. Being strangers, I asked them in; and  
before we parted I heard

(To be continued.)

### AN INTERESTING NARRATIVE.

Our story will carry the reader back a  
little more than fifty years; when all North  
of the Ohio river was an almost unbroken  
wilderness—the mysterious red man's home.  
On the other side a bold and hardy band  
from beyond the mountains had built their  
log cabins, and were trying to subdue the  
wilderness.

To them every hour was full of peril. The  
Indians would often cross the river, steal  
their children and horses, and kill and scalp  
any victim who came in their way. They  
worked in the field with weapons at their  
side, and on the Sabbath met in the grove  
in the rude log church, to hear the word of  
God with their rifles in their hands.

To preach to these settlers, Mr. Joseph  
Smith, a Presbyterian minister, had left his  
parental home east of the mountains. He,  
it was said, was the second minister who had  
crossed the Monongahela river. He settled  
in Washington county, Penn., and became  
the pastor of the Cross Creek and Upper Buf-  
falo congregations, dividing his time between  
them. He found them a willing and united  
people, but still unable to pay him a salary  
which would support his family. He in com-  
mon with all the early ministers, must culti-  
vate a farm. He purchased one on credit,  
proposing to pay for it with the salary pledg-  
ed to him by his people.

Years passed away. The pastor was un-  
paid. Little or no money was in circulation.  
Wheat was abundant, but there was no

market. It could not be sold for more than  
twelve and a half cents in cash. Even their  
salt had to be brought across the mountains  
on pack horses—was worth eight dollars per  
bushel, and twenty one bushels of wheat  
were often given for one of salt.

The time came when the last payment  
must be made, and Mr. Smith was told he  
must pay or leave his farm. Three years'  
salary was now due from his people.

For the want of this his land, his improve-  
ments upon it, and his hopes of remaining a-  
mong a beloved people, must be abandoned.  
The people were called together and the  
case laid before them. They were greatly  
moved. Counsel from on high was sought.  
Plan after plan was proposed and abandoned.  
The congregations were unable to pay the  
title of their debts, and no money could be  
borrowed.

In despair they adjourned to meet again  
the following week. In the mean time it was  
ascertained that a Mr. Moore who owned the  
only mill in the country, would grind for  
them wheat on moderate terms. At the next  
meeting it was resolved to carry their wheat  
to Mr. Moore's mill. Some gave 50 bushels,  
some more. This was carried from fifteen  
to twenty-six miles on horses to the mill.

In a month, word came that the flour was  
ready to go to market. Again the people  
were called together. After an earnest  
prayer, the question was asked, who will run  
the flour to New Orleans? This was a start-  
ling question. The work was perilous in the  
extreme. Months must pass before the ad-  
venturer could hope to return, even though  
his journey should be fortunate. Nearly all  
the way was a wilderness; and gloomy tales  
had been told of the treacherous Indian.—  
More than one boat's crew had gone on that  
journey and came back no more.

Who then would endure the toil and brave  
the danger? None volunteered. The young  
shrunk back, and the middle aged had their  
excuse. Their last scheme seemed likely  
to fail. At length a hoary headed man, an  
elder in the church, sixty-four years of age,  
arose, and to the astonishment of the assem-  
bly said, "Here am I, send me." The deep-  
est feeling at once pervaded the whole as-  
sembly. To see their venerated elder thus  
devote himself for their good, melted them to  
tears. They gather around old father Smi-  
ley to learn that his resolution was indeed  
taken; that rather than lose their pastor, he  
would brave danger, toil, and even death.—  
After some delay and trouble two young  
men were induced by hope of a large reward  
to go as his assistants.

A day was appointed for starting. The  
young and old from far and near, from love  
to father Smiley, and their deep interest in  
the object of his mission, gathered together,  
and with their pastor at their head, came  
down from the church, fifteen miles away to  
the bank of the river, to bid the old man  
farewell. Then a prayer was offered by  
their pastor. A parting hymn was sung.—  
"There," said the old Scotchman, "untie the  
cable, and let us see what the Lord will do  
for us." This was done and the boat float-  
ed slowly away.

More than nine months passed, and no  
word came back from father Smiley. Many  
a prayer had been breathed for him, but what  
had been his fate was unknown. Another  
Sabbath came. The people came together  
for worship, and there on his rude bench be-  
fore the preacher, composed and devout, sat  
father Smiley. After the services, the peo-  
ple were requested to meet early in the week  
to hear the report. All came again.

After thanks had been rendered to God  
for his safe return, father Smiley arose and  
told his story;—that the Lord had prospered  
his mission; that he had sold his flour for  
twenty-seven dollars per barrel, and then got  
safely back. He then drew a large purse,  
and poured upon the table a larger pile of  
gold than most of the spectators had ever  
seen before. The young men were paid each  
a hundred dollars. Father Smiley was asked  
his charges.

He meekly replied, that he thought he  
ought to have the same as one of the young  
men, though he had not done quite as much  
work. It was immediately proposed to pay  
him three hundred dollars. This he refused  
to receive till the pastor was paid. Upon  
counting the money, there was found enough  
to pay what was due Mr. S.—to advance his  
salary for the year to come—to reward father  
Smiley with three hundred dollars, and then  
to leave a large dividend for each contribution.  
Their debts were paid and pastor relieved.