

It was the duty of every loyal man to see that this principle was carried out, even as they were about to carry their departed brother out: though it must not be inferred that he meant it should be carried out on *beer*. (Great laughter.) When we had once settled this matter at home, we could afford to say to John Bull and Louis Napoleon: "Interfere if you dare. We are ready for you both." [Male parent of the deceased — "Why don't you go and fight yourself?"] That gentleman who spoke then, is as bad as the patient who said to the doctor who was recommending some wholesome medicine to him: "Why don't you take it yourself, if it's good?" (Great laughter and applause.) But he would detain them no longer, or the papers would say that he had talked politics.

At the conclusion of this discourse, my boy, the male parent of the deceased offered the following preamble and resolution:

WHEREAS, It has pleased an inscrutable and all-wise Providence to free our departed brother from the bonds of life; and

WHEREAS, Freedom is the normal condition of all mankind: therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we will vote for no man who is not in favor of Universal Liberty, without respect to color.

Passed, unanimously.

Politics, my boy, are, in themselves, a distinct system of life and death; and when we say that a man is politically dead, we mean that even his en-graving is forgotten; and that the brick which he carries in his hat is a species of head-stone.

Yours, post obit,
ORPHEUS C. KERR.

LETTER LXXXI.

SHOWING HOW A MINION OF TYRANNY WAS TERRIBLY PUNISHED FOR INTERFERING WITH THE CONSERVATIVE WOMEN OF AMERICA; AND DESCRIBING THE KENTUCKY CHAP'S REMARKABLE SKIRMISH WITH HIS THANKSGIVING DINNER.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 7th, 1868.

As I make it a practice to pay all my honest debts, my boy, and have never flagellated a person of African descent, I could not properly come under the head of "Chivalry" in an American dictionary, though I might possibly come under its feet in the "Union-as-it-Was;" yet I have that in my nature which revolts at the thought of a war against women, and am sufficiently chivalrous to defend any cause whose effects are crinoline. The bell-shaped structure called Woman, my boy, was created expressly to conquer unresisting adversaries; to win engagements without receiving a blow, and to do pretty much as she pleases, by pleasing pretty much as she does. She is a harmless creation of herself, my boy; and to war directly against her because she may chance to influence her male friends to war against us, is about as sensible as it would be to execrate our hatter because a gust of wind blows our new beaver into the mud. If the hatter had not made the hat, the wind could not have blown it off, and if God had not made women, she could not encourage the well-known Southern Confederacy against us; but

shall we turn enemy to the hatter, or to the woman, on this account? Not if we know ourselves, my boy, and recognize the high moral spirit of justice observable in the Constitution.

Being thus possessed of a reverence for that sex whose bonnets remind me of cake-baskets, I cannot refrain from frowning indignantly upon that horrible spirit of national tyranny which has inspired Sergeant O'Pake, of the demoralized Mackerel Brigade, to issue the following

“GENERAL ORDER.

“For the purpose of simplifying national strategy to those conservative women of America who, while engaged in the pursuit of happiness as guaranteed by the Constitution, desire to visit the Southern Confederacy, it is ordered that they shall answer the following paternal questions before passing the lines of the Mackerel Brigade:

“I. For how many years has your age been Just Twenty-two?

“II. How many novels do you consume per week?

“III. Were you ever complained of to the authorities for inordinate piano-forte playing?

“IV. Do you work slippers for the heathen?

“V. If so; for *what* He, then?

“VI. What newspaper's 'Marriages and Deaths' do you consider the best?

“VII. In selecting a church to attend, what colored prayer-book do you find most becoming to your complexion?

“VIII. How much display of neck do you consider

necessary to indicate a Modesty which shrinks from showing an ankle?

“IX. Did you ever stoop to folly? or is it Folly alone that stoops to you?

“X. Did you ever eat as much as you wanted at dinner, when members of the opposite sex were opposite?

“It is also ordered that no female visitor to the celebrated Southern Confederacy shall carry more than eight large trunks and a bonnet-box for each month in the year; and that no female shall pass the line, whose dimensions in full dress exceed the ordinary space between two pickets, as the latter will, on no account be permitted to edge away from their stations at this trying crisis in the history of our distracted country.

“O'PAKE,

“Sergeant Mackerel Brigade.”

This inhuman order had scarcely been issued when there came to the Mackerel lines in front of Paris a virtuous young female, aged 23 with the figures reversed, who was disgusted with the great vulgarity of the North, and wished to visit the marriageable Southern Confederacy, having heard that the Confederacy was carefully Husbanding its resources. Being a poor girl, with “nothing to wear,” she only had seven Saratoga trunks, ten bandboxes, fourteen small carpet-bags, and a lap-dog; yet the ill-bred O'Pake was suspicious enough to examine one of her trunks.

He ruthlessly opened it in her presence, my boy, and quickly met with the horrible fate which was at once im-

mortalized by the Mackerel Chaplain in the following awful presentment :

"THE AVENGING SKELETON.

"When tyrant purpose made the martial fool
With brief authority profoundly drunk,
Unto his minions issued forth a rule,
To search each Southward-going woman's trunk.

"There was a Sergeant of the Mack'el ranks
Made one attempt to carry out the law ;
But ah ! — to Providence a thousand thanks ! —
He met a doom to fill the soul with awe.

"Scarce had his impious hands the task begun ; —
Scarce had he ope'd the vast and mammoth thing, —
When, from the trunk's interior Phlegethon,
Came forth a horrid phantom, with a spring !

"It was a dreadful monster, without flesh,
Made up of ever-less'ning, perfect hoops ;
More terrible to vision than secesh,
With all his ragged, whiskey-drinking troops.

"The wretched Sergeant started back with fear,
And would have 'scaped the penalty incurred ;
But, ah ! the spectre caught him by an ear,
And held him trembling like a prisoned bird.

"Wrought up to frenzy by mishap so dire,
He struck the phantom in his thoughtless rage ;
But 'twas like fanning to put out a fire,
And straight his hand was tangled in a cage !

"And then his other tyrant hand he tried
To ease the springs that pressed him ev'rywhere ;
His futile blow the Skeleton defied, —
His other hand was taken in a snare !

"Then round his form the dread avenger coiled,
Like snakes' backbones in unelastic curl ;
By prison-bars his wished retreat is foiled,
And in a cage behold the trembling churl.

"Still mad with terror at his grievous plight,
He lifts a foot, as though to kick at last ;
When, lo ! his leg goes through an op'ning slight,
And there two wiry circles hold it fast.

"He plunges, staggers, tries to tear the bands
Which make that woman's Skeleton complete ;
Then reeleth blindly unto where she stands,
And falls in helpless bondage at her feet !"

When the poor tool of tyranny was released from this terrific skeleton, he looked as bewildered as one who had just returned from the outskirts of civilization ; but still his fiendish taste for trunk-inspection was not conquered. He returned to the edge of the wardrobe abyss, drew forth an immense white article, and says he :

"Do my spectacles relate a fiction, or is this indeed a Sibley tent for the use of the Confederacy ?"

At this moment the excellent young woman hastily snatched the article away from him, and says she :

"You nasty thing, that's my" — here she blushed.

At times, my boy, woman's blush is the imperial banner of virgin Modesty thrown out to catch the breeze that

wafts the sound of coming rescue, and means: "*God is my defence.*" At other times, it is the eloquent protest of a fine intelligence which deprecates the test that would turn all its hidden beauties to the public eye, and means: *Humility is born of Genius.* But in this case, it was the lurid flush of anger, and meant — *a petticoat.*

Not wishing to further betray the reproachful fact that he was an unmarried Mackerel, Sergeant O'Pake closed the trunk with emphasis, and permitted the triumphant young woman of America to trip it lightly to the South.

The Mackerel Brigade at present constitutes one of three parallel lines, the other two being the celebrated City of Paris and the well known Southern Confederacy. Paris is the central one, and may be called the line of battle, over which the Orange County Howitzers are continually hurling shot and shell at the glorious sun. During the day it is much frequented by Southern Confederacies, who drink anything that will pour into a tumbler; and in the evening it is visited by our indomitable troops, who go to look at the empty bottles. You may ask, my boy, why the Confederacies are not routed, and Paris occupied? I answer, that the new General of the Mackerel Brigade will not attack an inferior force, and is waiting until there shall be something worth killing on the opposite side. Too often did the former General of the Mackerel Brigade make the mistake this high-minded conduct is intended to avoid; too often, after an interval of only a few months, did he lead the majestic Mackerels ahead of him into the field, and then hastily retire, upon finding that the Confederacies were too inferior in numbers to make their conquest worth while. But we shall have no more such

mistakes, for the new General will not move against the foe until the latter is strong enough to make carnage desirable. Besides, the man who was to build a bridge across Duck Lake, could not come last week, on account of the rain, and there are no ferryboats running.

On Thanksgiving Day, however, we had a skirmish of thrilling intensity. The conservative Kentucky chap, my boy, has got command of Company 2, Regiment 1, and having drilled them in swearing, to the sound of the Emancipation Proclamation, for a whole fortnight, he has brought them to a high state of discipline and profanity. On Thursday morning, just after one of our scouts had cleaned his spectacles, he beheld a Confederate turkey emerge from this side of Paris and proceed to insult the United States of America by hideous gobblings. The alarm was at once given, and after swearing at his men to give them confidence, the conservative Kentucky chap led them forth to capture the obscene bird. Onward pushed the spectacled veterans, with fixed bayonets, addressing their eyes with pleasant oaths, and hoping that they might meet Horace Greeley.

The Confederate turkey was eating a worm at the moment, and only paused long enough to eye our troops with that species of disdain which comes of Southern birth. He felt, as it were, that he was protected by the Constitution of our forefathers.

The conservative Kentucky chap, being fond of turkey for dinner himself, waved his glittering sword above his head, and says he:

"The South has brought this upon herself. Make ready. —"

He was about to add "Fire!" my boy! but he had just put on his spectacles, and a sudden change came over his Kentucky countenance. Says he:

"For Heaven's sake, don't fire! Vallandigham me," says he, staring right over the turkey, — "Vallandigham me, if I didn't come near telling them to shoot! And there's a nigger coming after the turkey as sure as death. Ah! what an escape!"

A Mackerel chap, who had noticed his staring and great agitation, approached respectfully, and says he:

"Does a obstacle to victory protrude?"

The conservative Kentucky chap spat at a copy of the "Tribune," which he threw upon the ground for the purpose, and says he:

"Notwithstanding any Proclamations whatsoever, Kentucky is not waging this war against the institution of slavery. In the dim distance I behold a contraband apparently approaching the turkey, and there must be no bombardment until he has returned to his rightful owner."

The Mackerel chap wiped his boots with the "Tribune," and says he:

"I do not see our brother Africa at all."

Here the Confederate turkey, who had finished his worm, turned heavily from the scene, and presently disappeared on the other side of Paris.

The Kentucky chap still kept staring afar off, and says he:

"Why, I can see him, though he appears to be at a great distance."

Now it chanced, my boy, that while the conservative Kentucky chap was saying this, the Mackerel chap gazed at him fixedly, and then says he, in just astonishment:

"Methinks there is a object on one of the glasses of your spectacles, Capting."

Frantically the Kentucky chap tore off his spectacles, and discovered upon one of the glasses an object indeed. It was a small picture of a negro minstrel, my boy, cut from the show-bill of some country band, and pasted upon the spectacles of Kentucky's rising son. It had been secretly placed there the night before by a Democratic chap from the Sixth Ward, to give a constitutional turn to the war.

The mind's eye of Conservatism, my boy, looks upon the war through spectacles so seldom cleaned, that what most offends it, is more than likely to be what exists only in its own looking-glasses.

Yours, spectacularly,

ORPHEUS C. KERR.