

Head's brown gingham umbrella sticking in the gun, and it was the flight of the umbrella we had witnessed.

An umbrella, my boy, and a horse, may be said to have some relations. We put one up when it rains, and we rein the other up when we "put."

Yours, good-naturedly,

ORPHEUS C. KERR.

LETTER LXXXIII.

REFERRING TO WASHINGTON CITY AND THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE,
AND GIVING THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY'S VERY REASONABLE PEACE
PROPOSITION.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 28th, 1863.

THE city of Washington, my boy, without her Congress, is like a maiden without her plighted young man. She surveys herself in the mirror of the Potomac, and says she: "Where's my Congress, without whom I am like a gas bracket deserted by its old flame?" Alas! all flesh is gas, my boy, and some of our congressmen are very fleshy. Their presence it is that makes Washington a light for the world, and many of them who once rode high horses have alighted. At the present moment our distracted country is enveloped in darkest night, and the day seems so far off that many Mackerels despair of ever seeing payday, even. At such a time what a blessing is that Congress which burns to illumine us after the manner of an elaborate chandelier! It passes away to leave everything dark; it returns, and behold all is darkey.

I was in my room at my hotel, when Congress commenced to arrive, conversing with Captain Bob Shorty; and, as a seedy-looking, middle-aged chap passed by on the opposite side of the street, the captain looked out of the window, and says he:

"That's one of the new legislators, my Pythias."

"How can you tell a new Solon from an old one?" says I, curiously.

"Why," says Captain Bob Shorty, profoundly, "an old congressman never wears a tall hat. An old congressman," says Captain Bob Shorty, sagely, "always wears a soft hat, so that it wont be injured by being knocked over his eyes."

I pondered deeply over this idea, my boy, and it seemed to me that a soft hat must be the real Cap of Liberty.

Passing over the organization of Senate and House, which suggested thoughts of ancient Rome about the time she was saved by geese, I shall proceed to notice the Message which our honest Abe fired into Congress from his intellectual breastworks during the week.

You have undoubtedly read this Abe L. paper, my boy, in the reliable morning journals, making due allowance for the typographical outrages committed by printers of opposite politics; but there was one portion of it gotten up for the honest Abe by the Chaplain of the Mackerel Brigade, and this portion is so mutilated in the publishing, that I cannot refrain from giving you the true version. Speaking of the cost to the country of Emancipation with compensation, the Chaplain wrote:

"Certainly it is not so easy to pay something as it is to pay nothing; but it is easier to pay a small sum than it is to pay a large sum; and it is easier to pay any bill when we have the money, than it is to pay a smaller bill when we have no money. Compensated Emancipation requires no more money than would be necessary to the progress of Remunerated Enfranchisement, which

would not close before the end of five hundred years. At that time, we shall undoubtedly have five hundred times as many people as we have now, provided that no one dies in the mean time; and supposing the premium on gold to increase in the same ratio as it has increased since our last census was taken, the premium on the specie belonging to five hundred times our present population will be amply sufficient to pay for all persons of African descent.

"I do not state this inconsiderately. At the same ratio of increase as we now realize, American gold will soon be worth more than all Europe. We have ten millions nine hundred and sixty-three thousand miles, while Europe has three millions eight hundred thousand, and yet the average premium on specie, in some of the States, is already above that of Europe. Taking the brokers in the aggregate, I find that if one gold dollar is worth \$1.30 in one year,

It will be worth	\$2.60	in two years,
" " " "	3.90	" 3 "
" " " "	5.20	" 4 "
" " " "	6.50	" 5 "

This shows a yearly increase. If a gold dollar is worth \$6.50 in five years, it will, of course, be worth \$3,250 or five hundred times as much in five hundred years. Thus, when our population is five hundred times as great as at present, supposing each man to have a single gold dollar, the premium of \$3,250 on his gold dollar will enable such man to purchase thirty-two and a half persons of African descent from the loyal slaveholders of our border States at

\$100 a piece, though he would be virtually expending but one dollar himself.

"This scheme of emancipation would certainly make the war shorter than it now has a prospect of being. In a word, it shows that a dollar will be much harder to pay for the war than will be a dollar for emancipation on the proposed plan."

You will observe, my boy, that this same great mathematical idea is advanced in the Message as it is printed; but our Honest Abe has chosen to vary the terms somewhat. If you have a gold dollar, my boy, salt it down for five hundred years, and some future generation of offspring will call you blessed for leaving them \$3,250 in postage-stamps.

On my last journey toward Paris, finding the Mackerel Brigade still halting before that ancient city, I rode straight to the tent of Captain Villiam Brown, whom I found making himself a fall overcoat from some old newspapers, while the Chaplain sat near by, making himself a pair of shoes from a remnant of calico.

"Well, paladin," says I to Villiam, "what is it that so long detains our noble army on the path of conquest?"

Villiam sighed as he used a little more paste to fasten the sleeves of the garment he was constructing, and says he:

"It's the overcoats."

"Why," says I, epigrammatically, "don't they go far enough forward in front?"

"Ah!" says Villiam, thoughtfully, "they come far enough forward in front, but then they leave the rear exposed. On Monday," says Villiam, reflectively, "Company

Three's overcoats arrived, and I requested the warriors to attire themselves after the designs of frequent fashion-plates. But scarce had their manly forms commenced to assume the garments, when the garments tore frantically from their warlike shapes."

"Hum!" says I, questioningly, "the overcoats were Rebels in disguise."

"No," says Villiam, gloomily, "but it took two Mackerels to hold an overcoat together while another warrior put it on, and when it was buttoned in front, the rear presented the aspect of two separate departments. I am now making myself a stronger coat of Democratic newspapers," says Villiam, explainingly, "in order that my Constitution may be protected from harm."

I glanced at him askant, my boy, and says I, innocently, "I see a still better reason for your clothing yourself for battle in newspapers."

"Ah!" says Villiam, complacently, "you think that I adopt the intellectual garment to show that my line of battle is ten cents a line."

"No, my hero," says I, pleasantly, "I think you clothe yourself for battle in printed matter, to make sure that 'he who runs may read.'"

I would not say positively that Villiam "saw" this agreeable remark, my boy. I am not prepared to affirm that he took the hit; but as the canteen left his hand, my ears recognized a hasty whiz, and the effect upon the side of the tent, near my head, was perforating.

Turning from the spot, I next had my attention attracted by a tall whiskered chap, in a paralyzed whirlpool of gray rags, who was closely examining a stack of Mackerel mus-

kets near at hand. Hearing me ask his object, he remarked casually that I was a "mudsill," and says he :

"As the unconquerable Southern Confederacy has a great contempt for the Yankee army, it has sent me here to see whether these muskets are worth taking. If they proved to be worth taking, the war was to continue; if not, I was to offer indirect proposals for peace, as the Sunny South does not wish to protect a struggle that does not pay."

Instead of replying to him, I stepped aside to give place to the Conservative Kentucky chap, who had just been denouncing the Message to the Mackerel Chaplain in the tent, and was greatly outraged by the Chaplain's response.

It seems that he had abruptly addressed the Chaplain, and says he : "If that Message wants to make the nigger the equal of the conservative element by implication, I hereby announce that Kentucky considers herself much offended. I fight for that flag," says he, hotly, pointing to the national standard, — "I fight for the stars on that flag, to aid the cause of the white man alone; and with the black man Kentucky will have nothing to do whatever."

The Chaplain looked dreamily at the flag, as it patched the sky above him, and says he :

"For men of your way of thinking, my friend, that banner should bear a sun, rather than the stars."

"Hem!" says the Kentucky chap. "How so?"

"Why," says the Chaplain, gravely, "beneath the stars alone, you cannot tell a black man from a white man. The master and slave of the broad noonday are equals under the stars; for if the sun shines upon the one

working that the other may be idle, the gentle planets of the night make master and bondman of one hue and perfect equals in Nature's own Republic, — starry Night. The banner for you, my friend, should bear the sun, to show that it is but for a day."

The conservative Kentucky chap came away swearing, my boy; and hence, it was in no very good humor that he now saluted the Confederate raggedier.

"Hem!" says he, ungraciously, "where did all those rags come from, and what is their name?"

The Confederacy hastily put on a pair of white cotton gloves, and says he :

"Am I addressing the Democratic Organization?"

"You address the large Kentucky branch," says the Conservative chap, pulling out his ruffles.

"Then," says the Confederacy, "I am prepared to make an indirect proposition for peace. My name is Mr. Lamb, by which title the Democratic Organization has always known the injured Confederacy, and I propose the following terms: Hostilities shall at once cease, and the two armies be consolidated under the title of the Confederate States Forces. The war-debts of the North and South shall be so united that the North may be able to pay them without confusion. An election for a new President shall at once be held, everybody voting save those who have shown animosity to the sunny South. France shall be driven out of Mexico by the consolidated armies, the expense being so managed that the North may pay it without further trouble. Upon these terms, the Confederacy will become a peaceful fellow-man."

"Hem!" says the Kentucky chap, "What you ask is

perfectly reasonable. I will consider the matter after the manner of a dispassionate Democrat, and return you my answer in a few days."

Here I hastily stepped up, and says I, "But are you not going to consult the President at all about it, my Jupiter Tonans?"

"The President? the President?" says the Conservative Kentucky chap, with a vague look. "Hem!" says he, "I really forgot all about the President!"

The Democratic Organization, my boy, in its zeal to benefit its distracted country, is occasionally like that eminent fire company in the Sixth Ward, which nobly usurped with its hose the terrible business of putting out a large conflagration, and never remembered, until its beautiful machine was all in position, that another company of fellow-firemen had exclusive possession of all the water-works.

Yours, comparingly,

ORPHEUS C. KERR.

LETTER LXXXIV.

PROVING THAT RUSSIA IS INDEED OUR FRIEND; INSTANCING THE TERRIFIC BOMBARDMENT OF PARIS; AND TELLING HOW THE NEW GENERAL OF THE MACKEREL BRIGADE DELIGHTED ALL WITH HIS SURPRISING "SHAPE."

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 2d, 1863.

THE sagacious Russian bear, my boy, is found to regard the Eagle of our distracted country with more than his ordinary liking for fancy poultry, and our shattered bird may feel proud of a friendship proffered by such an excellent beast. Truth to tell, the present aspect of our national chicken is not calculated to inspire an idolatrous passion in the breast of European zoölogy. All his tail-feathers have seceded, and are in rebellion against him; and he has got a black eye, my boy, from strategic gambols with the playful Southern Confederacy. Hence, we should accept the bear's affection as a marvel of disinterested emotion; for I am almost sure, my boy, I am almost sure that nothing handsomer than a bear could have much real love for such a fractured fowl.

A relative of mine, named A. Merry Kerr,* went to Russia some time ago, being secretly deputed by Government to expend the amount of his passage-money in a judicious manner. He writes to me of his friendly reception by Gorchakoff, and says he:

* Excepting Mr. Bayard Taylor, no ordinary traveler ever excited so much wild affection in the breasts of foreign kings and noblemen as this gentleman.

"Mr. Gorchakoff ordered my trunks to be put away under the throne for the time being, and then hastened me to his own private bedroom, whose windows command a full view of all you can see through them. Having brushed me off and kissed me, he ordered some fried candles for two, and then says he :

"How comes on the Union cause, whose pregnant misery on Potomac's shore has caused the heart of the Czar untold anguish? How often has his majesty said to me: 'The North *must* triumph, Prince; and mark me when I say, that two more centuries will not roll by without witnessing the fall of Richmond.'"

"Sir," says I,—

"The lightning-motion of the fish,
Beneath the sea, will just compare
With victory's impulse to our flag,—
That striped bass of upper air."

"The North must conquer, you see, Mr. G."

Upon hearing me speak thus, Mr. Gorchakoff laid my head upon his bosom and smoothed my hair, and says he :
"Oh, how I love your country! Russia will never join any scheme of foreign intervention against your beautiful fish."

He said this in such a tone of real fondness that tears sprang to my eyes, and says I :

"Heaven bless you, my Muscovy duck!"

With a look of the deepest tenderness, Mr. Gorchakoff now extended himself at full length upon the top of a bureau near my chair, and allowed his head to hang over in such a manner that he was enabled to press his cheek against mine.

"Wilt thou do me one favor, noble youth?" says he, with much emotion.

I placed a hand upon my heart.

"Then," says he, "just ask Mr. Seward not to write so many letters to me every week; because when my mail is so large, I don't have any time to attend to my family."

I promised to do so, and then went out to get some oysters. The candles had made me quite light-headed.

From this, my boy, you will perceive that Russia "may be counted upon in an emergency;" as the man said of the bear-skin upon which he was reckoning his small change.

On Thursday, bright and early, I mounted my gothic steed Pegasus, and started for Duck Lake.

Upon reaching the Mackerel camp, I found all the spectacted warriors under arms for a fray, the unaccommodating Confederacies on the other side of Paris having urged some rifled objections to the construction of a pontoon bridge across Duck Lake. The chap who was building the bridge had only just untied his second paper of nails, when a potato from some Confederate marksman, in the second-story of Paris, hit him violently in the stomach. Simultaneously the cover of a dinner-pot cracked his knuckles, and, as he fell back in good order, a brick-bat tapped him on the head. Believing that hostilities had commenced, the new General of the Mackerel Brigade hastily put on all his dirty clothes, and ordered the Orange County Howitzers to commit incendiarism with Paris, simultaneously directing Rear Admiral Head to moor the "Secretary Welles" abreast of the nearest Confederacy and shell him with great slaughter.

Under command of Captain Samyule Sa-mith, the Howitzers were opened upon Paris, and commenced such a tornado of round shot and grape that the surrounding landscape was very much defaced. There was much noise, my boy, — there was much noise.

But the great sight of the hour was the manœuvring of the iron-plated Mackerel squadron on the tempestuous waters of Duck Lake. After hastily making a fire in the stove on the quarter-deck, and placing a tumbler where it could warm, the stern old Rear Admiral ordered the Mackerel crew to report how much water there was in the hold. The crew repaired to the stern-sheets and reported "One pitcherful and two lemons;" whereupon the hardy old sea-dog swore in his iron-plated manner, and ordered the swivel-gun amidships to be trained upon the basement windows of Paris. Everything being in readiness, the word was given to fire!

Bang! went the horrid instrument of carnage, and the hideous missile went crashing through the back basement windows, cutting a bow from the cap of a venerable Florence Nightingale, who was at that moment making a sponge-cake for some sick Confederacies, and driving the stove-pipe clear through the wall. The aged Nightingale thought that something had happened, and says she: "Well, I never did!"

Rear Admiral Head smiled; but it was the horrid smile of naval bloodthirstiness. "Revolve my turret!" says he, grimly, "I fight not against women; but the other window must be broken."

The venerable Neptune leaned over his columbiad to make sure of this shot, unconsciously pressing his stomach

against the but-end of his gun. There was a report, my boy; the swivel-gun kicked, and the Rear Admiral fell upon the deck with a promiscuous violence.

Meanwhile, Company 3, Regiment 5, under Captain Villiam Brown, had waded across Duck Lake in as many divisions as there were Mackerels, and immediately commenced a tremendous fire of musketry at the upper windows of Paris, wounding a Confederacy who kept a shoe-store up there, and reducing two flower-pots to fragments.

Whilst I was witnessing this bombardment, my boy, and admiring the courage with which Villiam was slashing around with his sword, I noticed that the squadron had suddenly ceased firing.

It had ceased firing, because Rear Admiral Head had unexpectedly discovered that his Mackerel crew was a Black Republican; and had therefore engaged him in single combat, greatly to the detriment of the regular engagement.

Scarcely had I turned to view this new phase of war, when the firing of howitzers and musketry behind me instantly ceased, and I heard a low murmur of wonder arising from the whole brigade.

Quickly turning about again, I was hastening to where Captain Bob Shorty strode with the Conic Section, when I beheld General Wobert Wobinson, the new General of the Mackerel Brigade, cantering along the shore of Duck Lake on his trained charger, and exhibiting a form to petrify the whole world with admiration.

"Ah! *there's* shape!" was the low cry of the spectated veterans, as they gazed breathlessly at the picture.

Captain Bob Shorty cleaned his glasses to make sure that it was no illusion, and says he: "By all that's Federal, it appears to me that I never saw so much Shape!"

A Confederacy, who had just appeared on the roof of Paris with a horse-pistol in his hand and slaughter in his thoughts, caught sight of the equestrian vision, and instantly dropped his merciless weapon of destruction as though paralyzed.

"Oh!" says he, panting, "what Shape!"

Rear Admiral Head heard the sound in the midst of his single combat, and paused to ascertain what it was. His spectacles scanned the horizon round and round, until they finally rested upon the figure of the new General of the Mackerel Brigade.

"Fracture my armor!" says he, ecstatically, "did I ever survey so much Shape!"

The battle was over for that day.

Shape, my boy, is a great thing in a General; for when Heaven's Great Printer commenced to set human type in the "galley" of earth, He must have needed considerable General matter to fully make up His "forms;" and when a General has a form fully up to His make, we may consider him well set up.

Yours, typographically,

ORPHEUS C. KERR.

LETTER LXXXV.

HOLDING THE GOVERNMENT STRICTLY ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE OCCURRENCE OF A RECENT "MILITARY NECESSITY;" RECOUNTING THE AFFECTING EPISODE OF THE MACKEREL DRUMMER-BOY; AND DEPICTING THE NEW MACKEREL GENERAL'S FIRST GREAT BATTLE.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 9th, 1863.

I AM no longer on speaking terms, my boy, with the Government of our distracted country, and beg leave most respectfully to inform it that the imbecile cold weather of the past few days may disgust, but can never discourage me. Being of respectable though Democratic parentage, I scorn to associate with an Executive and Cabinet so lost to all sense of national comfort, that it permits the weather to become a constant outrage on our Constitutions, frequently freezing loyal Democrats for no other offence than that of protecting defenceless lamp-posts after nightfall. I am very cold, my boy,—I am very cold, and my hatred of the present Cabinet is intense.

But what shall I say about the agency of this same Government in producing a Military Necessity at the late great battle of Paris? Let me put on my overcoat and express my cold in a passionate cough, as I remark that its agency in this matter forcibly reminds me of a chap I once knew in the sixth ward.

He was an aged chap of much red nose, my boy, and