

## LETTER CV.

BEING OUR CORRESPONDENT'S LAST EFFORT PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF A NEW MACKEREL CAMPAIGN; INTRODUCING A METRICAL PICTURE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE SINGLE COMBAT ON RECORD; AND SHOWING HOW THE ROMANCE OF WOMAN'S SENSITIVE SOUL CAN BE CRUSHED BY THE THING CALLED MAN.

WASHINGTON, D C., March 12th, 1865.

THIS sagacious business of writing national military history once a week, my boy, has at times presented itself to my mind as a public obligation nearly equal in steady mutual delight to the wholesome occupation of organ-grinding. Mark the Italian nobleman who discourses mercenary twangs beneath your window, and you shall find him a person of severe and gloomy visage,—a figure with an expression of being weighed down to the very earth by a something heavier than the mere mahogany box of shrieks out of which he grinds popular misery by the block. Not that he has a distaste for music, my boy; not that he was the less enthusiastic at that past period “when music, heavenly maid, was young” to him; but because the daily recurrence to his ears of precisely the same sounds for ten years, has a horribly depressing effect of unmitigated sameness; and music has become to him an ancient maiden of exasperating pertinacity. It quite affects me, my boy, when I see one of those melancholy sons of

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song carrying a regularly organized monkey around with him; for it is evident he finds in such companionship a certain relief from the anguish of monotony. Guided by the example, I sometimes get a Brigadier to keep me company also, and you can hardly imagine how often I am saved from gloom by the amusement I experience in seeing his shrewd imitation of a real soldier.

But even this resource may fail; for there are periods when such imitations are very bad indeed; and then the mind of the wearied scribe, like that of my departed friend, the Arkansaw Nightingale, may at any moment expire for want of food. Shall I ever forget the time, my boy, when the Nightingale came to Washington, as President of the Arkansaw Tract Society, for the express purpose of protesting against the war, and procuring a fresh glass of the same he had last time?

“This war,” says he, waiting for it to grow cooler, and thoughtfully contemplating the reflection of himself in the bowl of a spoon,—“this war, if it goes on, wont never shet pan till the hair’s rubbed off the hull country, and the ‘Merican Eagle wont hev enough feathers in his tail to oil a watch-spring. Tell you! stranger, it’ll be wuss than Tuscaloosa Sam’s last tackle; and that wasn’t slow.”

“What was that?” says I.

“What!” says the Nightingale, stirring in a little sugar, “did you never hearn tell of Tuscaloosa’s last? Then here’s the screed done into music under my pen and seal; and as it an’t quite as long’s the hundred nineteenth psalm, you don’t want a chair to hear it.”

Whereupon the Arkansaw Nightingale whipt from

some obscure rear pocket a remarkable handful of written paper, and proceeded to excite me with

“ A GREAT FIT.

“ There was a man in Arkansaw  
As let his passions rise,  
And not unfrequently picked out  
Some other varmint's eyes.

“ His name was Tuscaloosa Sam .  
And often he would say,  
' There's not a cuss in Arkansaw  
I can't whip any day.'

“ One morn, a stranger passin' by,  
Heard Sammy talkin' so,  
When down he scrambled from his hoss,  
And off his coat did go.

“ He sorter kinder shut one eye,  
And spit into his hand,  
And put his ugly head one side,  
And twitched his trowsers' band.

“ ‘ My boy,' says he, ‘ it's my belief,  
Whoever you may be,  
That I kin make you screech, and smell  
Pertikler agony.'

“ ‘ I'm thar,' says Tuscaloosa Sam,  
And chucked his hat away ;  
' I'm thar,' says he, and buttoned up  
As far as buttons may.

“ He thundered on the stranger's mug,  
The stranger pounded he ;  
And oh ! the way them critters fit  
Was beautiful to see.

“ They clinched like two rampageous bears,  
And then went down a bit ;  
They swore a stream of six-inch oaths  
And fit, and fit, and fit.

“ When Sam would try to work away,  
And on his pegs to git,  
The stranger'd pull him back ; and so,  
They fit, and fit, and fit !

“ Then like a pair of lobsters, both  
Upon the ground were knit,  
And yet the varmints used their teeth,  
And fit, and fit, and fit !!

“ The sun of noon was high above,  
And hot enough to split,  
But only riled the fellers more,  
That fit, and fit, and fit !!!

“ The stranger snapped at Sammy's nose,  
And shortened it a bit ;  
And then they both swore awful hard,  
And fit, and fit, and fit !!!!

“ The mud it flew, the sky grew dark,  
And all the litenins lit ;  
But still them critters rolled about,  
And fit, and fit, and fit !!!!!

"First Sam on top, then t'other chap;  
When one would make a hit,  
The other'd smell the grass; and so,  
They fit, and fit, and fit!!!!!!

"The night came on, the stars shone out  
As bright as wimmen's wit;  
And still them fellers swore and gouged,  
And fit, and fit, and fit!!!!!!

"The neighbors heard the noise they made,  
And thought an earthquake lit;  
Yet all the while 'twas him and Sam  
As fit, and fit, and fit!!!!!!

"For miles around the noise was heard;  
Folks couldn't sleep a bit,  
Because them two rantankerous chaps  
Still fit, and fit, and fit!!!!!!

"But jist at cock-crow, suddently,  
There came an awful pause,  
And I and my old man run out  
To ascertain the cause.

"The sun was rising in the yeast,  
And lit the hull concern;  
But not a sign of either chap  
Was found at any turn.

"Yet, in the region where they fit,  
We found, to our surprise,  
One pint of buttons, two big knives,  
Some whiskers, and four eyes!"

There's dramatic genius for you, my boy, and you will join me in raining a pint or so of tears in memory of one who perished because his mind had nothing to feed upon, and who left his bottle very empty.

Deferring for the present all account of the Mackerel strategy now coming slowly to a head and on foot, let me relate a little incident illustrative of the delicious loyalty of the taper women of America, and the intolerable base-ness of the repulsive object called man:

There is in this city an intensely common-place masculine from Pequog, who has, for a wife, a small, plump member of that imperishable sex whose eyes remind me of wild cherries and milk. There never was a nicer little woman, my boy, and she can knit scarlet dogs, play "Norma," make charlotte russe, and do other things equally well calculated to confer immeasurable happiness upon a husband of limited means. Ever since the well-known Southern Confederacy first respectfully requested to be let alone with Sumter, she has been eager to fulfil woman's part in the war, and does not wake up the Pequogian more than twice of a night to talk about it.

'Twas at one o'clock on the morning of Tuesday last that she roused up the partner of her joys and sorrows, and says she:

"Peter, I do wish you'd tell me what I can do, as a woman, for my country."

"Go to sleep," says Peter, fiendishly.

"No, but what *can* I do? Why wont you tell me what is really woman's part in the war?"

"Now, see here," says Peter, sternly. "I'm having so many nights, with the nap all worn off, over this busi-

ness, that I can't stand it any longer. Just wait till tomorrow evening, and I'll think over the matter and tell you what really *is* woman's part in the war."

So they both went to sleep, my boy, and all next day that little woman wondered, as she hummed pleasantly over her work, whether her lord would advise her to go out as a Florence Nightingale, or turn teacher of intelligent contrabands.

Night came, and the Pequogian returned from his grocery store, and silently took a seat before the fire in the dining-room. The little woman looked up at him from the ottoman on which she was cosily sitting, and says she:

"Well, dear?"

Slowly and solemnly did that Pequog husband draw off one boot. Deliberately did he take off a stocking and hold it aloft.

"Martha Jane!" says he, gravely, "'tis a sock your eyes behold, and there is a hole in the heel thereof. You are a wife; duty calls you to mend your husband's stockings; and *this* — THIS — is Woman's Part in the Wore!"

Let us draw a veil, my boy, over the heart-rending scene that followed; only hinting that hartshorn and burnt feathers are believed to be useful on such occasions, and produce an odor at once wholesome and exasperating.

Yours, sympathetically,

ORPHEUS C. KERR.

## LETTER CVI.

WHEREIN WILL BE FOUND CERTAIN PROFOUND REMARKS UPON THE VARIATIONS OF GOLD, ETC., AND A WHOLESOME LITTLE TALE ILLUSTRATIVE OF THAT FAMOUS POPULAR ABSTRACTION, THE SOUTHERN TREASURY NOTE.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 22, 1865.

THE venerable Aaron, my boy, was the first gold speculator mentioned in history, and it exhausted all the statesmanship of Moses to break up the unseemly speculation, and bring Hebrew dry goods and provisions down to decent prices. Were Aaron alive now, how he would mourn to find his auriferous calf going down at the rate of ten per cent. a day, while the Moses of the White House reduced that animal more and more to the standard of very common mutton!

Alas, my boy, what madness is this which causes men to forget honor, country, ay, even dinner itself, for ungrateful gold! Like all writers whose object is the moral improvement of their kind, I have a wholesome contempt of gold. What is it? A vulgar-looking yellow metal, with a disagreeable smell. It is filthy lucre. It is dross. It is also 156.

Not many months ago I knew a high-toned chap of much neck and chin, who made five hundred thousand dollars by supplying our national troops with canned peaches,

and was so inflated with his good luck in the cholera-morbus line, that he actually began to think that his canned peaches had something to do with the successes in the field of our excellent military organization. Being thus elevated, this finely-imaginative chap believed that his services deserved the mission to France ; and, as that was refused him, it was but natural for him to become at once a Southern Confederacy in sentiment, and pronounce our Honest Abe a tyrant of defective education.

Just before the last election, I met him at the Baltimore railroad depot, and says he : " I have just invested a cool five hundred thousand in gold. It is positively sure," says he, glibly, " it is positively sure that the reelection of our present despot will send gold straight up to five hundred. I tell you," says he, in a wild ecstasy, " it'll ruin the country, and I shall clear a half million."

He was a Jerseyman of fine feelings, and took a little hard cider for his often infirmity.

Yesterday I saw that man again, my boy, and I gave him a five-cent note in consideration of his great ability in sweeping a street-crossing. He deserted his canned peaches, and was cr-r-rushed.

But what is this manuscript upon my table, as I write? It is a veracious and wholesome little tale of

" THE SOUTH.—BY A NORTHER.

" 'Twas night, deep night, in the beautiful city of Richmond ; and the chivalrous Mr. Faro was slowly wending his way through Broad street to the bosom of his Confederate family, when, suddenly, he was confronted by a venerable figure in rags, soliciting alms.

" " Out of my path, wretch ! " ejaculated the haughty Virginian, impatiently ; and, tossing two thousand dollars (\$2000) to the unfortunate mendicant, he attempted to pass on.

" The starving beggar was about to give way, and had drawn near the barrel which he carried on a wheelbarrow, for the purpose of adding to its contents the pittance just received, when the small amount of the latter seemed to attract his attention for the first time, and again he threw himself in the way of the miserly aristocrat.

" " Moses Faro, ' he muttered, in tones of profound agitation, ' you have your sheds full (\$000000000) of Southern Bonds, while one poor barrel full (\$000) must supply me for a whole day ; yet would I not exchange places with a man capable of insulting honest poverty as you have done this night. ' "

" The proud Virginian felt the rebuke keenly ; and as he stood, momentarily silent, in the presence of the hapless victim of penury, he could not help remembering that he had, on that very morning, willingly given his youngest son five thousand dollars (\$5000) to purchase a kite and some marbles. Greatly stricken in conscience, and heartily ashamed of his recent meanness, he turned to the suppliant, and said, kindly :

" " Give me your address, and to-morrow morning I will send you a cart full (\$000) of means. I would give you more now, but I have only sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) about me, with which to pay for the pair of boots I now have on. ' "

" " Moses Faro, ' responded the deeply-affected pauper, ' your noble charity will enable me to pay the nine thou-

sand dollars (\$9000) I owe for a week's board; and now let me ask, how goes our sacred cause?'

"'Never brighter,' answered the wealthy Confederate, with enthusiasm. 'We have succeeded to-day in forcing five more cities through the Yankee lines, and are dragging three whole Hessian armies to this city.'

"'Then welcome poverty for a while longer,' cried the beggar, pathetically; and so great was his exuberance of spirit at the news, that he resolved to spend five hundred dollars (\$500) for a cigar in honor thereof.

"Mr. Faro walked thoughtfully on toward his residence, pondering earnestly the words he had listened to, and astonished to find how easily a rich man could give happiness to a poor one. After all, thought he, there is more contentment in poverty than in riches. Show me the rich man who can boast the sturdy lightness of heart inspiring that hackneyed rhyme, the

"'CAROL OF THE CONFEDERATE BEGGAR.'

"'Though but fifty thousand dollars  
Be the sum of all I own,  
Yet I'm merry with my begging,  
And I'm happy with my bone;  
Nor with any brother beggar  
Does my heart refuse to share,  
Though a thousand dollars only  
Be the most I have to spare.

"'I am shabby in my seven  
Hundred dollar hat of straw,  
And my dinner's but eleven  
Hundred dollars in the raw

Yet I hold my head the higher,  
That it owes the hatter least,  
And my scanty crumbs are sweeter  
Than the viands of a feast.'

"Humming to himself this simple lay of contented want, Mr. Faro reached his own residence, gave eighty dollars (\$80) to a little boy on the sidewalk for blacking his boots, and entered the portals of the hospitable mansion. His wife met him in the hall, and, as they walked together into the parlor, he noticed that her expression was serious.

"'Have you heard the latest news, Moses?' she asked.

"'No,' returned the haughty Southerner.

"'Well,' said the lady, 'just before you came in, I gave Sambo a hundred and twelve dollars (\$112) to get an evening paper, which says that the Confederate Government is about to seize all the money in the country, to pay the soldiers.'

"A gorgeous smile lit up the features of the chivalric Virginian, and he said:

"'Let them take both my shedsfull (\$00000000); let them take it all! Sooner than submit, or consent to be Reconstructed, I would give my very life even, for the sake of the Confederacy!'

Mrs. Faro still looked serious.

"'Moses,' she said, with quivering lips, 'have you not got, hidden away somewhere, a *twenty-shilling gold-piece* (\$2,500,000)?'

"Ghastly pale turned the proud Confederate, and he could barely stammer,—

"'Ye-ye-yes.'

“‘Well,’ murmured the matron, ‘it’s the gold they intend to take, I reckon.’

“That was enough. Frantically tore Mr. Faro into the street; desperately raced he to the city limits; madly flew he past the pickets and sentinels; swiftly scoured he down the Boynton Plank Road. A Yankee bayonet was at his bosom.

“‘Reconstruction!’ shouted he.

“They took him before the nearest post-commandant, and he only said, —

“‘Let me be Reconstructed.’”

Need the reader be informed that he is now in New York, looking for a house, and in great need of some financial aid to help him pay the rent of such a residence as he has always been accustomed to and cannot live without? Yes, far from home, family, and friends, he is now one of those long-suffering, self-sacrificing Union refugees from the South, whom it is a pleasure to assist, and whose manly opposition to the military despotism of the Confederacy commends them to our utmost liberality. He will accept donations in money, and this fact should be sufficient to make all loyal men eager to extend such pecuniary encouragement as may suffice to keep him above any necessity for exertion until the presidency of some Bank can be procured for him by the Christian Commission.

I may add, my boy, that any monetary contribution intended for this excellent man, may be directed to

Yours, patronizingly,

ORPHEUS C. KERR.

## LETTER CVII.

RECORDING THE LATEST DELPHIC UTTERANCES OF ONE WHOM WE ALL HONOR WITHOUT KNOWING WHY; AND RECOUNTING THE TRULY MARVELLOUS AFFAIR OF THE FORT BUILT ACCORDING TO TACITUS.

WASHINGTON, D C., March 29th, 1865.

It is a beautiful trait of our common American nature, my boy, that we should be stood-upon by fleshy Old Age, and find ourselves reduced to the mental condition of mangled infants thereby. It is an airy characteristic of our gentle national temperament, to let shirt-collared Old Age, of much alpaca pants, sit down on us and cough into our ears. It is a part of our social organization as a reverential people to be forever weighed-down in our spirits by the awful respectability of double-chinned Old Age, and the solemn satisfaction it displays at its elephantine meals.

Hence, my boy, when I tell you that the Venerable Gammon beamed hither from his residential Mugville last Saturday, with a view to benefiting that wayward infant, his country, you will be prepared to learn that the populace fell upon their unworthy stomachs before him, and respectfully begged him to walk over their necks.

“My children,” said the Venerable Gammon, with a fleshy smile, signifying that he had made them all, and yet didn’t wish to seem proud, — “My children, this war