

CONCERNING THE DRAFT.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ARTEMUS WARD.

Many Citizens Take Up Stage Driving as an Occupation to Avoid Military Service—Intelligence Received Relative to the Attitude of the Government.

XV. THE DRAFT IN BALDINSVILLE.



If I'm drafted I shall resign. Deeply grateful for the unexpected honor thus conferred upon me I shall feel compelled to resign the position in favor of sum more worthy person. Modesty is what ails me.

I meaner-say, I shall hav to resign if I'm drafted everywhere I've bin inrold. I must now, furrinstuns, beinrold in upards of 200 different towns. If I'd kept on travelin' I should hav eventooally becom a Brigadier, in which case I could have held a meetin' and elected myself Brigadeer-ginral quite unanimsly. I hain't no idea there was so many of me before. But, serisly, I concluded to stop exhibitin' and made tracks for Baldinsville.

My only daughter threw herself onto my bustum, and said, "It is me fayther! I thank the Gods!"

She reads the Ledger.

"Tip us yer bunch of fives, old faker!" said ARTEMUS, JR. He reads the Clipper.

My wife was to the sowin' circle. I knew she and the wimin folks was havin' a pleasant time slanderin' the females of the other sowin' circle (which likewise met that afternoon, and was doubtless enjoyin' theirselves ekally well in slanderin' the fust named circle), and I didn't send for her. I allus like to see people enjoy theirselves.

My son ORGUSTUS was playin' onto a float.

ORGUSTUS is a ethereal cuss. The twins was biddin' cob-houses in a corner of the kitchen.

It'll cost some postage stamps to raise this family, and yet 't'd go hard with the old man to lose any lamb of the flock.

An old bachelor is a poor critter. He may have hearn the skylark or (what's nearly the same thing) Miss KELLOGG and CARLOTTY PATTI sing; he may have hearn OLE BULL fiddle, and all the DODWORTHS toot, an' yet he don't know nothin' about music—the real, genuine thing—the music of the laughter of happy, well fed children! And you may ax the father of such children home to dinner, feelin' werry sure there'll be no spoons missin' when he goes away. Such fathers never drop tin five-cent pieces into the contribution box, nor palm shoe pegs off onto blind hosses for oats, nor skedaddle to British sile when their country is in danger—nor do any-thing which is really mean. I don't mean to intimate that the old bachelor is up to little games of this sort—not at all—but I repeat, he's a poor critter. He don't live here—only stays. He ought to 'poloigize, on behalf of his parients, for bein' here at all. The happy married man dies in good stile at home, surrounded by his weeping wife and children. The old bachelor don't die at all—he sort of rots away, like a pollywog's tail.

My townsmen were sort o' demoralized. There was a evident desire to evade the Draft, as I observed with sorror, and patriotism was below Par—and Mar, too. [A jew desprit.] I hadn't no sooner sot down on the piazza of the tavvun than I saw sixteen solitary hoss-men, ridin' four abreast, wending their way up the street.

"What's them? Is it cavilry?"

"That," said the landlord, "is the stage. Sixteen able-bodied citizens has lately bo't the stage line 'tween here and Scotsburg. That's them. They're Stage-drivers. Stage-drivers is exempt!"

I saw that each stage-driver carried a letter in his left hand.

"The mail is heavy today," said the landlord. "Gin'rally they don't have more'n half a dozen letters 'tween 'em. Today they've got one apiece! Bile my lights and liver!"

"And the passengers?"

"There ain't any, skacely now-days," said the landlord, "and what few there is very much prefer to walk, the roads is so rough."

"And how ist with you?" I inquired of the editor of the Bugle-Horn of Liberty, who sot near me.

"I can't go," he sed, shakin' his head in a wise way. "Ordinarily I should delight to wade in gore, but my bloodin' country bids me stay at home. It is imperatively necessary that I remain here for the purpose of announcin' from week to week that our Government is about to take vigorous measures to put down the rebellion!"

I strolled into the village oyster saloon, where I found Dr. Schwazwig, a leadin' citizen, in a state of mind which showed that he'd bin histin' in more'n his hare of pizon.

"Hello, old Beeswax," he bollerred; "how's yer grandmans? When you goin' to feed your stuffed animals?"

"What's the matter with the eminent physician?" I pleasantly inquired.

"This," he said, "this is what's the matter. I'm a habitooal drunkard! I'm exempt!"

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"Jes' so."

"Do you see them beans, old man?" and he pinto to a plate before him.

"Do you see 'em?"

"I do. They are a cheerfull fruit when used temperitly."

"Well," said he, "I hain't eat any-thing since last week. I eat beans now because I eat beans then. I never mix my vittles!"

"It's quite proper you should eat a little suthin' once in a while," I said. "It's a good idee to occasionally instruct the stummick that it mustn't depend exclusively on licker for its sustinance."

"A blessin'," he cried; "a blessin' onto the hed of the man what inwented beans. A blessin' onto his hed!"

"Which his name is Gilson! He's a first family of Boston," said I.

This is a specimen of how things was goin' in my place of residence.

A few were true blue. The schoolmaster was among 'em. He greeted me warmly. He said I was welkum to those shores. He said I had a massiv mind.

It was gratifyin', he said, to see that great intelleck stalkin' in their midst onct more. I have before had occasion to notice this schoolmaster. He is evidently a young man of far more than ordinary talents.

The schoolmaster proposed we should git up a mass meetin'. The meetin' was largely attended. We held it in the open air round a roarin' bonfire.

The schoolmaster was the first orator. He's pretty good on the speak. He also writes well, his composition bein' seldom marred by ingrammaticisms. He said this inactivity surprised him. "What do you expect will come of this kind of doin's? Nihil fit!"

"Hooray for Nihil!" I interrupted. "Fellow-citizens, let's giv three cheers for Nihil, the man who fit!"

The schoolmaster turned a little red, but repeated—"Nihil fit."

"Exactly," I said. "Nihil fit. He wasn't a strategy feller."

"Our venerable friend," said the schoolmaster, smiling pleasantly, "isn't posted in Virgil."

"No, I don't know him. But if he's a able-bodied man he must stand his little draft."

The schoolmaster wound up in eloquent style, and the subscriber took the stand.

I said the crisis had not only cum itself, but it had brought all its relations. It has cum, I said, with a evident intention of makin' us a good long visit. It's goin' to take off its things and stop with us. My wife says so too. This is a good war. For those who like this war, it's just such a kind of war as they like. I'll bet ye. My wife says so too. If the Federal army succeeds in takin' Washington, and they seem to be advancin' that way pretty often, I shall say it is strategy, and Washington will be safe. And that noble banner, as it were—that banner, as it were—will be a embler, or rather, I should say, that noble banner—as it were. My wife says so too. [I got a little mixed up here, but they didn't notice it. Keep mum.] Feller citizens, it will be a proud day for this Republic when Washington is safe. My wife says so too.

The editor of the Bugle-Horn of Liberty here arose and said: "I do not wish to interrupt the gentleman, but a important despach has just bin received at the telegraph office here. I will read it. It is as follows: *Government is about to take vigorous measures to put down the rebellion!* [Loud applause.]

That, said I, is cheerin'. That's soothin'. And Washington will be safe. [Sensation.] Philadelphia is safe. Gen. PATTERSON's in Philadelphia. But my heart bleeds partic'ly for Washington. My wife says so too.

There's money enough. No trouble about money. They've got a lot of first-class bank-note engravers at Washington (which place, I regret to say, is by no means safe) who turn out two or three cords of money a day—good money, too. Goes well. These bank-note engravers made good wages. I expect they lay up property. They are full of Union sentiment. There is considerable Union sentiment in Virginny, more especially among the honest farmers of the Shenandoah valley. My wife says so too.

Then it isn't money we want. But we do want men, and we must have them. We must carry a whirlwind of fire among the foe. We must crush the ungrateful rebels who are poundin' the Goddess of Liberty over the head with slung-shots, and stabbin' her with stolen knives! We must lick 'em quick. We must introduce a large number of first-class funerals among the people of the South. Betsy says so too.

This war hain't been too well managed. We all know that. What then? We are all in the same boat—if the boat goes down, we go down with her. Hence we must all fight. It ain't no use to talk now about who caused the war. That's played out. The war is upon us—upon us all—and we must all fight. We can't "reason" the matter with the foe. When, in the broad glare of the noon-day sun, a speckled jackass boldly and maliciously kicks over a peanut-stand do we "reason" with him? I guess not. And why "reason" with those other Southern people who are trying to kick over the Republic? Betsy, my wife, says so too.

The meeting broke up with enthusiasm.

We shant draft in Baldinsville if we can help it.

An Indian Whom the Prince Befriended.

"Oronigatckia, M. D., Toronto," was written on the register at the Grand Pacific hotel by a good looking, broad shouldered six footer. The guest is an Indian who in his youth was chief of a tribe of Mohawks. The Prince of Wales when he visited Canada was favorably impressed with the dusky young chief, and after some little urging the latter consented to go England to be educated at the expense of his royal highness.

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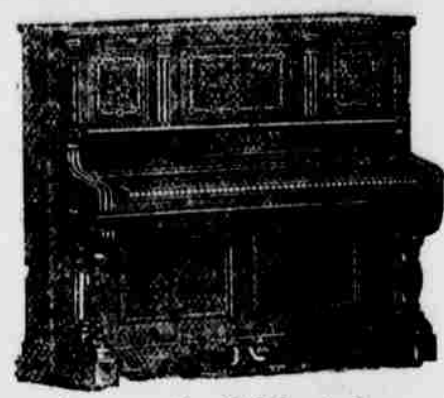
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