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Poetry.

NEARER TO LIFE'S WINTER.

Nearer to life's winter, wife, We are drawing near—

Through the autumn weather We have almost passed, sweet wife, Hand in hand together.

Time was, hearts were, well as feet, Lighter, I remember, April's locks of gold are turned Silver this November.

Flowers are fewer than at first, And the way grows drearier; For not life's winter, wife, We are drawing near.

Nearer to life's end, sweet wife, We are drawing near; The last milestone on the way To our sight grows clearer.

Some whose hands we held grow faint, And lay down to slumber; Looking backward, we to-day All their graver may number.

Hearts we sought, we failed to climb, Truth we've failed to gather; But what matter since we've still Jesus and each other.

Miscellaneous.

Forty Thousand Deserters in Canada.—The Newburyport (Mass.) Herald says:—From letters from Canada and from men who have recently visited there, we have information which leads to the conclusion that there are at least forty thousand men in the British Provinces who have served from six months to a year and a half in our armies, some of whom were broken down by the hardships of war; some had ill-treatment from drunken or brutal officers; more of them having sick furloughs or liberty to visit their homes, overstayed their time, and feared to go back, most of whom would gladly return to their duty if they could be assured that they could do so without being exposed to the terrors of a court-martial and punishment.

Minors and the writ of Habeas Corpus.—Judge Advocate Holt has decided that the President's late proclamation suspending the writ of habeas corpus undoubtedly includes its provisions the case of a minor enlisted without his parents' consent, in whose behalf, therefore, such writ cannot be issued. That minors between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one years cannot be discharged at all; that minors under eighteen cannot be discharged if in their oath of enlistment it is set forth that they are fully of that age, and that in case a minor actually under eighteen, whose age is correctly stated in his oath, or who has been enlisted or mustered without taking a formal oath, a discharge can be obtained only upon a full statement of all the facts in proper form, addressed to the discretion of the Secretary of War.

An army correspondent of a Western paper sums up his idea about freeing negroes thus:

"First, I have never seen a regular African that could take care of himself. Secondly, it is for a planter's interest to feed, clothe, and use his slaves well. They live as comfortably and well as our hard-working men north, and one white man will actually do more work than four negroes. We are fighting to make these negroes miserable. We are taking them from soft beds and plenty of food to live on nothing and sleep on brick pavements. We are here, living on a little of nothing, sleeping in the mud, and exposing ourselves to a thousand different dangers, to bring about this result?"

Mr. Lincoln made one of his eloquent and characteristic speeches at Gettysburg, on being serenaded by a band, on the evening previous to the consecration. He said: "A man should say nothing unless he has something to say, and as I have nothing to say, I will say nothing." As Artemus Ward would say, for the people who like such kind of speeches, this is just the kind of a speech such people like.

The three Quaker or other non-resistant conscripts from Vermont, and two from Massachusetts, have been "dismissed until called for," and sent home from the army of the Potomac, it being impossible to make soldiers of them.

Why can they not be made fight as well as Democrats? The above are Abolitionists to a man, we will bet.

It is said that President Lincoln has the small-pox or the varioloid.—If it should happen to be the former, will the Government of the United States be peck-marked?

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET STEPHEN SON OF DOUGLAS.

The New York Day Book says: the following is the first chapter of the above work, which we noticed last week as published by Feels & Bancker, and which contains many capital hits throughout:

I. It came to pass in the eighty and fourth year of the Republic, that James the Eunuch, having ruled all the days of his appointed time, retired to the shades of Westland, and Abraham, called the Rail-splitter, reigned in his stead.

II. Now Abraham was a child of promise, and a man after the woolly-headed Dragon's own heart; full of exceeding cunning, and beautiful to look upon, as the skin of a sheep drawn over the skeleton of a gorilla.

III. Moreover, he was a mighty statesman, having, withal, had much experience in the matter of rail-splitting, flabobating, and cooking woodchucks in the Indian wars.

IV. And behold it came to pass, that on his journey from the Far West to the seat of empire, even to the place that is called the Capitol, he made divers and sundry speeches, of great and marvelous power, inasmuch that the hills trembled at the round of his voice, and vast scores of little pigs and jockasses, and other beasts of the field, came and gathered about him, and were dumb with amazement at the beauty and majesty of the king.

V. And, lo, when he was come to the place that is called Gotham, that is built upon the water that is ever against the land of the Jerseys, he rested for the night. And the people came unto him, and took him up into the temple of the city, and there gathered about him men of high and low degree, who were curious to look upon the king, to see what manner of man he was.

VI. And the great height of Abraham amazed the people, inasmuch that a young and daring giant from the Aroostook, in the land of Maine, boldly challenged the king to stand up and measure with him. But the king, looking down with pity upon the young man, said, No, I will not measure with thee, but if thou hast a sister, bring her hither, and her I will kiss.

VII. And, lo, the people were dumbfounded at the elegance and majesty of the king, and they fell down and worshipped him.

VIII. And Abraham was also a great general, being a man mighty in battle, and of such exceeding strategy and exceeding courage, that he cut his way, by night, through a hundred millions of hostile men in arms, that lay in camp in the region of country that is between the city that is called Harrisburg and Washington, which is so named from the Father of his Country.

IX. Now, having escaped the bloody legions of his imaginary foes, Abraham ascended the throne on the fourth day of the third month; and he summoned together the chiefs of his clan, even the mighty men of unknown valor and virtue, who gladly came unto him and threw themselves at his feet.

X. And the king said unto William, whose surname is Seward, come thou and be my chief trumpeter, to blow the fauce of our kingdom to the four corners of the globe, and to make all other kings and potentates to tremble and flee away before the majesty of our power.

XI. And then he called a fish from the great deep, which is also called Salmon, being named Chase among the natives of the wilderness of Ohio, and he said unto him, Be thou my purse-bearer; and as we have neither silver nor gold, get thou engravers and printers, and blue ink, and red ink, and much green paper, and many mighty printing machines withal, and let us print money, to astonish the heathen, who think that nothing but silver and gold are precious metals.

XII. And next the king appointed Simon, who is called the Jew, to be his minister of peace, and he said unto him, Do thou set up our comely Black Idol, and bid all the people to fall down and worship it; lo, if any refuse, do thou draw forth thy sword, and smite them hip and thigh; for I say unto you, that of such neither man, woman nor child shall live in my kingdom. And Simon bowed down his head, and kissed the hem of his garment, and said, my lord, I will.

XIII. Then Abraham sent for one Gideon, whose surname is Wells, who is not deep, but is covered with much hair, and he said unto him, Do thou be my ruler over the seas; and get thee speedily a hundred ships, and prepare thyself to lock up three thousand miles of the coast of the heathen who worships white deities, lest it enter into their heads that they will not all fall down before our comely Black Idol. And Gideon lifted up his beard, and opened his mouth, and said, O, king, thy will shall be done.

XIV. And after this the king sent abroad into the Far West, and summoned into his presence the father of many children, who is called Bates, and said unto him, Come hither and sit by my side, and be thou the expounder of my laws, which thou shalt interpret according to my will, and not after the fashion of the books and judges which were before in this land.—And the father of many children said, Yes, O, king, thy will is the law.

XV. Now, there dwelt in the land the son of Blair, who was called Montgomery, and the king said unto his servants, Send hither this man to me, that I may make him the chief ruler over all my carriers, who are to do my will in sending forth such papers as are pleasing unto me, and in putting under their feet whatever is opposed to the worship of the comely Black Idol. And the father of the Blair

joyfully sent forth his son, even Montgomery, his youngest born, to do the bidding of the king.

XVI. And, lo, when all these things were done according to the pleasure of Abraham the king, he again opened his mouth and said, Now let us have one more man to serve in our name, in the interior of our kingdom; and again he sent forth into the West, and found him a man after his own heart; and when he had appointed him Minister of the Interior, he journeyed so far into the interior that his name and his exploits have not been heard of, no, not even to this day.

XVII. And it came to pass in those days that there was a mighty mourning among the people that dwell towards the South, and they loudly demanded of the king that he should make known to them, and to all the land, whether they were to be treated as equals in the family of States, or whether the religion of the woolly-headed Dragon and the Black Idol were to be the law of the land.

XVIII. Whereupon the king was filled with exceeding indignation, inasmuch that he swelled up to four times the size that was convenient to his skin. But he answered not a word, neither would he condescend to have any intercourse with the heathen who worship white deities.

XIX. And when the land was full of trouble, and the wise men were smitten with dread, the mighty men of the nation came together, from the North and from the South, from the East and from the West, and sat down in council together, as was the custom in those days. But the black fiend had taken possession of the people that dwell in the Northland, so that they could do nothing to appease the fury anger of the people that inhabited the region that lies to the south of the city that is called Washington.

XX. Now there were wise and good men in those days, who said, Let us go forth to save our country, that the men of the North and they of the South may still dwell together in unity, for our fathers were brethren.

XXI. And the wise men of the South stood up in the council of the nation, and said, We pray you let us settle this, our trouble, in peace. You men of the North, take for yourselves and your Black Idol, all the land that lies to the west of the line that is called after the old name of Missouri, that runneth even to the shores of the Pacific Ocean; and ye men of the South will take the little of the public land that lies to the south of that line; and we will dwell together as our fathers did, buying and selling and being one people forever and ever.

XXII. These things did John, surnamed Crittender, a mighty man from the Southland of Kentucky, offer to the inhabitants of the North, in the name of the people of the South.

XXIII. But, lo, the warriors of King Abraham all stood up as one man, and smote their breasts and tore out their hair, and made such noise as time affordeth not to mention, swearing withal, that they would have peace on no terms that did not ensure the universal worship of the comely Black Idol.

XXIV. And in those days came a man out of the Tonds, from the South, and smote the alters of the temple of the Nation with his fist, swearing that they of the North and they of the South should be two people forever.

XXV. And there followed after him a crazy man, who was called Wigfall, because he was often drunken, inasmuch that he lost the natural equilibrium of his body, and suffered the artificial covering of his cranium to fall prone to the ground.—He, too, was full of wrath, and threatened to blow up the king with a fire-cracker.

XXVI. But the greatest of the chiefs of the South was the son of Davis, who was called Jeff, whose head the king coveted; for he showed himself great in skill to govern, and wonderful in the arts of war.

XXVII. Inasmuch that when the king sent forth the Pope to devour the hosts of Jeff, and to eat them up alive, according to the balls he should publish against them, they neither feared nor did they stand in awe, but came out in great force and caused the Pope to flee for his life;—and the place was thereafter called Bull Run, by reason of the marvelous flight of the Pope.

XXVIII. And Abraham was discomfited; but, nothing daunted, he commanded his fiery Dragon, which was called Burnside, to go forth and burn up the armies of the heathen that worship white deities, root and branch. And, behold, when the fiery Dragon, even the all-devouring Burnside, was come into their country, they threw great tanks of cold water upon him, inasmuch that they utterly quenched him; so that he came back like a drowned chicken, and roasted in a chamber in the palace of the king.

XXIX. Now the king bethought himself of a terrible and mighty anger among his warriors, which was called Hooker, because that he knew how to hook; and him he sent forth, saying, Get thee over into the land of the heathen, and put me a hook into the noses of all the rebels, and lead them hither unto me, that I may kill them every one, and be avenged of the wrongs they have done unto me.

XXX. And when he had reached the southernmost bank of the river that is called Chickahominy, the heathen looked upon him and saw what manner of man he was, and they laughed one to another; and, in their evil conceits, they sent forth an army of loss, that kicked the hindermost parts of the king's fighting angle, and drove his rear guard even into the trenches that lie before the gates of the temple of the Dragon.

XXXI. Now Abraham, the king, was sore oppressed, because the heathen had kicked the hindermost parts of his mighty fighting angle; and he smote the earth until it quaked. And then he called unto

him his faithful Par-boy, who is called Park, son of Godwin, and he said unto him: The heathen have quenched my mighty, flaming Dragon, that is called Burnside, and they have kicked the hindermost parts of Hooker, the king's own angle;—now, therefore, do thou bring forth thine horn, and point its larger end straight at the heathen, and blow me a blast that shall blow off the heads of forty thousand.

XXXII. Now, the king's Par-boy was mighty of wind, so that he did even as he was bidden by the king; and, lo, he blew such a blast on his horn as astounded the heathen, yea, as blew the seat of his own nether garment into a thousand pieces, yea, into an hundred thousand pieces;—and the like of it was never known, no, not since the beginning of the world.

XXXIII. And, behold, when the king saw that his mighty windy Par-boy had not blown off the head of a single rebel, but instead thereof had blown himself to pieces, he was full of great grief, and of great wrath, and lifting up his eyes to the heavens, he exclaimed: Art thou, then, in the name of a thousand devils, on the side of the heathen? and is it thus thou fightest for thine own church of the woolly-headed Dragon?

XXXIV. And Abraham was smitten with amazement because his warriors had told him that speedily, yea, in ninety days, the hosts of the heathen should be blown away, as chaff before a mighty Northwind; and, behold, nothing had come to pass according to the promise of his cunning counsellors and many mighty warriors.—So Abraham hid his face in his mantle and was ashamed.

1,500,000 Democrats in the Free States

The Cincinnati Enquirer gives some figures to show that with all the fraud, all the appliances of corruption, and all the intimidation of power, civil and military, nearly one million and a half of Democrats rallied to the polls at the late elections, and recorded their votes against the policy of the Administration. Those who think that the Democratic organization is now powerless, will be instructed by perusing the following table of the votes as given at the State elections in 1863:

States.	Dem. Votes.
Maine	51,000
New Hampshire	40,000
Vermont	12,000
Connecticut	40,000
Rhode Island	15,000
Massachusetts	35,000
Total for New England	188,000
New York	284,000
New Jersey	60,000
Pennsylvania	253,000
Ohio	177,000
Indiana	125,000
Illinois	140,000
Michigan	60,000
Wisconsin	69,000
Iowa	55,000
Minnesota	12,000
California	50,000
Oregon	6,000
Kansas	8,000
Grand Total	1,488,000

So in the free States alone there are one million and a half of Democrats at the close of 1863. What a glorious figure! This is 100,000 more votes than Mr. Douglas got in all the States—Northern and Southern—in 1860. What Democrat can be discouraged at such good progress under the terrible pressure of the last three years? Only think of it—nearly 200,000 Democrats in New England, which we have been inclined to give over entirely to the Abolitionists; nearly 300,000 in the Empire State, and more than 300,000 in New Jersey and Pennsylvania; 200,000 in Ohio, and 250,000 in Indiana and Illinois. The other Western States contribute nearly a quarter of a million more, making up the grand total in the free States to one million and a half! Surely this is a power in the land not to be sneered at, impeached, or in any way disregarded, whatever hot-headed partisans may say. It is a party that has worked persistently—not as a party, but as patriots—to restore the country—and it will not be without a powerful and influential voice in this matter. The auguries now are that the practical restoration of the Union may not be far off. And this fact should induce all good conservative men to renew their energies and be frequent in their counsels, so that we may not shipwreck as we were nearer the haven of safety—the old Constitution and the restored Union.

WELL PAID VOLUNTEERS.—The Massachusetts volunteers, under the bounty act just published by the General Court, will probably be the best paid troops in the world. The amount of bounty and pay to be received for three years' service by a soldier who has previously been in the army nine months or more, if he has a family of not less than three persons dependent on his labors for support, is as follows: United States bounty, \$402; the Commonwealth's bounty, \$235; pay, \$168; rations, \$324; clothing, 125; aid to family, \$432; total, \$2,077. If instead of \$235 in bounty from the State he accepts the offer of \$20 per month increase of pay, he will receive \$445 more than the sum above, making a total of \$2,522.

THE CASE OF DR. OLDS.—The Court of Common Pleas of Fairfax county, Ohio, in the case of Dr. Edson B. Olds against Governor Tod and others, for damages for false imprisonment, has denied the motion of the defendants to remove the case to the Circuit Court of the United States.

ESCAPE OF NAVAL PRISONERS.—Two naval prisoners, who were confined in the marine barracks, at the Charlestown Navy Yard, under sentence of court-martial, escaped from the institution during Thanksgiving. They sawed off the bars of their cells, and after escaping through the aperture, replaced their again.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Washington, Dec. 9, 1863.

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:

Another year of health, and of sufficiently abundant harvests, has passed.—For these, and especially for the improved condition of our National affairs, our renewed and profound gratitude to God is due. We remain in peace and friendship with foreign powers.

The efforts of disloyal citizens of the United States, to involve us in foreign wars, to aid in inexcusable insurrection, have been unavailing. Her British Majesty's Government, as was justly expected, have exercised their authority to prevent the departure of new hostile expeditions from British ports. The Emperor of France has, by a like proceeding, promptly vindicated the neutrality which he proclaimed at the beginning of the contest.

Questions of great intricacy and importance have arisen out of the blockade, and other belligerent operations between the Government and several of the maritime powers; but they have been discussed, and as far as now possible, accommodated in a spirit of frankness, justice and mutual good will.

It is especially gratifying that our prize courts, by the impartiality of their adjudication, have commanded the respect and confidence of maritime powers.

The supplemental treaty between the United States and Great Britain for the suppression of the African Slave Trade, made on the 17th day of February last, has been duly ratified and carried into execution. It is believed that so far as American ports and American citizens are concerned, that inhuman and odious traffic has been brought to an end.

I shall submit, for the consideration of the Senate, a convention for the adjustment of possession claims in Washington Territory, arising out of the treaty of the 15th of June, 1846, between the United States and Great Britain, and which have been the source of disquiet among the citizens of that now rapidly improving part of the country.

A novel and important question involving the extent of the maritime jurisdiction of Spain on the waters which surround the Island of Cuba, has been debated without reaching an agreement, and it is proposed to refer the question to the arbitration of a friendly power. A convention for that purpose will be submitted to the Senate.

I have thought it proper, subject to the approval of the Senate, to concert with the interested commercial powers in an arrangement for the liquidation of the Scheldt dues upon the principles which have been heretofore adopted in regard to the imposts upon navigation in the waters of Denmark.

The long pending controversy between this Government and that of Chili, touching the seizure at Stania, in Peru, by Chilean officers of a large amount in treasure belonging to citizens of the United States, has been brought to a close by the award of his Majesty, the King of the Belgians, to whose arbitration the question was referred by the parties. The subject was thoroughly and patiently examined by that justly respected magistrate, and although the sum awarded to the claimants may not have been as large as they expected, there is no reason to distrust the wisdom of his Majesty's decision.—That decision was promptly complied with by Chili when intelligence in regard to it reached that country.

The joint commission, under the act of the last session, for carrying into effect the convention with Peru on the subject of claims, has been organized at Lima, and is engaged in the business entrusted to it.

Difficulties concerning the inter-oceanic transit through Nicaragua, are in course of amicable adjustment.

In conformity with the principles set forth in my last annual message, I have received a representative from the United States of Columbia, and have acceded to a minister to that Republic.

Incidents occurring in the progress of our civil war have forced upon my attention the uncertain state of international questions touching the rights of foreigners in this country, and of United States citizens abroad, in regard to some governments. These rights are at least partially defined by treaties. In some instances, however, it is expressly stipulated that in the event of civil war a foreigner residing in this country within the lines of the insurgents is to be exempted from the rule which classes him as a belligerent, in whose behalf the government of his country cannot expect any privileges or immunities distinct from that character. I regret to say, however, that such claims have been put forward, and in some instances in behalf of foreigners who have lived in the United States the greater part of their lives. There is reason to believe that many persons born in foreign countries, who have declared their intention to become citizens, or who have been fully naturalized, have evaded the military duty required of them by denying the fact, and thereby throwing upon the government the burden of proof.

It has been found difficult, or impracticable, to obtain this proof for the want of guides to the proper sources of information. These might be supplied by requiring the clerks of courts where declarations of intention may be made, or naturalizations effected, to send periodically a list of the names of the persons naturalized or declaring their intention to become citizens, to the Secretary of the Interior, in whose department these names might be arranged and printed for general information. There is also reason to believe that foreigners frequently become citizens of the United States for the sole purpose of evading duties imposed by the laws of their native countries, to which, on becoming

naturalized here, they at once repair, and though never returning to the United States they still claim the interposition of this government as citizens. Many alterations of great prejudice have heretofore arisen out of that abuse. It might be advisable to fix a limit beyond which no citizen of the United States residing abroad may claim the interposition of this government.

The right of suffrage has often been assumed and exercised by aliens, under pretences of naturalization, which they have disavowed when drafted into the military service. I submit the expediency of such an amendment of the law as will make the fact of voting an estoppel against any plea of exemption from military service or other civil obligation on the ground of alienage.

In common with other Western Powers, our relations with Japan have been brought into serious jeopardy through the perverse opposition of the hereditary aristocracy of the empire to the enlightened and liberal policy of the Tycoon, assigned to bring the country into the society of nations. It is hoped, although not with entire confidence that these difficulties may be peacefully overcome. I ask your attention to the claim of the minister residing there for the damages he sustained in the destruction by fire, of the residence of the Legation at Yeddo.

Satisfactory arrangements have been made with the Emperor of Russia, which it is believed will result in effecting a continuous line of telegraph through that Empire from our Pacific coast. I recommend to your favorable consideration the subject of an international telegraph across the Atlantic Ocean, and also a telegraph between the Capitol and the National forts along the Atlantic seaboard and Gulf of Mexico. Such communications, established with any reasonable outlay, would be an economical as well as effective aid in the diplomatic, military and naval service.

The consular system of the United States, under the enactment of the last Congress, begins to be self-sustaining, and there is reason to hope that it may become entirely so with an increase of trade, which will ensue whenever peace is restored.

Our ministers abroad have been faithfully defending American rights, in protecting commercial interests, and our consuls have necessarily had to engage in the out of the war. These they leave, for the most part, met and discharged with zeal and efficiency. This acknowledgment justly includes those consuls who, residing in Mexico, Egypt, Turkey, Japan, China, and other Oriental countries, are charged with complex and extraordinary powers. The condition of the several organized Territories is generally satisfactory, altho' Indian disturbances in New Mexico have not been entirely suppressed. The mineral resources of Colorado, Nevada, Idaho, New Mexico and Arizona, are proving far richer than has been heretofore understood. I lay before you a communication on this subject from the Governor of New Mexico.

I again submit to your consideration the expediency of establishing a system for the encouragement of emigration. Although this source of national wealth and strength is again flowing with greater freedom than for several years before, the insurrection occurred, there is still a great deficiency of laborers in every field of industry, especially in agriculture and in our mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals. While the demand for labor is thus increased here, tens of thousands of persons destitute of remunerative occupation, are thronging our foreign consulates and offering to emigrate to the U. States, if essential but very cheap assistance can be afforded them. It is easy to see that under the sharp system of civil war, the nation is beginning a new life. Honorable effort demands the aid and ought to receive the attention and support of the government.

Injuries, unforeseen by the government and unintended, may in some cases have been inflicted upon subjects or citizens of foreign countries, both at sea and on land, by persons in the service of the U. States. As the Government expects redress from other powers when similar injuries are inflicted by persons in their service upon citizens of the United States, we must be prepared to do justice to foreigners. If the existing judicial tribunals are inadequate to this purpose, a special court may be authorized with power to hear and decide such claims of the character referred to as may have arisen under treaties and the public law. Conventions for adjusting the claims of joint commissions, have been proposed to some other governments, but no definite answer to the proposition has been received from them.

During the past fiscal year the financial condition of the Post Office Department has been one of increasing prosperity, and I am gratified in being able to state that the actual postal revenue has nearly equaled the entire expenditures, the latter amounting to \$11,314,206 84, and the former to \$11,163,789 59, leaving a deficiency of but \$150,417 25.

In 1860, the year immediately preceding the rebellion, the deficiency amounted to \$5,656,705 43, the postal receipts of that year being \$2,645,722 19, less than those of 1863.

The decrease in 1860 in the actual amount of transportation has been only about 25 per cent., but the annual expenditure on account of the same has been reduced 35 per cent. It is manifest, therefore, that the Post Office Department may become self-sustaining in a few years, even with the restoration of the whole service. The international conference of Postal Delegates from the principal countries of Europe and America, which was called at the suggestion of the Postmaster General, met at Paris on the 11th of May last, and concluded its deliberations on the 8th of