

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

The Ex-Southern Chief at Home.

A VISIT TO THE EX-CONFEDERATE EXECUTIVE—HIS APPEARANCE AND PHILOSOPHICAL TEMPERAMENT—HE DISCUSSES SUMPTER AND GETTYSBURG—THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY—HIS HOPEFUL VIEW.

Colonel McClure's Letter to the Times.

MISSISSIPPI CITY, Miss., Dec. 16.

I write on the open veranda of the dilapidated summer hotel that constitutes the most of the city. Beyond the bar-room across the way, bearing the inviting title of the "dew-drop," and the little warehouse and station, the hotel is guileless of tenement associates; but the air is balmy as a Northern summer morning; the roses we welcome in June are in full bloom along the broken fence that once made an enclosure about this resort of fugitives from Yellow Jack when he sways his deadly sceptre in the Crescent City, and the laziest content prevails among man and beast without regard to race or previous condition of servitude. I have learned to look with contempt upon my thick traveling blanket and the well-lined overshoes buckled within. They seemed to be quite superfluous luggage last night, when, after a long, hot evening, the lightning and the tempest danced the raequet with a running accompaniment of young earthquakes; but they may grow in favor as I journey back toward the Pennsylvania mountains.

VISITING JEFFERSON DAVIS.

A journey through the South for the study of the currents of opinion and the present condition and probable progress of the reconstructed States, would be incomplete without a visit to the one man who must stand in history as the front of the overthrown confederacy. A drive of five miles through the sand and straggling pines which skirt the Gulf bay, exhibits the same general dilapidation among the old-time summer homes, which were once the favorite retreats of the elite of New Orleans in the sickly season. The shore of the bay has a number of palatial plantation houses, but they have fallen into the sweeping decay that marks them as relics of an age that has gone. The only one that seems to have been preserved carefully from the desolation that surrounds it, is the Dorsey place, now the home of Jefferson Davis. In a forest of green live-oaks, richly laden orange trees, and a profusion of vines and flowers, a large frame plantation house is presented. It is a single story in height and has the regulation pillars and broad verandas of the aristocratic Southern mansion. There the ex-Confederate President lives with his nephew, General Davis, and their joint families. The ex-Queen of the Confederate Court is a stout, motherly, cultured and genial woman, and a daughter, a strongly marked copy of her mother, possesses unusual attractions of both person and intellect. The house is furnished with every regard for comfort, as the well-worn easy chairs and lounges and the hall and parlor divans faithfully attest, and the walls are decorated with ancient paintings and modern bric-a-brac, while the wide chimney-place and capacious mantel tell how the cheerful pine fire sparkles when a chill or a stray foot silences the song of the mocking-bird and the blood-thirsty serenade of the mosquito. Soon after I had been politely bowed into the parlor Jefferson Davis entered alone, and his greeting was the cordial welcome of the proverbial hospitality of the South. I confess to disappointment in the general appearance of the man who stands in history today as the soldier-statesman without a country. I expected to find the strongly-marked traces of a grievously disappointed life, and severe civility and studied reticence in discussing all things of the past; but those who believe Jefferson Davis to be misanthropic in temperament and embittered against the nation and the world greatly misjudge him. Nor is he the broken invalid that he is generally regarded.

DAVIS IN CONVERSATION.

His yet abundant locks and full beard are deeply silvered, and his face and frame are spare as they always have been, but his step is elastic and steady and the hard lines of his brow which are so conspicuous in his pictures, are at once effaced when he enters into conversation. Instead of impressing the visitor as a political recluse who has no interest in the land to whose citizenship he will live and die a stranger, he at once invites the freedom of the planter's home, by chatting without reserve, save when his contemporaries are likely to be criticised, when he adroitly and pleasantly turns the discussion into inoffensive channels. He is yet the same positive man in all his convictions and purposes that made him the leader of a causeless rebellion. He well understands that he cast the die for empire or for failure that must make him alien to the country and the world, and that he lost; and he knows that he is to-day the most powerless of all men in the land to retrieve the fortunes of

those who followed him to bereavement and sacrifice. He reads aright the inexorable judgment that makes him execrated for the Confederacy, while his equally guilty subordinates have been welcomed to the fatted calf. His Vice President who followed the slave empire afar off when doubt and darkness began to gather about it, made haste to scramble over the ruins of the Confederacy and regain the seat in Washington from which he seceded with Davis to aid in guiding rebellion. Two of his unnoted warriors have sat in Republican cabinets; Lee's ablest lieutenant is the Republican minister to Turkey; the man who marched the first regiment of volunteers to Charleston and who served as Confederate Senator until Appomattox became historic, died as the Republican Minister to Russia, and Senate, House and the Washington departments swarm with men who were abreast with Jefferson Davis in every effort to dismember the Republic, but Davis is the embodiment of humiliation while his fellows go in and out without displeasure. I heard no allusion to or complaint of this injustice, but it is plainly evident that Davis entirely appreciates it and that he believes he would not be consistent with himself and the grave responsibilities he assumed, however mistaken he may have been in assuming them, if he did not deliberately remain an alien to the government that he more conspicuously than all others struggled to overthrow. He could not help the South or himself by seeking or accepting restoration to citizenship, and he is wisely content with stubborn faith in the rectitude of his lost cause.

SOME REMINISCENCES OF THE WAR.

I have long desired to know the exact truth from the fountain of Southern knowledge on the subject, in regard to several important events of the war, and I was agreeably surprised at the freedom with which Mr. Davis met my inquiries. Why Beauregard was ordered to fire upon Anderson in Fort Sumpter, after his surrender was inevitable at a specified time without assaulting the flag, has never been entirely understood. It was the act of madness, as it made division in the North impossible, and I have always believed that the real cause of the order to open fire was to unify the South and end the threatening movements for reunion on terms. Mr. Davis answered promptly and emphatically that the order was given solely because faith had been broken by the Lincoln administration in attempting to reinforce Anderson, and that the South needed no war to solidify its people. I think he errs in underestimating the probable power of the movement in the South for reconstruction before the war, but it is evident that in deciding to issue the fatal order for the assault upon Sumter, he believed the Confederacy invincible and defiantly resented what he regarded as a violation of the pledge of the Federal government. That act practically consolidated the North, and thenceforth the Confederacy was a fearfully hopeless venture. On another important point he answered with the same freedom. When asked whether the aggressive movement of Lee that culminated at Gettysburg was adopted as purely military strategy or the offspring of political necessity inside the Confederacy, he answered that it was the wisest of both military and political strategy, but that it was not dictated at all by political considerations. He said that the wisdom of the military movement was proven in the recall of Meade from Virginia and the transfer of both armies to Northern soil; but, he soberly added, the battle was a misfortune. The chances were equal, as he regarded it, for military success, and that would have deranged the whole plan of the government and impaired its resources for the campaign of that year. As a military movement, Mr. Davis says, the Gettysburg campaign had the entire approval of Lee, and there were no political divisions in the South to dictate any departure from the wisest military laws. I desire, also, to know, whether, at the time of the Hampton Roads conference between Lincoln, Seward, Stephens and others, Mr. Davis had received any intimation from any credible source, that Mr. Lincoln would assent to the payment of four hundred millions as compensation for slaves, if the South would accept emancipation and return to the Union. He answered that he had no such intimation from any source, but that if such proposition had been made, he could not have entertained it as the Executive of the Confederacy. He said that he was the sworn Executive of a government founded on the rights of the States; that slavery was distinctly declared to be exclusively a State institution, and that such an issue could have been decided only by the independent assent of each State. Some of them, he added, would have accepted such terms at that time, but others would have declined it, and peace was, therefore, impossible on that basis.

DAVIS HOPEFUL OF THE SOUTH.

Mr. Davis discussed the present attitude and future prospects of the South with manifest interest and great candor. While he is not and cannot be a factor in attaining any desired political results for the South, he shares the hopes expressed by the great mass of the more intelligent Southern people, that all the difficult problems will yet be wisely solved by gradual ad-

vancement and final harmony of race and sections. He was unreserved in expressing the belief that a civil service in the South that would insure fidelity to government and people, could not fail to end partisan or sectional issues between the South and the Garfield administration, and unite both North and South in the promotion of the material interests of the whole country. His discussion of the relations of the two sections under the present political aspect, was thoroughly philosophical and statesmanlike, and while he will remain the one adjudged stranger to the Republic, he hopes yet to see the South prosperous in common with a prosperous North, and the scars of war and the bitterness of sectional dispute healed forever. Next to a Southern Slave Confederacy, he believes a free Union the best government for the Republic. A. K. M.

MUSCULAR MEN.

Among the Greeks the successful athlete was crowned with laurels and loaded down with wealth and honors. When Egeuetus, in the ninety-second Olympiad triumphant in games, entered Agrigutum, his native home, he was attended by an escort of three hundred chariots, each drawn by two white horses, and followed by the populace, cheering and waving banners. Milo six times won the palm at both the Olympic and Pythian games. He is said to have run a mile with a four-year-old ox upon his shoulders, and afterwards killed the animal with one blow of his fist, and ate the entire carcass in one day! So great was his muscular power that he would bind a cord around his head and break it by the swelling and pressure of the veins. An ordinary meal for Milo was twenty pounds of meat, as much bread, and fifteen pints of wine.

Polydamus, of Thessalia, was of colossal height and prodigious strength, and, it is said, alone and without weapons, killed an enormous and enraged lion. One day, it is recorded, he seized a bull by its hind feet, and the animal escaped only by leaving the hoof in the grasp of the athlete.

The Roman Emperor Maximinus was upward of eight feet in height, and, like Milo, of Crotona, could squeeze to powder the hardest stone with his fingers and break the leg of a horse by a kick. His wife's bracelet served him as a ring, and his everyday repast was sixty pounds of meat and an amphora of wine.

While a prisoner in Germany, Richard I. accepted an invitation to a boxing match with the son of his jailer. He received the first blow, which made him stagger, but recovering, with a blow of his fist he killed his antagonist on the spot. Topham, also an Englishman, born in 1710, was possessed of astonishing strength. His armpits, hollow in the case of ordinary men, were with him full of muscles and tendons. He would take a bar of iron, with its two ends held in his hands, place the middle of the bar behind his neck, and then bend the extremities by main force until they met together, and then bend back the iron straight again. One night, seeing a watchman asleep in his box, he carried both the man and his shell to a great distance, and put them on the wall of a churchyard. Owing to domestic troubles, he committed suicide in the prime of life.

The famous Scanderberg, King of Albania, who was born in 1444, was a man of great stature, and his feats of sword exercise have never been equaled. On one occasion, with a scimitar, he struck his antagonist such a blow that its force cleaved him to the waist. He is said to have cloven in two men who were clad in armor from head to foot. On one occasion the brother and nephew of a certain Ballaban, who had been convicted of cruelties toward the Albanians, were brought to him bound together. Transported with rage, he cut them in two with one stroke of his weapon.

Maurice, Count of Saxony, the hero of Fontenoy, inherited the physical vigor of his father, and was especially noted for the surprising muscular power, or "grip," of his hands. On one occasion, needing a corkscrew, he twisted a long iron nail round into the required shape with his fingers and opened half a dozen bottles of wine with it. Another time, when stopping at a blacksmith shop to have his horse shod, he picked up a number of new horse-shoes, and with his hands snapped them in two as readily as if made of glass, much to the disgust of the smith.

If history is to be believed, Pharyllus of Crotona, could jump a distance of fifty-six feet. The exercise was practiced at the Olympic games and formed part of the course of Pentathlon. Strutt, an English authority on games and amusements, speaks of a Yorkish jumper named Ireland, whose powers were marvelous. He was six feet high, and at the age of eighteen leaped, without the aid of a spring-board, over nine horses ranged side by side. He cleared a cord extended fourteen feet from the ground with one bound, crushed with his foot a bladder suspended at a height of sixteen feet; and on another occasion he lightly cleared a large wagon, covered with an awning.

Colonel Ironside, who lived in India early in this century, relates that he met in his travels an old white-haired man who with one leap sprang over the back of an enormous elephant flanked by six camels of the largest

breed. A curious French work published in Paris in 1745, entitled "The Tracts Towards the History of Wonders Performed at Fairs," mentioned an Englishman, who at the fair of St. Germain in 1724, leaped over forty people without touching one of them. In our own day we are familiar with many remarkable exhibitions of strength and endurance. Dr. Winship, with the aid of straps, lifted a weight of 3,500 pounds, and with the little finger of his right hand could raise his body a considerable distance from the ground.

AN INFANT PHENOMENA.

From Gil Blas.

One of the most remarkable instances of childish precocity known of late years has recently appeared in Paris. The child which is French born in the neighborhood of Perigueux in October, 1877, and thus scarcely more than three years old, is named Berthe Guillemand. The parents are poor and ignorant vine dressers, who, struck when she was only eighteen months old by the fact that she had extraordinary intelligence and a prodigious memory, took her to the school-teacher of their village, and he amused himself by cultivating her astonishing talents. In a year she had made such progress that her parents made up their minds to reap some advantage from it, and brought her to Paris. She knows not only how to read and write, but the four rules of arithmetic, and solves the little problems that are given her without ever making a mistake. Moreover, she knows the first act of "Athalia," which she repeats in her little silver voice from end to end without missing a line. And finally one can ask her whatever piece he chooses from "Il Trovatore," "Rigoletto," "Faust," and "La Juive," she will sing it to him at once in the most accurate fashion imaginable. Nothing could be funnier than to hear her coo out the "Caro nome" from "Rigoletto" in Italian. And yet, as we said, she is but little over three years old. Not only does she look older, but her certificate of birth, attested by all sorts of authorities each more official than the other, proves the fact beyond question. The child has been carefully examined by physicians for any abnormal development of the brain or skull, but they say that there is nothing of the sort, and that it simply is a very well developed head. We asked her manager what he intended to do when she would be five or six years old, when what is now surprising in her would no longer be extraordinary. "Oh," said he, "I have an engagement with her parent for five years, all the same, and I am quite sure of making a good thing of it. As she grows older I make her exercises complicated. She has just recited to you the first act of 'Athalia.' Now I am going to make her learn it backwards. As soon as she is four years old I am going to begin to have her taught mathematics!" And the baby playing with an India rubber doll, listened to all this without appearing in the least frightened by a future thus bristling with ciphers, with incomprehensible phrases, and even, perhaps, with algebraic formulae.

This may all be very well for a year, for two years, perhaps for five, but in the end this poor little brain cannot fail of breaking down under such a strain. It simply means meningitis in the more or less remote future. We have a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Why in the world not have one for childhood as well? Meanwhile, Berthe Guillemand goes on earning a thousand francs for parents and many more for her impressario, a sort of Italian Barnum named Pessaro.

A Rich Man's Whims.

From the London Telegraph.

Some few weeks ago a well-to-do bourgeois of Vienna died, leaving the whole of his property away from his natural heirs, and to the son of a retired Austrian general with whom he had been personally unacquainted during his life, upon the sole ground, duly set forth in his will, that the Christian name of the young gentleman in question was identical with his own. When the legate, after proving the will, visited the testator's dwelling, accompanied by a legal official, in order to take possession of the property bequeathed to him, his attention was first directed to a fire-proof safe as a likely repository of securities. Upon opening the safe, however, it was found to contain nothing but scraps of paper, cut up very small with scissors, and consisting chiefly of old envelopes. A further search through the rooms, however, was rewarded by the discovery of bank notes to the amount of 40,000 florins, crumpled up into a ball and hidden in a corner behind a curtain. Other 20,000 florins were presently found in a photograph album, containing some two score portraits of pretty women in fancy costumes. Behind each one of these photographs were concealed bank notes corresponding in value to the deceased gentleman's appreciation of the ladies' respective charms, a fair beauty's attractive merits being appraised at 2,000 florins, while those of a handsome brunette were rated at 3,000. The notion of looking behind these portraits was suggested by marginal notes appended to each on the pages of the album in which they were inserted. These memoranda indicated

the intention of the deceased to make his testamentary dispositions in such sort that each several charmer should inherit the sum hidden away behind her counterfeited presentment. Fortunately for his heir, this eccentric project had never been advanced beyond its valuation stage, and thus the prizes originally intended to be awarded to beauty ultimately fell into the hands of an infantry lieutenant.

MARRYING FOR LOVE.

The man who marries for love has generally the vital temperament—is combative, sagacious and independent, and takes a general view of everything. A life of indolence and stagnation has no charms for one whose blood is warm and whose hopes are high; he likes to be in the thickest of the fight, giving blows and taking them; watching the turn of events with coolness and foresight; pleased at his own independence and struggles; eager to show the world what he can achieve, and the contest rouses all the strength and manliness of his nature. He wins the respect of his fellows by his own worth. He often brings home pleasant surprises for his wife and children. You may recognise him in trains loaded with parcels, which he goes naturally carries in perfect unconcern of what others think—a new sonnet, music, books, a set of furs for his wife; while in another parcel the wheels of a cart, a jack-in-the-box, a loll or skipping-rope intrude through the paper and suggest the nursery. He never forgets the dear ones at home; the humanizing influence of that darling red-checked little fellow who calls him father brings a glow ofapture of the purest pleasure earth holds; for the man who has never felt a tiny hand clasp his will always lack something—he will be less human, less blessed than others. This is the noble, the honest, the only form of life that imparts real contentment and joy, that will make a death-bed glorious, and love see peace through its eyes. It is so purely unselfish, so tenderly true, it satisfies the highest instincts, it stimulates men to the best deeds they are capable of. By studying how to live, we must know how to die; and the finest life is that which ministers to others needs and increases the joys of those dependant on us, whom we love, and who look to us for support, solace and light, even as the earth is revived by the sun; for feeling is life, the pulsation of delicious sympathy, the spring in a desert, the uanna from the skies.

A Pittsburg Accomplishment.

Did you ever see a Pittsburger get a flake of soot off his face? He never rubs it off. To rub off a flake of soot discloses the stranger. It also leaves a streak of black half an inch wide in place of the flake of soot as big as a three cent piece. This is not an improvement. The Pittsburger in the manor born blows it off. He is an adept at the art. If the flakes settle on his nose he protrudes his under lip, gives one vigorous whiff, and the obnoxious Pittsburgh snowflake leaves his face without a mark. If it lights on either of his cheeks, the mouth is puckered and stretched around in the direction of the smut with the unerring accuracy of a garden hoe. It is astonishing what almost inaccessible portions of the face and head can be reached by a native burgher in this way. I have seen one who could pull a black flake off the back of his neck. Sometimes the beauty-spot will nestle in behind the left ear, where it is apparently secure from a blow as a calm centre; but the native simply gives it a puff clear around his head from left to right; the current passes over the left ear, caroms on the right and comes back and picks up the wanderer and blows him away. They puff these sable flakes in any position as easily as a weekly paper puffs the summer circus.

How the Supreme Court is Opened.

To begin with, there is a degree of dignity and stately bearing about the court and its members which permeates even to the most humble attaché. There is a quiet in the court room which recalls the Sabbath of the Covenanters. When one enters the involuntary feeling comes on that the room is set aside only for the contemplation of the sober side of life, and woe to him who jibes or jokes in the presence of the court. The court is opened in about this fashion: At 12 o'clock (noon) the Justices come in from the consulting room and take their seats on the bench. Away to the left of the chamber is seen a beautiful officer, whose business it is to catch the first glimpse of the advancing Justices. Then comes three raps with a ponderous gavel, by the same officer. This is meant as a signal for the audience to rise. Then, with the Chief Justice in advance, the Judges enter from the right of the chamber. To the rear of the Justices seat is an aisle. In the centre is an arched entrance for the Chief Justice. Through this aisle the Judges file and take positions on the right and left. None enter until the Chief Justice makes a graceful obeisance to the standing audience. Then the Justices take seats, a stroke of the gavel is made, and the audience seats itself. The opening of the court falls upon a youthful official. It is after the old English form, "Oyez, Oyez," etc., and

concludes with the words, "God bless the honorable Supreme Court." The court is now ready for business. The Justices are clad in black silk gowns with an ecclesiastic cut. In the dispatch of business the Chief Justice is quite expeditious. He is always ready with a reply to a question, and eminently satisfactory. The Justices on the bench assume different attitudes. Justice Miller sinks down in his chair, and but little can be seen but the top of his head; so also does Justice Bradley. The Chief Justice sits erect most of the time when not hearing an argument, busy in consulting a calendar. Judge Harlan is the most striking in appearance of any of the Judges. He is tall, well built and sits erect.

THE IRISH REVOLUTION.

If were it not for the occasional acts of individual vengeance and brutal violence, such as the assassination of Lord Mountmorres, the present attitude of the Irish people, as described in a cable extract of a Dublin letter to the London Times, would command the undivided sympathy of our own country. That letter, published yesterday in our foreign despatches, was not intended by the writer to stimulate sympathy for the Irish cause, or to excite admiration for the resolute front presented by the people under the guidance of their leaders in the Land League; but it is sure to have that effect wherever it is read by Americans who recall to mind the early resistance to British misrule in the American colonies. The substance and point of the letter is that the Irish people, to give concentrated force to their resistance to the evils and oppressions of which they complain, have improvised an interior government of their own, which, in many respects, is more potent than the government authorized and supported by British law. In the language of the letter writer, "Its code is clear, its executive absolute, its machinery complete, and its action uniform. There is a government *de facto* and a government *de jure*—the former wielding a power which is felt and feared—and the latter (meaning the British vice-regal government), exhibiting only pomp, but little reality of power." This *de facto* interior government is described as having its magistrates and courts, in which disputes are settled, to the exclusion of the regular law courts and magistrates; as levying taxes, which are promptly paid, while the taxes under the law cannot be collected; as issuing licences for markets and fairs and doing other acts in the nature of local government; and as, in fact, lacking but the one great attribute of a national army to make it equal, if not superior, to the government of the British Viceroy.

All Americans ought to be able to understand that, and if the *de facto* rule were free from acts of murder and other violence to the person, they should be ready to regard it with keen fellow-feeling. Leaving these out, it is our own Revolutionary experience over again. It requires no recent study of our own history to remember how petition after petition, and appeal upon appeal, were sent by the American colonists from 1770 to '74 and '75 for redress of the hardships and grievances inflicted on them by a government which turned a deaf ear to all their prayers; how their appeals were couched in terms expressing the very humility of loyalty, in order to get justice by anything short of armed rebellion; and how, instead of getting redress, they were met by delays, hard words and threats, and then by fleets and armies, with soldiers quartered in their houses. Our resistance began in ways precisely similar to some of those in Ireland at this time. There were loyalists in those days who complained and some of them with reason, to "terrorism and social ostracism." It was popular feeling of this sort that induced Benjamin Thompson, afterwards Count Bombard, to fly from Massachusetts home to take up his abode in Europe. His case is typical of many. Recollections of this enable us to make a better measure of the word "terrorism" in Ireland; it comes flashing to us over the sea under the name of terrorism. The patriot revolution put every man upon his own who attempted to serve as agent under the stamp act, and was ed (and first of all here) in Philadelphia the non-importation act; they refused to buy anything for their own home products; they refused to buy tea, and at Jersey's they refused to buy down the coast, and some of them refused to buy and feed the army, and some of them refused to buy and feed the army. The patriot revolution put every man upon his own who attempted to serve as agent under the stamp act, and was ed (and first of all here) in Philadelphia the non-importation act; they refused to buy anything for their own home products; they refused to buy tea, and at Jersey's they refused to buy down the coast, and some of them refused to buy and feed the army, and some of them refused to buy and feed the army.