



RIGHT OR WRONG.  
WHEN RIGHT, TO BE KEPT RIGHT,  
WHEN WRONG, TO BE PUT RIGHT.

EBENSBURG:  
THURSDAY, MARCH 20.

Important Correspondence.

Wheatland, March 17, 1862.

C. D. MORDECAI, Esq.  
Charles:—It has been so long since you have had the pleasure of hearing from me, that you have, no doubt, ere this, begun to speculate as to the cause of my silence. I trust, however, I have not been misunderstood either in my motives or action,—or rather, I should say, my want of action,—and therefore I shall not weary you with any apology for what may or may not have been a shortcoming. But of one thing I will assure you. My silence has not been because I have forgotten you. The truth is, Charles, I am not a forgetful man; I was always remarkable on account of my good memory. I will know that JOHN W. FORNEY, and a few others of like character, have boldly charged me with forgetting my friends occasionally, but I repudiate the charge as a foul calumny. It is, indeed, a herculean task for a man having so many friends as I have had, to remember them all. It is but human to forget one here and there, but I solemnly assure you I never did. The assertion of FORNEY and all other ingrates to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding. And as you know I was always extremely fond of playing upon words, let me say that, dead or alive, it is my private opinion I shall always have a good memory. I say this not to anticipate monumental inscriptions, or what the historian may say, but because I verily believe it to be true. And further saith not.

So with these few remarks, I will now prepare to pucker.

We are just now, Charles, in a most important crisis. We have fallen, I fear, upon evil times; or perhaps it would be more proper to say that evil times have fallen upon us. Civil war is desolating our land; fraternal strife is being waged; brother is panting for the blood of brother; and we are having a bad time generally. Nevertheless, we should be duly grateful for the general good health of the people; for the abundant crops of the last season; and for divers other matters and things too tedious to mention.—But above all, should we be thankful that, while the War has come very near being carried into Africa, it has not yet been carried into Pennsylvania. I should feel sorry, indeed, to see any part or portion of the property of my fellow citizens, whether it might be real or personal, become a prey to a devouring element in the shape of an invading army from the South. If such an event should ever occur, (and it is my earnest prayer that it never may), it is easy to see how our heroisms would suffer. Nor is this the worst that would befall us. Our houses and barns, and other outbuildings, would in all probability be ransacked and destroyed, and our fences, upon which so much has been bestowed, and for which we cherish such a tender regard, would be prostituted to the base use of making fires to warm the shins of the enemy and cook his victuals by. This would be humiliating enough in all conscience, to say nothing of having our roasting-ears appropriated, our orchards broken down, and—oh, horror!—our Wheatland ruined! The very idea makes me nervous, and hence it is that I have written so nervously upon the subject.

But let us bide our time. "There is luck in leisure," saith the old proverb, which you have doubtless long since committed to memory. It is always best to be prepared for emergencies, I grant; but, perhaps, we have no good reason to fear a war of invasion from our brethren of the South. It is true, that, in looking over the columns of the *Hollidaysburg Standard*, a few days ago, I noticed that threats of that kind had been freely made. It seems that, since FLOYD stole away from Fort Donelson, and PILLOW showed the white feather, it has become necessary to reorganize the Southern army. ROBERT TOOMBS, of Georgia, it is said, has been, or is to be, placed at the top of the heap, and he, forsooth, is to march right over here with his men, and pounce down upon

us like a bumble-bee upon a clover-top. When that dire day comes, if come it must, we will likely have a time of it.—Well might we exclaim, in the language of the Poet—

"When Greek meets Greek,  
Then comes the tug of war—"

A quotation which would be very applicable indeed supposing us all to be Greeks, which is very far from the case, though the quotation itself may be Greek to a great many. But for the sake of our wives and little ones, (of which fortunately you and I have none), I hope TOOMBS will not be so green as to attempt the experiment. If he does, all I can say to him, is that we will furnish Toombs for him and all the men he brings with him, and that too on the shortest notice and on the most reasonable terms. In such a contingency, I will, if it be agreeable to all concerned, go myself at the head of the Army, and would like to have you, Charles at the head of the Navy. In other words, I propose that I shall take the field, and that you shall take the water—a thing which may go a little awkward with you at first, inasmuch as you have always been used to something stronger. As for myself I am sure that, if an opportunity be afforded, I will add still more military glory to that which I achieved in the Mormon War, and in the great Expedition which I sent against the haughty and powerful republic of Paraguay;—and as for you Charles, I know your strategy would accomplish wonders. If attacked, your very first fire would in all probability be from your rear, thus giving your adversaries dis-stink-tly to understand that you would show them no quarters, except hindquarters. I imagine that a few shots such as you would fire from the mortar at the stern end of your craft, would have a telling effect, particularly on the soil upon which it would happen to land.

But, if I may be permitted to use a Yankee expression, "it seems to run up the back of my leg" that we need not apprehend an invasion at present. There are, in my opinion, some cogent reasons why we are likely to be "let alone" in that line. In the first place, as you well know, Charles, the people of the South have always been the strenuous advocates of State Rights and State Sovereignty.—They hold that the soil of any particular State is and ought to be sacred to the people thereof; and so far have they carried this theory, that, when OLD ABE undertook to send the Federal troops into certain of their territory, they denounced the movement in the most unmeasured terms, and even went so far as to say that it was "an outrage upon a free people"—in which expression they did not, of course, mean to include their slaves. Now, if the people of the South are the people I think they are, (and I have no doubt they are,) I cannot for one moment believe that they will preach one thing and practice another; that they will one day proclaim an idea as their adopted theory, and the next day repudiate it by their action—I say I cannot believe this. Suppose we admit the Rights and Sovereignty of their States and the sacredness of their soil—their Rights and Sovereignty are no better or greater, according to their own argument, than the Rights and Sovereignty of Pennsylvania, nor is their soil any more sacred. It is very true that "my successor" did not heed their protests against what they termed "an invasion," nevertheless that can afford them no excuse for invading us. If they want to do right, let them act upon the Golden Rule, and (not) "do unto others as they would have others (not) do unto them." If they want to be "let alone," they ought on the same principle to let us alone, it being a well ascertained fact that what is sauce for the goose is, by a parity of reasoning, sauce for the gander also. But there is another and what I conceive to be a greater reason why our brethren of the South will not invade our State, and that is because, if we may judge by recent events, it seems likely that they will be kept busy to stay where they are.

I have occupied considerable space in discussing this subject, deeming it one of peculiar importance. I need not dwell at any great length upon the policy of my administration in regard to the great issues which necessarily pressed upon its attention. My acts were those of "an old public functionary," whose sands of life had well nigh run out, and whose greatest ambition was to preserve the Constitution, save the Union, and see that the institution of Slavery should not suffer. But I confess, Charles, and with the deepest remorse, that my policy was a failure; for ere I had retired to the shades of Wheatland, the Constitution had been violated and broken, and the Union was

knocked into a three-cocked hat; and as to Slavery—well, Charles, I am afraid I have suffered slightly, and I fear it would not now do to bet on.

I was, Charles, as you well know, always friendly to Southern people and Southern institutions. Of this I gave ample proof in and at divers ways, times, and places. I showed it by my public speeches and votes before my nomination for the Presidency; by my acceptance of that nomination, and my unequalled endorsement of the Cincinnati Platform; by my inaugural address; by my endorsement of the Dred Scott decision; by my course on the Lecompton question; by all my Messages; by bestowing my best appointments on Southern men; and by giving my ear to Southerners as my Constitutional advisers. Nay, more, Charles: you know I always was a ladies' man; and as such I used to heed the prattlings of those dear, bewitching creatures from the South, who were all the while whispering Southern Rights to me; but who, I am now satisfied, were only binding me hand and foot with wreaths of flowers, so that they might eventually carry me a captive down the highroad to Secession. And I confess they had well nigh succeeded. For you may remember, that up to a very late period of my Administration, I backed up or connived at every movement the Southerners inaugurated, and overlooked or excused every crime which they committed. I allowed CASS to go out of the Cabinet, because he wanted to do what he considered right, and I permitted FLOYD, and COBB, and THOMPSON to remain when everybody knew they were traitors and thieves. I really thought hard of South Carolina when it seceded, for I had treated it well; and I begged it to remain in the Union, because I knew if it would go out, the Union would be dissolved, and a bad example set for other States to follow. My policy was a peaceful one. When ANDERSON wanted reinforcements, I wouldn't send them, though I knew all the while that the South Carolinians were making arrangements to drive him out of a Federal fort; and when he took the precaution to leave Moultrie and go to Sumpter, I would have ordered him back with a fitting rebuke—but then, Charles, I had begun to "smell a mice," and I was afraid the people of the North wouldn't stand it.

All these things and many similar ones I had done and permitted, Charles, in order that I might exhibit my friendship for the Southern people, and to indicate in the most unmistakable terms that the Federal Government, so long as I controlled it at least, had not the slightest disposition to tread on their corns. These manifestations, together with the hearty support which I had given to your dearly beloved friend BRECKINRIDGE, a Southern man and a Southern candidate, I had hoped would be satisfactory to my misguided fellow citizens in that section; but in this I soon found myself a victim of the most bitter disappointment. They reminded me forcibly of a set of spoiled brats—the more they got, the more they wanted. When they finally discovered, that I had begun to consider that "forbearance had ceased to be a virtue," and that I was no longer to be moved by their importunities, they began to bluster, and swear, and threaten, and one by one, and State by State to secede—just as though they could scare me. And even the southern ladies, Charles,—yes, even they began to slight me, and finally the dear creatures ceased to come to those princely halls of the White House, where before I had so often made them the recipients of my unbounded hospitality. Base ingrates that they all were, their conduct aroused my anger—which, by the way, is terrible—and the result was I was brimful of fight. I felt for a time like pitching into the South, men, women, children, niggers and all, and was about making preparations to that end, when—presto!—

I happened to think of a certain Message sent into Congress a short time before. In that document, dictated by some evil genius, I had taken the position that the President could not make war even for the purpose of preserving or defending the Union; and, though admitting that a State had no right to secede, yet I had declared that, if it saw fit to go out of the Union, the Government had no right to keep it in, or in any way to coerce it. I was reminded, too, that upon the identical position there assumed, the Democracy were fast organizing themselves into an anti-coercion party; that such powerful papers as the *Democrat* & *Sentinel* were warmly urging such a consummation; and that numerous able-bodied orators like yourself, Charles, were advocating the doctrine with any quantity

of eloquence. This very naturally placed me in a split stick, and rather knocked the war feeling out of me. Of course, I could not run counter to Democratic feeling and sentiment, and as my official term was near its close, I contrived as best I could to do nothing one way or the other, and finally, on the 4th of March, 1861, I handed the Government over to "my successor"—at which time, to say the least of it, the Union was in a very dilapidated condition.

I returned to Wheatland, resolved to spend the remainder of my days here, and as I met with rather a cool reception on my arrival, and learned the feeling of the people to be against my policy, I thought it prudent to change my tactics at the earliest possible moment. I endeavored, at an early day to become President of a Union meeting, but for some reason or other my proposition was declined. I took occasion, however, so soon as the War had commenced, to say publicly that OLD ABE'S Administration should by all means be sustained, though I well knew at the time it was pursuing a coercive policy towards the South, which, in the Message referred to, I had utterly repudiated. For this change, I am informed, I was somewhat blamed by certain of my old friends in your county, but you will now see the propriety of it, and be prepared to explain it accordingly. I was, indeed, very much consoled by the fact that, when I changed, your paper changed also. It had violently opposed coercion, and so bitter were some of your articles, that I often wondered that some of your Republican neighbors did not take occasion to ride you on a rail—that being a sport in which they are sometimes prone to indulge. By drawing in your horns at the time you did, and pretending to sustain the Government, you exhibited a degree of shrewdness which did you credit. But in my humble opinion, Charles, you have not yet gone far enough. Doubtless, the great body of the Northern people are in favor of putting the South through, and hence they look with suspicion on anybody or any paper showing a disposition to cripple the Administration in its prosecution of the War. I have noticed several side-wipes in the *Democrat* & *Sentinel*, which would be to many persons conclusive evidence that you sympathize with the Rebellion. If this be so, you ought, as matter of policy, to repel such an idea by the strongest way possible.—Above all, you ought to pitch into BRECKINRIDGE. While you have said a great many things in his favor, I have never seen a single word in your paper against him. Neither you nor I have anything more to expect from JOHN; so you may as well walk into him rough-shod. By so doing you might possibly dispel the present belief that you are still his friend. By all means, Charles, do all you can to keep down the impression that your paper is in favor of Secession. It is a sheet in which I always took the deepest interest, and I would much regret to see your establishment subjected to the "cleaning out process" which some others have been compelled to undergo.

But I fear I am wearying you with this protracted dissertation on national questions; therefore, I will close it, and finish up by a few touches on topics more local in their character, but quite as interesting.

I watched, with great interest, the campaign in your county last fall, and was delighted to hear of the glorious victory the Democracy achieved. They did a good thing by refusing to coalesce with the Black Republicans. It is all right, of course, for Democrats to be in favor of the Union; but that don't say that they ought to be in favor of a Union Ticket—more especially in a county where they can get along without it. It may be allowable, indeed, in counties like Huntingdon or Blair, but then only on the principle that "half a loaf is better than no bread at all." I noticed you elected our old Congressional friend, PERSHING, to the Legislature, by a handsome majority. Considering that your county was represented in that body several years by Black Republicans, PERSHING'S election was rather a good thing. The puff you gave him last week, however, was a most ponderous one, endorsing, as you did, his entire career. Since that time, I discover that he forgot to vote for the act to restore the three-mill tax. Of course, you will now give him another puff on that score. If I remember correctly, you last week compared him to "some tall cliff," with "eternal sunshine settling on its head," &c. You are generally happy in your poetical quotations, Charles, but allow me to suggest that you slightly missed it on this occasion. Would not a middle-sized

cliff have better answered your purpose? and as to the sunshine, don't the Tonnage tax vote satisfy you that it was all moonshine? I feel anxious, indeed, to see how you will dispose of his case in your next issue.

Time works wonders. I am informed on what I consider reliable authority, that JONATHAN OLDBUCK is actually a candidate for the Senate. But a few years since JONATHAN was "an old-line Whig"; then, for a very brief space of time, he was a Black Republican; and then he became what is far worse than both these together, a Douglasite; and now, it seems, he is a candidate, and that too for an important Democratic nomination. When will wonders cease? How are you going to meet this question, Charles? I hope you will do your duty. All I can say is, that we ought to fight those who have always been fighting us. If we are to give all our places of trust and profit to new-fledged Democrats, and thrust all our old stand-bys aside, we may as well abandon our organization at once, and break up in a row. What say you, Charles? Am I not right? I feel sure that JONATHAN'S nomination would be a bitter pill for you BRECKINRIDGE'S to swallow. But JONATHAN is good at sugar-coating, and if he compels you to take the dose, I hope you will all do so with as good grace as possible.

I notice with much pleasure that you continue to give "the great Apostle of Liberty" all the way from the State of Maine, an occasional big lick. You seem determined to make it appear that he is "an Abolitionist from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet." Take care, Charles, that you don't overdo the thing. It may turn out, as our friend JEFF. DAVIS said of the Southern Confederacy, that you have undertaken to do more than you can successfully accomplish. By the way, who are those fellows whose certificates you published last week, in regard to the Chest Springs speech? That was the first intimation I ever had that such mortals were in existence. Who are they? and where do they live? and who wrote the certificates? and did they know what they were signing? It is remarkably strange, indeed, what a penchant some men have for notoriety, and what an appetite for getting their names into print! But so it is.

Between you and me, privately, Charles, there is a great difference between a Republican and an Abolitionist. I am well satisfied BARKER never was an Abolitionist, and I think all who know him are of the same opinion. Still it is well enough for you to keep that idea before the people, as it may have a tendency to injure his chances for Congress. But, as I said before, take care that you don't overdo the thing. I am aware that our friend TRAUIG, whose weather-cock politics I never liked, but who undoubtedly considers himself one of the smartest men of the age, speaks flippantly of BARKER'S recent article proving that he is not an Abolitionist but a Republican. And he asks BARKER to tell the difference between tweddle dum and tweddle dee.—Now BARKER may not be as good at retort as I am, but if I were asked to tell the "difference," I would answer unhesitatingly that as for you, Charles, I consider you tweddle dee, and as for TRAUIG, well, I consider him tweddle dumb.

I see, by your last paper, that our old friend MORDECAI has finally consented to leave this world, and become a candidate for Congress. Your strictures on the step which he has taken are very caustic and severe. In looking over his letter, my eye rested on a number of grammatical errors, and they very naturally confirmed a previous opinion of mine that "MORDECAI is not much of a scholar."—I have often wondered, Charles, that you, who are in the habit of boasting that your "best days were spent in teaching School," should permit so many mistakes to go forth in your paper without correction. Speaking of teaching School leads me to suggest, that, if it be consistent with your notions of things, you ought to go back to that business, as I know of no one better qualified than yourself to keep company with children.

I have been somewhat surprised that MORDECAI did not inform me of his intention to be a candidate. I have just received a letter from him, penned in his usual style, but in which he was entirely mum on that subject. He gave me some items of news, however, which were intensely interesting. Among other things, he stated, that, after your paper had come out last week, you were so delighted with the many good things which it contained, that, in conformity with an ancient custom of yours, you proceeded to take on a small keg, and the result was that you forgot to attend to your duties as Clerk to the Commissioners. This, according to MORDECAI, raised quite a storm in the Board, and they performed the very little act of tumbling you out, and putting another in your place—an occurrence which, however annoying it may have been to you, no doubt gave unsalubrious satisfaction to your successor. MORDECAI then goes on to say, that, for a while, you had thought of testing the matter before the Court, but on his advice, you had determined to drop it, and let the whole thing go by the Board. I am sorry, indeed, that this little affair resulted so disastrously to you, but I must at the same time commend your wisdom in keeping it as quiet as possible. If I were in your place, I would amuse myself by opening up the batteries of the *Democrat* & *Sentinel* on the Commissioners. They richly

merit severe castigation for some of their official acts, and it is hard to tell what they would do or wouldn't do, if the Republicans hadn't placed a Cooper there to tighten the hoops on them.

MORDECAI also informs me that, not long since, you were grossly insulted in a barber-shop, not a hundred miles from Ebenburg. He says you had been in the habit of getting "shaved and sheared" there, and had gone in again for that purpose; but, it seems, the barber declined, modestly alleging that he could not conscientiously perform tonsorial operations for any fellow who said and published that "negroes were no better than brutes."—It seems, too, that you remonstrated and argued the point, but to no purpose; the barber was inexorable. Well, Charles, I confess that was insulting, and it just goes to show how the darkies would treat us, supposing that they were freemen and no slaves. I would cordially recommend you to withdraw at once your patronage from that establishment, and read its proprietors a lesson through the ample columns of your paper.

There are many other matters and things, Charles, on which I would like to spread myself, but advancing years admonish me that it is high time to bring this rambling epistle to an end. You will observe that where I have said anything at all pointed, I have taken the precaution to under-score it. Here and there, you will discover a pun. Some of these, I think, will be found pretty good, while others, perhaps, are only middling. Hoping to hear from you soon, and that what I have written may prove to you a source of both pleasure and profit, I deliberately submit the same to your serious consideration.

J. B.

Letter from the "Silver Grays."

Camp Curtin, March 15, 1862.

Correspondence of The Allegonian.  
A wondrous change has come over the appearance of things since I last addressed you. The great body of troops then occupying Camp Curtin has left for the seat of war, having been ordered to the Potomac, leaving the "Silver Grays" almost solitary and alone in the occupancy of the camp. There are not, at this time, more than two hundred men at this station, your company being the only full one here. The remainder is made up of three skeleton companies, and some recruits for regiments in the field.

Camp Curtin has passed from the immediate control of the authorities of the State to that of the General Government. Capt. Dodge, the gentlemanly, masterful officer and superintendent of the recruiting service in Pennsylvania, represents the Government of the United States, and has taken possession of the entire camp and its appurtenances, in its name. He has issued an Order appointing Captain Palmer of the Grays, he being the senior Captain, to take charge of the police and discipline of the camp.

The Grays are "monarchs of all they survey," and, for the present, "to their right there is none to dispute." The "fowl and the brute," being somewhat scarce in these quarters, the title of "lordship" need not be set up. How long we may remain in our present position, as the guardians of the public property in and around the Capitol, I can not predict. The business on hand now requires the services of every member of the company. He who thinks the duties imposed upon the Grays to be trivial and easily to be discharged, is very much in error.

Camp Curtin will hereafter be a depot for recruits for the army (Regulars and Volunteers.) They will be forwarded to this point from the several stations in the State, and then distributed to their respective regiments in the field. It will devolve upon our company to keep up the regular order of camp discipline, as the other troops are only temporary sojourners, en route for their respective commands.

The recent simultaneous movement of the several divisions of the army, bearing down upon the lines of the enemy, indicate a speedy crushing out of the rebellion. The gradual development of the plans of the Federal Government, which have been maturing for months, gives promise that this war must be of short duration. Taking this as a stand point, we may extend our view to the south-east, and south-west, and in each section we distinguish the evidence that a master mind has been at work, controlling all the operations of the army, directing its secret evolutions, and, by a system of scientific strategy, coercing the evacuation of the enemy's strongest positions without shedding a drop of blood. While human life is only secondary to the maintenance of our glorious system of Government, yet humanity must approve the measure which accomplishes the desired end by the least sanguinary means.

Since the almost entire "evacuation" of Camp Curtin, your correspondent may consider his "occupation gone." Surrounded by abandoned barracks, he would be compelled to romance, to call to his aid all his limited powers of imagination, that he might be enabled to produce an interesting letter. Well, Mr. Editor, this is out of the line of your humble servant. At the time High Private introduced himself to your readers, he professed only to be a chronicler of passing events—to detail facts and not fiction. Now, camp items, when called for, are like unto the "spirits of the vasty deep"—they will not come. Until something new "turns up," my visits must necessarily be "like Angel's few and far between."  
IRON PRIVATE.