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Selected Poetry.

THE LIFE-CLOCK.

There's a little mystic clock,
No human eye hath seen,
That beats on—and beats on,
From morning until e'en.

And when the soul is wrapped in sleep,
All silent and alone,
It ticks, and ticks the livelong night,
And never runneth down.

Oh! wondrous is that work of art,
Which knells the passing hour;
But art never formed nor mind conceived,
The life clock's magic power.

Nor set in gold nor decked with gems,
By wealth and pride possessed;
But rich or poor, or high or low,
Each bears it in his breast.

When life's deep stream, 'mid budding flowers,
All still and softly glides,
Like the warbler's step, with a gentle beat,
It warns of passing tides.

When threatening darkness gathers o'er,
And hope's bright visions flee,
Like the sullen stroke of the muffled oar,
It beateth heavily.

When passion nerves the warrior's arm
For deeds of hate and wrong,
Though heeded not the fearful sound,
The knell is deep and strong.

When eyes to eyes are gazing soft,
And tender words are spoken,
Then fast and wild it rattles on,
As if with love 'twere broken.

Such is the clock that measures life,
Of flesh and spirit blended;
And thus twill run within the breast,
Till that strange life is ended.

THE FATHERLAND.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

Where is the true man's fatherland?
Is it where he by chance is born?
Doth not the yearning spirit scorn
In such scant borders to be spanned?
O, yes! his fatherland must be
As the blue heaven wide and free!

Is it alone where freedom is,
Where God is God and man is man?
Doth he not claim a broader span,
For the soul's love of home than this?
O, yes! his fatherland must be
As the blue heaven wide and free!

Where'er a human heart doth wear
Joy's myrtle wreath or sorrow's cypress,
Where'er a human spirit strives
After a life more true and fair,
There is the true man's birth place grand,
His is a world-wide fatherland!

Where'er a single slave doth pine,
Where'er one man may help another,—
Thank God for such a birthright brother,—
That spot of earth is thine and mine!
There is the true man's birth-place grand,
His is a world-wide fatherland!

[From the Atlantic Monthly.]

LOVE AND SKATES.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

CHAPTER V.

SKATING AS A FINE ART.

Of all the plays that are played by this playful world, on its play-days, there is no play like Skating.

To prepare a board for the moves of this game of games, a panel for the drawings of this Fine Art, a stage for the *entrechats* and *pirouettes* of its graceful adepts. Zero, magical artificer, had been, for the last two nights, sliding at full speed up and down the North river.

We have heard of Midas, whose touch made gold, and of the virgin under whose feet sprang roses; but Zero's heels and toes were armed with more precious influences. They left a diamond way, where they slid,—a hundred and fifty miles of diamond, half a mile wide and six inches thick.

Diamond can only reflect sunlight; ice can contain it. Zero's product, finer even than diamond, was filled—at the rate of a million to the square foot—with bubbles immeasurably little, and yet every one big enough to comprise the entire sun in small, but without alteration or abridgement. When the sun rose, each of those wonderful cells was ready to catch the tip of a sunbeam and house it in a shining abode.

Besides this, Zero had inlaid its work, all along the shore, with exquisite marquetry of leaves, brown and evergreen, of sprays and twigs, leaves and grasses.

No parquet in any palace from Fontainebleau to St. Petersburg could show such delicate patterns, or could gleam so brightly, though polished with all the wax in Christendom.

On this fine pavement, all the way from Cohoes to Spuyten Duyvel, Jubilee was sliding without friction, the Christmas morning of these adventures.

Navigation was closed. Navigators had leisure. The sloops and schooners were frozen in along the shore, and tugs and barges were laid up in basins, the floating palaces were down at New York, deodorizing their bar-rooms, regilding their bridal chambers, and enlarging their spittoon accomodations alow and aloft for next summer. All the population was out on the ice, skating, sliding, sledding, slipping tumbling, to its heart's content.

One person out of every Dunderbunk family was of course at home, roasting Christmas turkey. The rest were already at high jinks on Zero's Christmas present when Wade and the men came down from the meeting.

Wade buckled on his new skates in a jiffy. He stamped to settle himself, and then flung off half a dozen circles on his right leg, half dozen with his left, and the same with either leg backwards.

The ice, traced with these white peripheries, showed like a blackboard where a school had been chalking diagrams of Euclid, to point at with the "slow unyielding finger" of demonstration.

"Hurrah!" cries Wade, halting in front of the men, who, some on the Foundry wharf, some on the deck of our first acquaintance at Dunderbunk, the tug, "I Ambuster," were putting on their skates or watching him. "Hurrah! the skates are perfection! Are you ready, Bill?"

"Yes," says Tarbox, whizzing off rings as exact as Giotto's autograph.

"Now, then," Wade said, "we'll give Dunderbunk a laugh as we practised last night."

They got under full headway, Wade backwards, Bill forwards, holding hands.

When they were near enough to the merry throng out in the stream, both dropped into a sitting posture, with the left knee bent, and each with his right leg stretched out parallel to the ice and fitting compactly by the other man's leg.

In this queer figure they rushed through the laughing crowd.

Then all Dunderbunk formed a ring, agog for the grand show of

SKATING AS A FINE ART.

The world loves to see Great Artists, and expects them to do their duty.

It is hard to treat of this Fine Art by the Art of Fine Writing. Its eloquent motions must be seen.

To skate Fine Art, you must have a Body and a Soul, each of the First Order; otherwise you will never get out of coarse art and skating in one syllable. So much for yourself, the motive power. And your machinery,—your smooth bottomed rockers, the same shape stem and stern, this must be as perfect as the man it moves, and who moves it.

Now suppose you wish to skate so that the critics will say, "See! this athlete does his work as Church paints, as Darley draws, as Palmer chisels, as Whittier strikes the lyre, and Longfellow the dulcimer; he is as terse as Emerson, as clever as Holmes, as graceful as Curtis; he is as calm as Seward, as keen as Phillips, as stalwart as Beecher; he is Garibaldi, he is Kit Carson, he is Blondin; he is as complex as the steamboat Metropolis, as Steers' yacht, as Singer's sewing-machine, as Colt's revolver, as the steamplough, as Civilization." You wish to be so ranked among the people and the things that lead the age;—consider the qualities you must have, and while you consider, keep your eye on Richard Wade, for he has them all in perfection.

First—of your physical qualities. You must have lungs, not bellows; and an active heart, not an assortment of sluggish auricles and ventricles. You must have legs, not shanks. Their shape is unimportant, except that they must not interfere at the knee. You must have muscles, not flabbiness; sinews like wire, nerves like sunbeams; and a thin layer of flesh to cushion the gable-ends, where you will strike, if you tumble,—which, once for all be it said, you must never do. You must be all *momentum* and no *inertia*. You must be one part grace, one force, one agility, and the rest caoutchouc, Manilla hemp, and watchspring. Your machine, your body, must be thoroughly obedient. It must go just so far and no farther. You have got to be as unerring as a planet holding its own, emphatically, between forces centripetal and centrifugal. Your *aplomb* must be as absolute as the pounce of a falcon.

So much for a few of the physical qualities necessary to be a Great Artist in Skating. See Wade, how he shows them.

Now for the moral an intellectual. Pluck is the first; it always is the first quality. Then enthusiasm. Then patience. Then pertinacity. Then a fine æsthetic faculty,—in short, good taste. Then an orderly and submissive mind, that can consent to act in accordance with the laws of art. Circumstances, too, must have been reasonably favorable. The well-known skeptic, the King of tropical Bantam, could not skate, because he had never seen ice and doubted even the existence of solid water. Widdrington, after the battle of Chevy Chase, could not have skated, because he had no legs,—poor fellow!

But granted the ice and the legs, then if you begin in the elastic days of youth, when cold does not sting, tumbles do not bruise, and duckings do not wet; if you have pluck and ardor enough to try everything; if you work slowly ahead and stick to it; if you have good taste and a lively invention; if you are a man and not a lubber;—then, in fine, you may become a Great Skater, just as with equal power and equal pains you may put your grip on any kind of Greatness.

The technology of skating is imperfect. Few of the great feats, the Big Things, have admitted names. If I attempted to catalogue Wade's achievements, this chapter might become an unintelligible rhapsody. A sheet of paper and a pen-point cannot supply the place of a sheet of ice and a skate-edge. Geometry must have its diagrams, Anatomy its *corpus* to carve. Skating also refuses to be spiritulized into a Science; it remains an Art, and cannot be expressed in a formula.

Skating has its Little Go, its Great Go, and its Baccalaureate, its M. A., its F. S. D. (Doctor of Frantic Skipping), its A. G. D. (Doctor of Airy Gliding), its N. T. D. (Doctor of No Tumbles), and finally its highest degree, U. P. (Unapproachable Podographer).

Wade was U. P.

There was a hundred of Dunderbunkers who had passed their Little Go and could skate forward and backward easily. A half-hundred, perhaps, were through their Great Go; these could do outer edge freely. A dozen had taken the Baccalaureate, and were proudly repeating the pirouettes and spread-eagle of that degree. A few could cross their feet, on the edge, forward and backward, and shift edge on the same foot, and so were *Magistri Artis*.

Wade U. P., added to these, an indefinite list of combinations and fresh contrivances. He spun spirals slow, and spirals neck or nothing. He pivoted on one toe, with the other toe cutting rings, inner and outer edge, forward and backward. He skated on one foot better than the M. A.s could on both. He ran on his toes; he slid on his heels; he cut up shines like a sunbeam on a bender; he swung, light as if he could fly, if he pleased, like a wing-footed Mercury; he glided as if will, not muscle, moved him; he tore about in frenzies; his pivotal leg stood firm, his balance leg flapped like a graceful pinion; he turned somersets; he jumped, whirling backward as he went, over a platoon of boys laid flat on the ice;—the last boy whinced, and thought he was amputated; but Wade flew over, and the boy still holds together as well as most boys. Besides this, he could write his name with a flourish at the end, like the *rubrica* of a Spanish *hidalgo*. He could phodograph any letter, and multitudes of ingenious curlicues which might pass for the alphabets of unknown tongues. He could not tumble.

It was Fine Art.

Bill Tarbox sometimes pressed the champion hard. But Bill stopped just short of Fine Art, in High Artisanship.

How Dunderbunk cheered this wondrous display! How delighted the whole population was to believe they possessed the best skater on the North River! How they struggled to imitate! How they tumbled, some on their backs, some on their faces, some with dignity like the dying Cæsar, some rebelliously like a cat thrown out of a garret, some limp as an ancient acrobat! How they laughed at themselves and at each other!

"It's all in the new skates," says Wade, apologizing for his unapproachable power and finish.

"It's suthin' in the man," says Smith Wheelwright.

"Now chase me, everybody," said Wade.

And, for a quarter of an hour, he dodged the merry crowd, until at last, breathless, he let himself be touched by pretty Bell Purtett, rosiest of all the Dunderbunk bevy of rosy maidens on the ice.

"He rather beats Bosting," says Capt. Isaac Ambuster to Smith Wheelwright. "It's so cold there that they can skate all the year round; but he beats them, all the same."

The Captain was sitting in a queer little bowl of a skiff on the deck of his tug, and rocking it like a cradle, as he talked.

"Bosting's always hard to beat in anything rejoined the ex-Chairman. "But if Bosting is to be beat, here's the man to do it."

And now, perhaps, gentle reader, you think I have said enough in behalf of a limited fraternity, the skaters.

The next chapter, shall take up the cause of the Lovers, a more numerous body, and we will see whether True Love, which never makes "smooth running," can help its progress by a skate-blade.

CHAPTER VI.

"GO NOT, HAPPY DAY, TILL THE MAIDEN YIELDS."

Christmas noon at Dunderbunk. Every skater was in galloping glee,—as the electric air, and the sparkling sun, and the glinting ice had a right to expect that they all should be.

Belle Purtett, skating simply and well, had never looked so pretty and graceful. So thought Bill Tarbox.

He had not spoken to her, nor she to him, for more than six months. The poor fellow was ashamed of himself and penitent for his past bad courses. And so, though he longed to have his old flame recognize him again, and though he was bitterly jealous and miserably afraid he should lose her, he had kept away and consumed his heart like a true despairing lover.

But to-day Bill was a lion, only second to Wade, the unapproachable lion-in-chief. Bill was reinstated in public esteem, and had won back his standing in the Foundry. He had to-day made a speech which Perry Purtett gave everybody to understand "none of Senator Bill Seward's could hold the tallow to." Getting up the meeting and presenting Wade with the skates was Bill's own scheme, and it had turned out an eminent success. Everything began to look bright to him. His past life drifted out of his mind like the rowdy tales he used to read in the Sunday newspapers.

He had watched Belle Purtett all the morning, and saw that she distinguished nobody with her smiles, not even *coq du village*, Ringdove. He also observed that she was furtively watching him.

By-and-by she sailed out of the crowd, and went off a little way to practise.

"Now," said he to himself "sail in, Bill Tarbox!"

Belle heard the sharp strokes of a powerful skater coming after her. Her heart divined who this might be. She sped away like the swift Camilla, and her modest drapery showed just enough and "*ne quid nimis*" of her ankles.

Bill admired the grace and the ankles immensely. But his hopes sank a little at the flight,—for he thought she perceived his chase and meant to drop him. Bill had not had a classical education, and knew nothing of Galatea in the Eclogue,—how she did not hide, until she saw her swain was looking fondly after.

"She wants to get away," he thought. "But she shan't,—no, not if I have to follow her to Albany."

He struck out mightily. Presently the swift Camilla let herself be overtaken.

"Good morning, Miss Purtett." (dogged air.)

"Good morning, Mr. Tarbox." (Taken by surprise air.)

"I've been admiring your skating,"

"Have you?" rejoins Belle, very cool and distant.

"Have you been long on the ice?" he inquired hypocritically.

"I came on two hours ago with Mr. Ringdove and the girls," returned she, with a twinkle which said, "Take that, sir, for pretending you did not see me."

"You've seen Mr. Wade skate, then," Bill said, ignoring Ringdove.

"Yes; is'n't it splendid?" Belle replied kindling.

"Tip-top."

"But then he does everything better than anybody."

"So he does?" Bill said,—true to his friend, and yet beginning to be jealous of this enthusiasm. It was not the first time he had been jealous of Wade; but he had quelled his fears like a good fellow.

Belle perceived Bill's jealousy, and could have cried for joy. She had known as little of her once lover's heart as he of her's. She only knew that he stopped coming to see her when he fell, and had not renewed his visits now that he was risen again. If she had not been charmingly ruddy with the brisk air and exercise, she would have betrayed her pleasure at Bill's jealousy with a fine blush.

The sense of recovered power made her wish to use it again. She must tease him a little. So she continued, as they skated on in good rhythm—

"Mother and I wouldn't know what to do without Mr Wade. We like him *so* much,"—said ardently.

What Bill feared was true, then, he thought. Wade, noble fellow, worthy to win any woman's heart, had fascinated his landlady's daughter.

"I don't wonder you like him," said he. "He deserves it."

Belle was touched by her old lover's forlorn tone.

"He does indeed," she said. "He has helped and taught us all so much. He has taken such good care of Perry. And then"—here she gave her companion a little look and a little smile—"he speaks so kindly of you, Mr. Tarbox."

Smile, look, and words electrified Bill. He gave such a spring on his skates that he shot far ahead of the lady. He brought himself back with a sharp turn.

"He has done kinder than he can speak," says Bill. "He has made a man of me again, Miss Belle."

"I know it. It makes me very happy to hear you able to say so of yourself." She spoke gravely.

"Very happy"—about anything that concerned him? Bill had to work off his overjoy at this by an exuberant flourish. He whisked about Belle,—outer edge backwark. She stopped to admire. He finished by describing on the virgin ice, before her, the letters B. P., in his neatest style of podography easy letters to make, luckily.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed Belle. "What are those letters? Oh! B. P.! What do they stand for?"

"Guess!"

"I'm so dull," she said, loooking bright as a dimond. "Let me think! B. P.? British Poets, perhaps."

"Try nearer home!"

"What are you likely to be thinking about that begins with B. P.?—Oh, I know! Boiler Plates!"

She looked at him,—innocent as a lamb. Bill looked at her, delighted with her little coquetry. A woman without coquetry is insipid as a rose without scent, as Champagne without bubbles, or as corned beef without mustard.

"It's something I'm thinking of most of the time," says he; "but I hope it's softer than Boiler Plates. B. P. stands for Miss Isabella Purtett."

"Oh!" says Belle, and she skated on in silence.

"You came down with Alonza Ringdove?" Bill asked, suddenly, aware of another pang after a moment of peace.

"He came with me and his sisters," she replied.

Yes; poor Ringdove had dressed himself in his shiniest black, put on his brightest patent-leather boots, with his new swan-necked skates newly strapped over them, and wore his new dove colored overcoat with the long skirts, on purpose to be lovely in the eyes of Belle on this occasion. Alas, in vain!

"Mr. Ringdove is a great friend of yours, isn't he?"

"If you ever came to see me now, you would know who my friends are, Mr. Tarbox."

"Would you be my friend again, if I came, Miss Belle?"

"Again? I have always been so,—always, Bill."

"Well, then, something more than my friend,—now that I am trying to be worthy of more, Belle?"

"What more can I be?" she said, softly.

"My wife."

She curved to the right. He followed. To the left. He was not to be shaken off.

"Will you promise me not to say *valves* instead of *valves*, Bill?" she said, looking pretty and saucy as could be.—"I know, to say W for V is fashionable in the iron business, but I don't like it."

"What a thing woman is to dodge!" says Bill. "Suppose I told you that men brought up inside of boilers, hammering on the inside against twenty hammering like Vulcans on the outside, get their ear so dumbfoundered that they can't tell whether they are saying *valves* or *walves*, *wice* or *virtue*,—suppose I told you that—what would you say, Belle?"

"Perhaps I'd say that you pronounce *virtue* so well, and act it so sincerely, that I can't make any objection to your other words. If you'd asked me to be your *vife* Bill, I might have said I didn't understand; but *wife* I do understand, and I say"—

She nodded, and tried to skate off. Bill stuck close to her side.

"Is this true Belle?" he said, almost doubtfully.

"True as truth?"

She put out her hand. He took it, and they skated on together,—hearts beating to the rythm of their movements.

The uproar and merriment of the village came only faintly to them. It seemed as if all Nature was hushed to listen to their plighted troth, their words of love renewed, more earnest for long suppression. The beautiful ice spread before them, like their life to come, a pathway untouched by any sorrowful or weary footstep.

The blue sky was cloudless. The keen air stirred the pulses like the vapor of frozen wine. The benignant mountains westward kindly surveyed the happy pair, and the sun seemed created to warm and cheer them.

"And you forgive me, Belle?" said the lover. "I feel as if I had only gone bad to make me know how much better going right is."

"I always knew you would find it out. I never stopped hoping and praying for it."

"That must have been what brought Mr. Wade here."

"Oh, I did hate him so, Bill, when I heard of something that happened between you and him! I thought him a brute and a tyrant. I never could get over it, until he told mother that you were the best machinest he ever knew, and would sometime grow to be a great inventor.',

"I'm glad you hated him. I suffered rattlesnakes and collapsed flues for fear you'd go and love him."

"My affections were engaged," she said with simple seriousness.

"Oh if I'd only thought so long ago!

How lovely you are!" exclaims Bill, in ecstacy. "And how refined! And how good! God bless you!"

He made up such a wishful mouth,—so wishful for one of the pleasurable duties of mouthes, that Belle blushed, laughed, and looked down, and as she did so saw that one of her straps was trailing.

"Please fix it, Bill," she said, stooping and kneeling.

Bill also knelt, and his wishful mouth immediately took its chance.

A manly smack and a sweet little feminine chirp sounded as their lips met.

"Boom! twanging as gay as the first tap of a marriage-bell, a loud crack in the ice rang musically for leagues up and down the river. "Bravo!" it seemed to say.

"Well done, Bill Tarbox! Try again"

Which the happy fellow did, and the happy maiden permitted.

"Now," said Bill, "let us go and hug Mr. Wade!"

"What! Both of us?" Belle protested. "Mr Tarbox, I am ashamed of you!"

CONCLUSION NEXT WEEK.

LODGINGS FOR BOOTS.

A short time ago, one of our citizens who loves his joke about as well as folks generally do, had occasion to visit one of the small towns in the interior of the State, and knowing he would have considerable walking over muddy roads, he took with him a pair of long India rubber boots.

He arrived at his destination about nine o'clock in the evening, and upon inquiry he found that the only tavern in the place was half a mile from the station. No conveyance was to be had, and the road was muddy in the extreme. Congratulating himself on having his long boots, he set off and found the mud so deep in some places his boots were barely long enough.

He reached the hotel at last, looking rather soiled about the feet. After supper he inquired the charge for lodgings.

"We usually charge," said the landlord, who also had some fun in his composition, "twenty-five cents; but if a man goes to bed with such boots as them on, (pointing to the customer's feet,) we charge him fifty cents."

"A very good idea, I should think," returned the traveler.

After half an hour's conversation, the landlord showed him to his room, and they parted for the night, mutually pleased with each other. The next morning our friend arose late, and inquiring for the landlord, learned that he had gone from home to attend to some business.—After breakfast he handed a dollar to the landlord's wife, saying—

"There is fifty cents for my supper and breakfast, and fifty cents for my lodging."

"Twenty-five cents is all we charge for lodging," said the landlady.

"Yes," returned the stranger, "under ordinary circumstances: but in this case fifty cents is not too much."

The stranger departed, and the lady was deep in conjecture as to what could be the circumstances which required a man to pay double price for lodging. When her husband returned—

"Has that man who slept in the front room come down yet?" he asked.

"Yes," answered the wife, "and he has gone away. He paid fifty cents for his lodging, and said, under the circumstances it was right."

The landlord rushed up stairs. His wife followed, to learn the meaning of such strange proceedings, and found her husband with the bed-clothes turned down, and her best bed looking more fit to plant potatoes in than it did for any human being to sleep in.

"You saw that man when he arrived here last night?"

"Yes."

"You saw his boots, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"Well," said the landlord, "the scamp slept in 'em.

A few days after, the traveler, on his return home put up at the same tavern.—Neither himself nor the landlord said anything about the boots, which were in the same condition as on the previous occasion; but the landlady looked daggers at him, and eyed his boots with anxiety.—About ten o'clock, he said he would retire. "And, by the way, landlord," said he, with a merry twinkling in his eye, "what do you usually charge for lodging?"

"We charge," answered the landlord, with a most tremendous emphasis, "twenty-five cents!"

MR. RUSSELL'S LAST LETTER.

The letter of Mr. Russell in the *Times* of the 13th is of unusual interest, being graphic and sketchy, and with but few prophesies. We make a few extracts:

PROBABILITIES OF AN ADVANCE.

"As the condition of the roads and of the country in Virginia continues as bad as ever, *it is likely that no movement of the army of the Potomac will take place until winter is over*, unless the General is bold enough to trust to a bridge of frost, which may break when he is in the middle of it, and leave him floundering in a sea of mud. * * * It is possible that the Military Committee may have been satisfied by the promise of action to come, or it may be that the General does really intend to throw the Confederates off their guard, and make a dash at them one of these fine frosty days. *The thing could be done—just done, by moving the whole force off suddenly, making a forced march so as to arrive in front of the enemy's lines by daybreak, and by a concerted plan, under fire of the numerous field artillery, breaking his line in the centre or overwhelming it on either flank.* Such marches as that from the camps on the line from the front of Alexandria round by the Chain Bridge to the position at Centreville have often been made, and have ended in successful battles. To make such an effort now it would be necessary to have a hard frost and a certainty of its duration for a day or two, and there should be also some reasonable certainty of success in the attack.

THE POTOMAC AND THE CRIMEA CONTRASTED.

"The ride from Washington to Munson's Hill has places which bid fair to rival that famous dip in the hill on the Balaklava road between the Col and Kadikoi. But how different the scene beyond! the long line of trenches, the smoke wreaths of the cannon, the expanse of tents on the dark plateau, the white houses of the city, the lines of the fleet and the symmetrical masses of the guardian forts. *How great the contrast between that ill fed, ill-clad army of our soldiers, meeting death and disease without a murmur in the face of the enemy, and the comforts of these troops who have not even to fight!*

COMFORT OF THE AMERICAN TROOPS.

"The American soldier is lightly equipped, his knapsack is by no means burdensome, he wears no cross belts; instead of hide and canvass sandles, he has well made boots and shoes of leather. When sick he has medicine and medical attendance, and unless he is at some forlorn sickly post like that at Beaufort, where injudicious correspondents have revealed the existence of great sickness, and some neglect, and have thereby nearly subjected themselves to the kindness of an expulsion by General Sherman, he is well treated in illness, and has as fair chances as any invalid in the world for recovery. In addition to his rations it is suggested in Congress that he shall have "crackers, butter, and cheese!" Certainly it will not be from any want of all care and comfort that the Northern soldiers prove unsuccessful. At night enormous fires blaze in the camps, and the guards warm themselves by pyramids of blazing billets enough for a hundred yule fires.

"In the other tents not thus provided the soldiers have shown ingenuity in making themselves comfortable. Thus, they construct a fire-place by cutting a hole in the earth inside the tent, and thence pushing a small covered gallery outside, the distance of two or three yards. The shaft is then pierced, and a couple empty barrels placed one above the other, and coated with clay, establish a draught, and serve as a chimney for the fire inside the tent. The abundance of wood gives the soldiers means of flooring the tents, fitting them with shelves, making bedsteads and chairs, and, above all, raising stockades round the sides of the tents to keep out the wind. They are also clever in constructing stables of the branches of firs, pines and evergreens, and in making screens of the same materials round their camps and tents, which sometimes affect artistic forms, and expand into decorations, triumphal arches, wreaths with inscriptions over the entrances to the streets of the camp, and the like. At Christmas they were particularly effective and prettily arranged. Sutler's carts, very well got up, with the names of the regiments to which they belong painted on the panels and oilskin covers, are grouped around the wooden sheds and stores, and various unrecognized vehicles are loitering in the vicinity, surrounded by soldiers, who are intent on struggling with Brobdignag oysters, purchasing 'gum drops,' or investing in the doubtful solaces afforded by volumes of 'Common Prayer,' 'Sacred Poems,' and similar tin volumes full of spiritual fluids, which quite unfit the recipient for any exercises whatever, and which are intended to evade the strict watch which is kept over the sale of intoxicating drinks. Yankee ingenuity has been taxed, not unsuccessfully, to defeat the Provost Marshal. 'Liniments,' 'Embrocations,' 'Cough Mixtures,' and patent medicines of the most stimulating character have been devised for the occasion, and a man may become as 'happy as a king,' and 'as sick as a dog,' by taking a couple of bottles of 'Prepared Bear's Grease,' or 'The Patriot's Ursina.' Drunkenness is the great evil of the camps. Venus is not permitted to follow the American Mars into the field, and it is rare indeed to see a woman in the vicinity."

Mr. Russell elsewhere admits that the battle of Mill Spring was a decided success for the Federals, and thinks an order of merit ought to be established for our soldiers.

A chap who was told that the best cure for palpitation of the heart was to quit hugging and kissing the girls, said,

"If that is the only remedy that can be proposed, I, for one, say, let'er palpitate."

Western Exuberance.

The Frankfort (Ky.) Commonwealth of the 19th contains the following letter to the Rebels:

My Dear Rebs—I now take my pen in hand for the purpose of holding communion with you through the silent medium of pen and paper. I have just learned that the lines are now open as far as Fort Donelson, in Tennessee, and I avail myself with alacrity of the opportunity now presented of resuming our correspondence. You many friends in this section would like to be informed on various topics—for instance:

How are you, anyhow?

How does "dying in the last ditch" agree with your general health?

How is the "Constitution" down your way?

Do you think there is any Government?

How is "King Kotting?"

Is Yancy well, and able to eat his oats?

When will Buckner take his Christmas dinner in Louisville?

Is Lloyd Tilghman still hanging Union men in the First District?

Is Floyd still "*rifling*" cannon and other small arms?

How is Pillow's last "ditch," and when will he gratify his numerous friends by "dying" in the same?

How is the "Southern Heart"?

Are you still able to whip five to one?

What is your opinion of the Dutch rage?

Did the recognition of the S. Confederacy by England and France benefit you much?

Where is the "Provisional Government" of Kentucky, and what is it kept in?

Where is the Louisville-Nashville-Bowling Green-Courier now published? Say?

And lastly, what do you think of yourselves, anyhow?

A prompt answer will relieve many anxious hearts.

Yours, in a horn,
A LINCOLN MAN.

United States, Feb. 18th 1862.

"RIDIN' ON A RAILROAD KERR."—A most veracious chronicler relates, in the following fashion, the experience of a young lady from the rural districts who lately visited the city, accompanied by her peculiar swain, and took an appreciative view of the elephant.

Getting into one of the city cars for a ride, the maiden took a seat, while the lover planted himself on the platform.

The graceful vehicle had sped but a few short blocks, when the benificently young conductor insinuated himself into the popular chariot for the purpose of collecting the expenses. Approaching the rustic maiden, he said affably:

"Your fare miss."

The rosebud allowed a delicate pink to manifest itself on her cheeks, and looked down in soft confusion. The justly popular conductor was rather astonished at this, and adventured to remark once more:

"Your fare, miss"

This time the pink deepened to carnation, and the maiden fingered her parasol with pretty coquettishness. The conductor really didn't know what to make of this sort of thing, and began to look a little foolish; but as a small boy at the other end of the car began to show signs of a disposition to leave without paying for his ride, the official managed to say once more:

"Hem! miss, your fare."

In a moment those lovely violet eyes were looking up in his face, through an aurora of blushes, and the rosy lip exclaimed:

"Well, they do say I'm good looking at hum; but I don't see why you want to say it out so loud!"

It was not a peal of thunder that shook the car just then. Oh, no. It was something that commenced in a general titter, and culminated in such a shattering guffaw as stentorian lungs alone are capable of. In the midst of the cachinatory tempest, the 'lovyer" came to the rescue of his Doxiana, and, when the "pint of the hull thing" was explained to him, his mouth expanded to proportions that might have made Barnum's hippopotamus die of jealousy on the spot. The pair descended from the car amid a salvo of mirth, and when last seen were purchasing artificial sweetmeats at a candy shop.

THE SEVEN OLD AND THE SEVEN NEW.—The seven wonders of the world *were:* 1st, the Egyptian pyramids. The largest of these is 604 feet square and 469 feet high, and its base covers 11½ acres of ground. 2, the Mausoleum, erected to Mausolus, king of Caria, by his widow, Artemisia. It was 73 feet long and 35 high. 3d. the Temple of Diana, at Ephesus. This was 425 feet in length and 220 feet in breadth. 4th, the Walls and Hanging Gardens of Babylon. These walls are stated, by Herodotus, to have been 87 feet thick, 250 feet high and 60 miles in length; and the statement is deemed credible by modern antiquarians. 5th, the Colossus of Rhodes. This was a brazen statue of Apollo, 105 feet in height standing at the mouth of the harbor of Rhodes. 6th. the statue of Jupiter Olympus, at Athens, which was made of ivory and gold, and was wonderful for its beauty rather than for its size. 7th, Pharos at Alexandria, in Egypt. A fire of wood was kept burning on its summit during the night, to guide ships to the harbor.

The seven wonders of the world *are:* The art of printing; Optical Instruments; such as the Telescope and the Microscope; Gunpowder; the steam Engine; Labor saving Machinery; the Electric Telegraph, and Photography.

The ladies of Boston having made some shirts for the soldiers, from four to six inches too short, some wag perpetrated the following:

Like a man without a wife,
Like a ship without a sail,
The most useless thing in life
Is a shirt without—proper length.

He who puts aside his religion because he is going into society is like one taking off his shoes because he is about to walk on thorns.