

The Potter Journal

Devoted to the Principles of True Democracy, and the Dissemination of Morality, Literature and News.

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Original.
To Florence Smith.
BY ALVIRA WILLIAMS.

When approach the shades of even,
And the stars above
Deck the mighty arch of heaven
As with gems of love;
Then my spirit, ever free,
Holds communion sweet with thee.

When the breeze is softly sighing
Through each leaf-crown'd tree,
And the lingering sunbeams lying
On the scented sea;
Thoughts of thee do throng my breast
Robbing me of dark unrest.

As I take my morning ramble
Through the grassy lawn,
Climbing over brake and bramble
At the early dawn;
Every zephyr seems to bring
Thy sweet voice, upon its wing.

Thoughts of thee dear one, shall guide me
All life's paths along;
And thy gentleness shall chide me,
When I think of wrong;
Ever shall thy memory be
Kept a sacred trust by me.
Black Forest, Pa.

OUR ARMY CORRESPONDENCE.

CAMP CALIFORNIA, Va.
Head Quarters, Co. G. 53d Reg. P. V.
Dec. 6, 1861.

FRIEND MAC: As our Company is now of an erratic nature, often changing its location, I thought to spend a few moments in writing to you. Since writing you last we have moved quite often. I propose to give you and your readers an abridged detail of our various movements since that time. At dismissal of "dress parade" on the 27th of November, our Colonel informed us that he had ordered to strike tents at 6 o'clock A. M. next day, and to report at the earliest possible moment to Gen. Sumner, at Springfield Station, on the Orange and Alexandria Rail Road, some nineteen miles distant from Washington. Pursuant to those orders, on the following morning we "struck tents" and took up the line of march for "Sacred Soil," passing over the Long Bridge at about ten o'clock A. M. We arrived at Alexandria a little past noon. We had expected to have taken the cars for the remainder of our journey, but for some reason as yet not fully explained, our first orders were countermanded and instead of proceeding, we were ordered to encamp for the night on the first suitable ground to which we should come. In accordance with these last instructions we proceeded about two miles this side Alexandria and pitched tents on an eminence known as "Oakshoe Farm." This eminence lies directly and about midway between Fort Ellsworth and Fairfax Summit. It was last summer occupied by the Fourth Regiment Maine Volunteers. Strolling out back of this Camp a distance of perhaps half a mile we come to what was formerly a beautiful residence, but is now a wreck. The design was a good one and the finish excellent. I was informed that the furniture was magnificent almost beyond description. But when the three months' men came on, the owner (a Rebel) migrated to a more congenial climate, and the exasperated volunteers cut down his orchard, ruined his furniture, tore the partitions and floors from out the house, and defaced the walls in a most shameful manner, wantonly destroying about ten thousand dollars' worth of property; and this, I am informed, is only one instance of many. While I have no sympathy for those designing men who have so wickedly brought untold misery and destruction upon themselves, still I could wish that our own soldiers of the free North might conduct themselves in a manner better suited to the cause in which we are engaged, and to the age in which we live.

Going over the hill and walking a mile we came to Fort Ellsworth. I am not sufficiently versed in the structure of Forts to be able to describe it. My conclusions, however, after rambling through it a half hour were, that with its defences properly manned Jeff. would have a sorry time should he be hardy enough to attempt its capture. There are mounted upon it sixteen sixty-four pounders, two heavy rifled cannon, and four smaller brass pieces. In addition to these defences, situated at a few paces from the Fort is a strong masked battery. The whole structure, to the inexperienced eye of one unaccustomed to such arrangements, conveys an idea of strength, and causes him to think he would not like to be of the number who should attempt to test its capacities for dealing death to the enemy. Stepping upon the parapets, we behold in the distance up the Potomac, the city of "magnificent distances" and looming up far above the rest, the Capitol and the Washington Monument. It is a beautiful sight indeed. Lying down the river we see Fort Lyon, a structure which we judge to be considerably larger than Fort Ellsworth; and just beyond it a large encampment said to contain four or five thousand Union troops. The sentinel standing at our side informs us that

over beyond and bear to the Seminary at Forts Ward, Bennett and others, and in that direction too we observe large encampments. So you see Mr. Editor, if the Potter boys are in "Dixie Land" they are not alone.

Returning to our quarters at noon we were just preparing to write you while having nothing better to do, when we were ordered to pull up stakes and again move. At 12 1/2 o'clock we were again on the road. Between marching and halting we occupied nearly all the afternoon in reaching our present station. This is in a sort of valley where mud is plenty and dry ground scarce. We are this time located on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, a distance of some five like two miles up the river from Alexandria, in the direction of Springfield. Our encampment runs obliquely across the valley. Our own Fifty third is stationed with its right flank on the railroad, whilst its left extends across Big Hunting Creek. We are in line of battle, ready at a moment's warning to fall in. It is said that here is to be the scene of a battle, and to quote an expression of an officer, "that right quick, too." We think differently however.

There was a sort of alarm among the Brigade officers the other night, they having information that the Rebels were contemplating an advance upon us, but they did not come. Had they, they would have found us well prepared for their reception. The "Seesch" about here say that their friends in the rebel army are coming up here for their "Christmas dinner"—that they are coming down this valley too. Well we don't know but they will, still we may be permitted to doubt their making such a display. Our own opinion is that if the rebels do make an advance, it is only for the purpose of retreating and thus drawing us unawares into the line of their batteries and mines, making their own assertions of another "Ball Run" run in a few days, good for you must know some of them are jubilant over their certain success. One of the *Remoine* gender the other day told one of our boys that the Southern boys laid their eyes on us daily, that every movement made by us was well known to them, and soon we should get the starch taken out of our shirt bosoms, (nighly little in them to take out.)

I will close by saying that every day adds to our strength and efficiency so far at least as this division is concerned. Did time permit, we would gladly write more. Yours Respectfully, R.

ABOUT PENS.

Pens of some sort have been in use from very ancient times, adapted to the material upon which the written characters were to be impressed. Upon stone or metallic plates gravers of steel served for writing, and such are referred to by Job in speaking of "an iron pen." For the waxen tablets of the ancients a metallic stylus was employed, one end of which was "sharpened" for "erasing" the marks and smoothing the wax. It was also the practice in ancient times, as it is among the Chinese at the present day, to paint the letters with a fine hair pencil. Pens of reeds also were made at a very early period, for the use of a fluid ink upon papyrus. The reed selected for this purpose is, described as small and hard, and about the size of a swan's quill. It was found in Egypt and Armenia, and Cairo and Alexandria were famous markets in which it was sold. Along the shores of the Persian Gulf reeds are still collected for this purpose, and are distributed throughout various parts of the eastern countries, being better adapted to the ink and paper employed in these regions than any other kind of pens. The introduction of common writing paper rendered necessary pens of a finer character, and caused a demand for goose-quills.

A great trade grew up in these articles, which even the more recent introduction of steel and gold pens has not materially diminished. Poland and Russia are large engaged in it. In a single year St. Petersburg has furnished England over 27,000,000 of quills. Within the last fifty years, steel pens of various kinds have been manufactured in Great Britain, and the number made annually in Birmingham has been estimated at one thousand millions. Several attempts have been made to establish this manufacture in the United States, but it has been found almost hopeless to compete with the manufacturers of Birmingham. The art of making gold pens has, however, been carried to the highest perfection in New York, so that the only really excellent pen used in Europe is obtained in this country. The machinery used for this purpose was invented by Mr. Rendell, and improved by Mr. Fairchild, and is curious and elaborate, more than twenty distinct operations being required in the production of a single pen. There are seven or eight factories for this manufacture in the city of New York, one in Brooklyn, N. Y.; two in Brooklyn, O.; one in Haverhill, Mass.; and one in Cincinnati. *New American Cyclopaedia.*

Secretary Welles' Report.

The report of the Hon. Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, occupies twenty-one octavo pages. The report commences by noticing the objects of the enlarged estimates of expenditure for the naval service as were contained in his report at the extra session of Congress in July, and says that they contemplated then different lines of naval operations upon the Southern coast, the first of which was the closing of all the insurgent ports along a coast line of nearly three thousand miles, in the form and under the exacting regulations of an international blockade, including the naval occupation and defense of the Potomac river, from its mouth to the federal capital, as the boundary line between Maryland and Virginia, and also the main commercial avenue to the principal base of the military operations.

The second was the organization of combined naval and military expeditions to operate in force against various points of the Southern coast, rendering efficient naval co-operation with the position and movements of such expeditions when landed, and including also all needful naval aid to the army in cutting off intercommunication with the rebels, and in its operations on the Mississippi and its tributaries; and the third, the active pursuit of the piratical cruisers which might escape the vigilance of the blockading force, and put to sea from the rebel ports.

To carry out these plans of operations the Secretary says that it became necessary for the department to call into immediate service not only the naval forces, but vessels from the commercial marine.

The force thus gathered was placed along our coast and divided into two squadrons, one of which, designated as the Atlantic blockading squadron, had for its field of operation the whole coast, extending from the easternmost line of Virginia to Cape Florida, and was under the command of Flag Officer Silas H. Stringham. The other, or Gulf squadron, operating from Cape Florida westward to the Rio Grande, was commanded by Flag Officer William Mervine.

Secretary Cameron's Report.

The report of the Hon. Simon Cameron, Secretary of War, occupies nearly fourteen closely printed octavo pages. It sets out with a statement of the entire estimated strength of the army, both volunteers and regulars, as follows:—

States.	3 mos.	For the War.	Total.
California	4,688	4,688	9,376
Connecticut	2,236	12,400	14,636
Delaware	775	2,000	2,775
Florida	4,011	8,000	12,011
Illinois	4,056	57,322	61,378
Iowa	868	10,800	11,668
Kentucky	15,000	15,000	30,000
Maine	768	14,239	15,007
Maryland	7,000	7,000	14,000
Massachusetts	3,435	26,750	30,185
Michigan	781	23,550	24,331
Minnesota	4,160	4,160	8,320
Missouri	9,356	22,130	31,486
N. Hampshire	779	9,600	10,379
New Jersey	3,038	9,302	12,340
New York	10,288	100,200	110,488
Ohio	10,136	81,205	91,341
Pennsylvania	19,199	94,760	113,959
Rhode Island	1,205	5,898	7,103
Vermont	780	8,000	8,780
Virginia	792	12,000	12,792
Wisconsin	782	14,153	14,935
Kansas	5,000	5,000	10,000
Colorado	1,000	1,000	2,000
Nebraska	2,500	2,500	5,000
Nevada	1,000	1,000	2,000
New Mexico	1,000	1,000	2,000
Dist. Columbia	2,853	1,000	3,853
	77,875	640,637	718,512

Adding the estimated strength of the regular army including the new enlistments under act of Congress July 29, 1861, it makes a total of 660,971.

The several arms of the service are estimated as follows:—

Volunteers.	Regulars.	Aggregate.	
Infantry	557,208	11,175	568,383
Cavalry	54,654	4,744	59,398
Artillery	20,388	4,308	24,696
Rifles and Sharpshooters	8,395		8,395
Engineers		107	107
	640,937	20,334	660,971

The appropriations asked for the service of the fiscal year are computed for a force of 500,000 men. The numerical strength of the cavalry force is now greater than is required, and as it can only be maintained at a great cost, measures will be taken for its gradual reduction.

Congress at its late extra session authorized the acceptance of 500,000 volunteers and appropriated \$500,000,000 for their support, but so numerous were the offers of volunteers it is believed 1,000,000 men could have been obtained, had there been authority to accept their services. It will, says the Secretary, be now for Congress to say whether the army shall be further augmented; with a view to a more speedy termination of the war.

THE GREAT END IN FARMING.

It is not the great end, to see how much hard work can be done, nor how much money can be earned in a given time. The aim should be, not only to better one's condition, but to improve one's self and his family, and to make himself useful, virtuous, and happy. Which is first, the man, or his farm? The farm was made first, no doubt, so far as the earth and water and wood, are concerned; but its importance, the man stands first, and high above all, and he should always keep himself so.

It is folly to make one's self a slave to his land; bending his back year in and out, in the hardest drudgery, regardless of his own improvement, and of his high relations to society and God. Whenever a farmer (and we might as well say mechanic, merchant, or professional man) finds himself a slave to work, wearing himself out prematurely in the mad pursuit of money, he had better pause and ask himself a few sober questions: What is the use of all this work and worry? What is it going to amount to in the end? Am I true to the dignity of my own nature, to my family, to my Maker? Am I preparing myself for a serene and healthy old age? Am I not cutting short my days?

TASTE OF GARLIC IN MILK.

In answer to a query in the *Farmer and Gardener* upon this subject, a correspondent says:—I do not know that I can prescribe the best method, but a very effectual remedy is found in saltpeter. Place a lump from the size of a pea to a hickory nut, in the bucket before commencing to milk. The saltpeter will thus become thoroughly dissolved and diffused through the milk before straining.

It is advisable, where it can be done, to remove the cows from the garlicky pastures five or six hours before milking. A large portion of the garlic will be expelled in the exhalations—consequently less saltpeter will be required, and there will be less danger of the latter being detected in the taste of the butter. When everything is kept sweet and clean, there need be no fear of the butter tasting old, if churned several days before it is destined for use, provided it be immediately well worked. Indeed, where it is necessary to use this salt as a corrective, the butter is improved by a week or two of age.

Saltpeter will to a considerable extent, also remove the taste of bitter weeds, turnips, and rank clover from milk and butter. Whether it will interfere with the "fine flavor" imparted to Philadelphia "June butter" by the sweet scented vernal grass, I have no means of knowing; but this I do know that I have often sold butter treated in the above manner to some of your city connoisseurs, who invariably praised its good qualities, especially for keeping free from rancidity.

KEEPING APPLES.—If you want your winter apples to keep well you must carefully observe the four following things:

1. See that the surface or outside of your apples are perfectly free from moisture before you store them away.
2. Avoid putting them in a damp place where moisture can have access to them.
3. Exclude them from the air by burying them in dry earth, the drier the better, or covering them in the cellar with such earth.
4. Keep them in as cool a temperature as possible, but so as to avoid frost; for heat, air and moisture are three active agents that must, when acting in concert, soon heat and rot your apples. Add the same is equally true of winter pears and also of all your root crops, such as cabbage, carrots, parsnips, beets, turnips, potatoes, etc.

A NEW RACE OF CATTLE.

According to Belgian journals, M. Dutroue, one of the most distinguished cattle-breeders of France, has succeeded, after twenty years' trial, in producing a bovine race without horns, which carried the first prize at the great cattle-show of Poissy, in 1854. A cow of this species, which had been raised on the farm of the King of Belgium, near Brussels, was killed lately in the latter town, in presence of the professors of the veterinary school, and the survivors of the public slaughter-house. The report of these gentlemen confirms the fact that the quantity, both of sweet and meat, was much more considerable than that of the ordinary cattle.

FEEDING BEES.—It is said that from two to four pounds of sugar candy will keep a colony of bees over winter. If they have plenty of comb, Phlox candy is best, though lemon or hoarhound will answer.

It is suggested that the President be empowered to send commissioners with the army with power to enforce obligations of contracts and the collection of debts due to loyal citizens, in districts where civil power has ceased to exist.

Recruiting for the regular army has not been as successful as anticipated, and it is therefore recommended that further inducements be held out to recruits by bounties and full pay when due.

It is recommended that the law making obligatory the discharge of minors, who may enlist without the consent of their parents, should be repealed, and the subject left to the regulations of the War Department or to the civil tribunals of the country.

That part of the report which treats of the Slavery question may be condensed into the following:

1. This War is prosecuted on behalf of the Nation with intent to re-establish its authority over the States and districts now in flagrant rebellion, and to secure a general obedience to the constitution and laws of the Union;
2. That the rebels began the war, without necessity or provocation, and ought to be made to feel and respect the power of the Government and its loyal supporters;
3. That the Government would be unjust to itself, and faithless to its high trust, if it failed to employ and improve all means at its command, within the fair scope of the laws of war, to overcome and subdue its implacable and unsparring foes;
4. That the property of the rebels is the strength of their rebellion, and is liable to seizure and confiscation by the Government which they have conspired against and are desperately fighting to overthrow;
5. That a considerable proportion of this property consists of slaves, variously estimated as worth to them in the aggregate from \$700,000,000 to \$1,000,000,000;
6. That there is nothing in nature, in reason, nor in the laws of war, which exempts this species of property from confiscation and conversion to the uses of loyalty in its struggle with rebellion;
7. That the Federal Government has no constitutional and no rightful power to hold slaves, to sell slaves, nor to ex-service from any one without rendering him an equivalent;
8. That it is a right, however, to use the voluntary labor of the slaves of rebels, like any other property forfeited by treason, "for the defense of the Government, the prosecution of the war, and the suppression of the rebellion";
9. That the expediency of so using the muscle of slaves, whether they be armed or otherwise, is purely a question of military exigency, to be determined by circumstances. What is certain and indisputable is that it would be madness to leave this immense amount of available property, so clearly contraband of war, in the hands and under the control of rebels where we have the power to take it away. "Such policy would be National suicide."
10. The Government, having used the services of a rebel's slave, in such a manner as it shall deem most conducive to the overthrow of the rebellion, cannot remand him thereafter into bondage. The rebel master has forfeited his title to him by treason; the ex-slave has earned by his services to the National cause freedom and protection.

WE MAY SAY OF A GOOD MANY PEOPLE'S SOULS THAT IT IS A WONDER. NATURE EVER THOUGHT THEM WORTH RAISING.

We may say of a good many people's souls that it is a wonder. Nature ever thought them worth raising.