The Potter Journal.

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

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***Devoted to the cause of Republicanism, the interests of Agriculture, the advancement of Education, and the best good of Potter county. Owning no guide except that of Principle, it will endeaver to aid in the work of more fully Freedomizing our Country.

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MISSING.

Boom! boom! boom!
'Twas the sullen signal-gun;
And through the early morning gloom
It pealed like the trump of a dreadful doom;
And the tired sleeper woke with a start,
And wondered what should be his part
In the tragedy that must soon begin;
Whether the Right should lose or win, [done.
And where he should be when the day was

But his reverie could not last:
"Fall in! fall in!" was the cry;
And with one thought of the happy past,
One glance that was suddenly, lovingly cast
At a picture that nestled close to his heart,
A glance that made the warm tears start,
One breathing of prayer, one cheery word
To the mustering ranks, he grasped his sword
And sprung to the front to do or die.

Then a hundred cannon roared,
And a hundred bugles blared,
And over the ramparts the heroes poured
With bayonet fixed and flashing sword;
And across the plain, where the storm of death
Came sweeping down with its fiery breath,
And up the hill, where the surly foe
Like an ambushed lion was crouching low,
They marched, tho' they knew it was death
they dared.

His voice was steady and clear,
His heart was cheerful and strong;
In his face there lingered no line of fear,
The fire in his eye had dried the tear,
And cheerily rung his word of command
As he shouted back to his gallant band.
They were falling fast, but he did not quail,
And steadily up, through the leaden hail,
He led his confident braves along.

Right up to the rampart grim
Where the Rebel flag was floating;
Right up to the awful crater's rim
The sturdy veterans followed him.
"Forward! boys, forward!" they heard him cry;
Then a blast of death went howling by,
And when it had passed *he* was lying still,
And his braves were staggering down the hill,
And the air was rent with the rebel shouting.

Oh, who can tell the rest?
Is he lying silently now
With the frozen clods above his breast?
Alas! God knoweth what is best;
But better, far better, our poor hearts say,
To pour out his life in the fiery fray
Than slowly to die in the loathsome cell
Of a terrible Southern prison hell:
God knoweth the best—to His will we bow.

THE MASON'S WIFE.

During the late Mexican war a lad of sixteen, a daring young Virginian, leaped a fence and climed a parapet some hundred yards ahead of his company, and was taken prisoner, but not before he had killed three Mexicans, and mortally wounded a Colonel! His mother a poor widow, but though poor, a lady, (and why not?) heard of his fate, and as he was an only son, her heart yearned for his release.—She wept at the thought, but while the tears were streaming down her cheeks suddenly she recollected that she was a Mason's widow. Hope lighted up her bosom at the thought—she dried her tears and exclaimed:

"I will go and test the talismanic power of the order my husband loved and revered so much."

She sold some articles of furniture, and with the money reached the city of Washington, on foot.

In her dusty attire she entered the department of the Secretary of War, and with some difficulty obtained an interview. As she entered the apartment in which he was seated, and he saw how dusty she appeared, "Well ma'am," was the salution he gave her; but when she removed her veil, and he saw the visage of the lady in her face, he half raised himself in his chair and pointed her to a seat. She told him of her son's capture, and wished to go to him.

"I can't help you ma'am he replied, "a very expensive journey to the city of Mexico. Your son will be released by and by on exchange of prisoners."

"Sir," said the widow, as the tears of woe rolled down her cheek, "can you not help me to a passport."

"Of course," he replied, "that will be granted to you by the Secretary of the State office, but you are poor, how do you expect te pay the expences of such a journey? It is a visionary scheme. Good morning, ma'am."

"Sir," said the lady, "will you be so kind as to recommend me to the officer in command of the regiment that will sail from Baltimore in a few days?"

"Impossible, ma'am, impossible," he replied. Then turning to the page, he said, "who did you say was waiting for an audience? Tell them I am at leisure, now."

"Sir," said the lady, "I have one more question to ask before I leave your office, and pray you answer it—are you a Mason?"

"Yes, ma'am," he replied.

"Then, sir," she said, "permit me to say I am a Mason's widow—with this declaration I leave your office."

That moment the Secretary's manner was changed to that of more courteous interest.

He entreated her to be seated until he could write a few lines to the Secretary of State. In a few moments he presented her with a note to the Secretary, recommending her to his sympathy and friendship. The Secretary of State received her most kindly, and gave her a letter to the commandant at New Orleans directing him to procure her a free pass to Vera Cruz by the first steamer. Through the agency of the two Secretaries the Lodges placed in her hands three hundred dollars, with a talismanic card from the Grand Master at Washington, and the widow left the city

When she reached Pittsburg, the stage agent seeing the letter she bore from the Grand Master, would receive nothing for her passage—the Captain of the steamer on which she embarked for New Orleans, no sooner deciphered it than he gave her the best state-room he had, and when she reached the Crescent City, she had two hundred and ninety dollars left of her three hundred. She there waited on the General in command of the station, with the letter of the Secretary of State, who immediately instructed the Colonel in command of the forwarding troops to see that she had a free passage to Vera Cruz by the first steamer. By all the officers she was treated with the greatest politeness and delicacy, for they were all Masons and felt bound to her by ties as sarong and delicate as those which bind a brother to a sister and rejoiced in the opportunity offered them of evincing the benign and noble principles of the craft.

After a passage of five days she reached Vera Cruz, and having a letter from the commandant at New Orleans to the American Governor she sent it to him, enclosing the talismanic card she received from the Grand Master at Washington. The Governor immediately waited on her at the hotel and offered her a transportation to the city of Mexico by a train that would start the next morning. The Colonel who commanded the train, kindly took her in charge and offered her every tacility and comfort on her journey, provided her with a carriage where the country is level, and with mules and palanquins over the mountains.

Within ninety miles of the city, they were overtaken by a detachment of dragoons escorting a government official to the General in command. Anxious to get on faster, she asked permission of the Colonel to join the detachment, and though informed of the danger and fatigue of riding all day on horseback, she was willing to brave all that she might sooner see her son. The Colonel then provided her with a fleet and gentle Mexican pony and she assumed her place with the troops, escorted by the officers, and never fatigued till the towers of Mexico were in sight.

She reached the city on the second day's battle, and in the heat of the battle attempted to enter the gates. An officer instantly seized the bridle and told her she must wait until the city was taken.

"Oh! sir," she exclaimed, "I cannot wait one hour in sight of the city that holds my son a prisoner—I must see him, sir."

"The city must first be taken, madam," he again replied with much emphasis, becoming excited.

"I cannot wait, sir," she replied, "my son may be ill—dying—in chains—in a dungeon—one hour's delay may remove him from me. Oh! I must go to him—I will enter the city."

"Madam," said the officer, "you cannot reach it but by crossing the battlefield—you will surely be killed."

"Sir," said the lady, "I have not traveled from Virginia to the gates of the city to fear to enter them—thanks for your kindness—a thousand heartfelt thanks for you and the officers who have been so kind to me. I shall always remember these officers with the most grateful feelings of my heart—but don,t detain me longer. Yonder is a gate that leads to the city. I will enter it in search of my boy.

And on she sped, but ere she reached the gate another officer rode up by her side and admonished her of danger and imprudence.

"Sir," she replied, "this is no time to talk of prudence and fear—my son, my only son, is a prisoner in chains. I am told that Santa Anna is in the midst of your glittering group. I will seek him and in his hand place the talismanic card which I bear—he is a Mason and will certainly heed me."

"War destroys all brotherhood." said an officer who was not a Mason. She made no reply, but watching her moment struck her pony and darted across the field of death. At that moment the masked battery that mowed down one-half of the Palmetto regiment, opened—yet right across the gory field she was seen galloping on her white pony, avoiding the retreating platoons by a semi-circle around their flank—the next moment she was seen coursing over the ground in the rear, the battery in full play. Hundreds seeing her, stopped, forgetful of the storm of iron balls that howled around them, an apparition. All expected her to fall every moment, but on she went with fearless air.

"That woman's love for her son has made her wild," said the officer who attempted to arrest her flight.

"She will surely be killed," exclaimed another.

"A mother's love is stronger than the pains of death," exclaimed a soldier.

"The God of battles will protect her," said a Tennesseean. "She will reach Santa Anna safe and sound as a roach."

The soldier was right—she went over the field of death and reached Santa Anna unhurt. He received her politely, and when she told him her errand presented her talisman.

"Madam," said he, "I am a mason, and know the obligations of the Order in pease and in war. When your son was taken prisoner he mortally wounded my nephew, who is now dead. but he shall be restored, for I will not refuse your request in the face of the letters you bear.

He immediately gave her an escort to the city, with an order to restore her son to her arms. The order was promptly obeyed, and that very day, as he promised, she embraced her long lost son.

So much for a mother's love; and so much for the protecting arm and noble sympathetic heart which Mason's ever extend to lovely, helpless women.

Oh! if widowhood be the doom of woman, who would not be a mason's widow?

Who would not be a Mason's wife, mother, daughter or sister in the hour of peril and need.

THE CAT AGE.

The palmy days for cats were in the time of Egypt's power as a nation, some four hundred years B. C. They were held as sacred as dogs or crocodiles, and death was the penalty for killing them. From their nocturnal habits and glossy fur, the Egyptians deemed them symbolical of the moon, and a golden cat was worshipped at Syens. Herodctus tells us some marvels about them. "The Toms," it seems, in his time, had a peculiar liking for making way with kittens—a very fortunate thing too, or the land would have been overrun with cats. Crowning wonder of all, when a fire breaks out, the sole care of the natives is to keep the cats from it; to do which they post themselves as guards around the burning house, and take no thought for putting out the flames. A divine impulse however, says the chronicler, seizes the cats; they dart under the men, or leap over them, and fling themselves into the flames; then great mourning takes posession of the land. If a cat was found dead in any one's house, the inmates had to shave off their eyebrows. The defunct animals were carried into the temples, where they were embalmed and solemnly deposited in the city of Bubaris. Specimens may be seen in the British Museum. Very different is their fate at modern Rome. A recent traveler tells us they are there as highly estemed for culinary purposes as puppy dogs. in China. If you have a roast hare for dinner, you had better not make too many inquiries as to what kind of 'pussey' it was before it came into the *chief's* hands.

EMPTY BOTTLES NAVIGATING THE OCEAN.—Captain Beecher, an English shipmaster, compiled, within the last ten years, the following curious voyages of bottles thrown into the sea by unfortunate navigators. A good many bottles cast into the sea next to the African coast, found their way to Europe. One bottle seems to have anticipated the Panama route, having traveled from the Panama Isthmus to the Irish coast. Another crossed the Atlantic from the Canary to Novia Scotia. Three or four bottles thrown into the sea by Greenland mariners off Davis' Strnits, landed on the northwest coast of Ireland. Another made a curious trip—swam from the South Atlantic Ocean to the west coast of Africa, passing Gibralter, went along the Portuguese coast of France, and was finally picked up on Jersey Island. One bottle was found after sixteen years' swimming, one after fourteen years, and two after ten years. A few only traveled more than one year, and one only five days. This was sent off by the captain of the Racehorse on the on 17th of April, in the Carribbean Sea, and was found on the 22d, after having gone through three degrees of longitude, (210 miles,) western direction. Captain M'Clure, of the Investigator, threw a bottle into the sea in 1850, on his voyage to Behring's Straits. It swam 3,500 mies in 200 days, and was picked up on the Honduras coast.

A SOCKDOLOGER.—A western paper publishes the following: "We knew an old man who believed "that what was to be would be." He lived in a region infested by very savage Indians. He always took his gun with him when going into the woods; but this time he found that some of his family had taken it. As he would not go without it, his friends tantalized him by saying that there was no danger of the Indians; that he would not die till his time came, anyhow.

"Yes, yes," said the old fellow; "but suppose I was to meet an Indian, and his time had come, it wouldn't do not to have my gun."

HIGHJINKS ON SKATES.

BY CLEW GARNET, U. S. N.

Everywhere, in all sorts of newspapers, I had read of glorious skating fun—Central Park skating—Schuylkill and Schuylkill Park—Diamond ditto—private ditto—the grand fun—men on skates, boys on skates; splendid sylphides in scant skirts, steel shod and skirring away over the ice—the—the—Thunder! the very reading gave me the ice fever, and in the delirium consequent upon the sudden attack, I resolved upon taking an ice cruise myself.

Why not? What was to hinder? I had never navigated that sort of craft, 'tis true. But then I'd been on the water, and under water all my life—and on ice, too, some. Hadn't I killed seals and chased white bears, for weeks together, on ice?

Women could skate—so the papers said. So did everybody else, when I inquired of 'em. *I* could skate! What was the reason I couldn't? The only thing I'd ever seen a woman do that I cuuldn't, was to hook her own dress aft, and carrying six feet breadth of crinoline, sail through a twenty inch door way. Yes *sir*—I could skate; and I was bound on an ice cruise.

There was nothing to prevent the expedition from being fitted out at once. I was lounging about the Navy Yard, detached from everything—all acquaintances included—waiting orders. Disgusted with bar rooms, detesting theatres, what was I to do for amusement? Why, *skate*, of course! Ah, yes!—the very thing, by Jove! Why hadn't I thought of that before? I'd have a cruise directly; or sooner if possible. No—I must have the tools first, and then started up town to find 'em.

I brought up in front of a big window on the starboard side of Chestnut street, going towards Schuylkill, where they had more different rigs of sliding machines than you can see national flags in Gibralter. Knowing about as much of the qualifications of the different patterns as a cow does of chronometer time, I went inside, and asked for a pair of skates.

"What kind do you prefer, sir?"

"Oh, I have no preference. Give me the best article you've got."

"Yes, sir;" and the clerk passed out for inspection a pair of brass clad, steel clippers, with more gilgies and running rigging to 'em than there is to a French sloop of war.

"These are the best, are they?"

"Yes, sir, decidedly! Just get onto them, sir, and you'll go everywhere and anywhere, like patent lightning! If you don't find it so, bring 'em back, sir, and I'll return your money."

"What's the price?"

"*Fourteen dollars!* Very cheap, sir."

Didn't believe that, of course; but invested the amount, and made sail for Fairmount.

Found superb skating. Everybody said so—only those who called it elegant! splendid! magnificent! There was a regiment of men, a battalion of dimity, and a whole brigade of small craft, on skates—skivering, scooting, and cutting all sorts of fancies on the ice; everybody laughing, chattering, whooping, skylarking and skittering in all directions! and I didn't wonder newspapers, and everybody else, called skating glorious fun.

"Have yer skates strapped, sir?" said an itinerant bootblack about the height of a walking stick.

"Do you understand it, Bob?"

"Oh, yes, sir. I strap all the ladies' skates for 'em."

"Ah, ha! Do, eh! Must have a jolly time of it! Would like the berth myself. There you are. Go ahead, boy!" and I sat down on Blackie's box, about a couple of fathoms out on the ice.

Whiz—like a rocket, went by a great strapping, long legged chap, with a cigar flying jib boom, and swinging his arms like a frigate's headyards in a hurricane, with the braces all adrift.

"Oh, ho! So they can smoke on skates eh, boy?"

"Lord! yes *sir*. Everybody smokes on the ice."

"Exactly" So I fired up on a Principe, and shipped it for the cruise.

Urchin announced skates all ataunto, and took a fifty cent "fractional" fee.

"Here, boy!—here's another fifty. Just allow me to sit on your box a few minutes till I get the run of the navigation."

"Yes, sir—you can *set* there till I git somepody else to strap."

So I sat there studying ice navigation by dead reckoning, till directly a little petticoat craft, in yellow trousers, skirts to her knees, red belt, Russian cap, and arms akimbo, swooped down, and checked up right in front of me. There she hung for a minute, quivering like, and balancing, just as a fish-hawk does over his prey, and all the time eyeing me with a jolly twinkle in her dancing black eyes.

"A challenge, for a race, sir! Catch me if you can!"

Little dimity lifted her left foot a trifle, bent right knee slightly, made a graceful curve, the bottom of her skirt just brushing my nose; and off she went like a flying fish—ze-ee-e-e-st!—swinging from side to side, her tartan skirt swaying hither and thither, like the folds of a spanker brailed in with the ship head to the wind.

"So-ho! That's a challenge, is it? And that's the way to skate? Thunder! *I* can skate! Anybody can skate!"

But I couldn't though, whatever anybody else could do. I accepted Dimity's challenge, however, and her practice on ice. So I bounded up from that blacking-box, lifted left foot a little, bent right knee, and stuck my arms akimbo. But I didn't cut a curve. I did the next best thing, however, and cut a "spread eagle." Port foot slid due south-east, and starboard one norwest, till I realized those spread-out pictorial impossibilities on circus bills. I wondered if my boots and skates would ever become shipmates again.

"Hullo! mister, you mustn't try to skate all over both sides of this 'ere pond at once!" growled an old commercial looking chap, as he checked up long enough to put in the remonstrance against my ice-monopoly.

"I say, Mister Saltwater, couldn't yer lift yerself amidship a bit, so we can sail 'tween yer legs?" piped a young scamp, file-leader to a string of twenty juvenile skaters.

"Don't try to skate on both feet at once, my dear sir!" advised a sensible, Christian looking man, who came to my assistance, and set me on an even keel once more. "When you lift one foot, sir, you must throw all your vigor and muscle into the other limb. And then, remember to sway your body so that your weight will always be upon that foot which has the ice. 'Tis very easy, sir—just this way!"—and away went my Christian mentor, with a long, striding, graceful swing.

"Oh, yes—that's very easy. All the vigor in the other limb. Yes—I can do it." So I made a prodigious scoot, and—did it.

I stuck out left leg, like a mosquito when he's bloodsucking. Put all my vigor and muscle into right limb, and couldn't get it out again. Went off on one foot, like a shot; crooking right knee a little twice a minute, just as little Dimity did. Saw a crinoline craft crossing my course, under convoy of a big double-banked chap, both skating a streak. Tried to sheer to port, and go clear of 'em. Missed stays, and went foul of Crinoline. The toe of my port skate hooked Miss Somebody's skirt, which gave me a broad sheer to starboard, and I rammed big convoy, butting him square on his cut-water, and drove the fire end of my Principe slap down his throat. There was an everlasting tangle, and all hands went sprawling on the ice, like a nest of Incauga land crabs.

"Look here, sir! What do you mean?" yelled the big convoy, scrambling to his feet, and manœuvering for a broadside.

"Beg pardon, sir. I couldn't help it!" I replied meekly, still sitting on the ice.

"*Couldn't help it?* Why didn't you stop?"

"Didn't know how."

"Oh, ho! Green on skates, eh?"

"Yes, greener'n a cabbage!"

That mollified the big chap, and setting me on my pins again, he volunteered to educate me in checking up.

"Turn your toes up, and dig the heels of your skates into the ice—this way." And he illustrated.

"O, yes; I can do that." And I did, directly. Off I shot again on one leg, steering this time for the shore—for I'd skated enough.

Halfway in, and there slid right down in my course a crowd of forty or so—girls and men, women and boys. I tried "down brakes," according to instructions—and broke too much. Up toes, and digging my heels into the ice, I sagged back like, and doubled amidship, as if I was going to take a seat—and I did! I went down stern foremost, with a *Whang*, that broke the ice like a pane of window-glass shivered by a pebble hurled through it. I had an idea just then that such a bump as that would have started the armor of any iron clad afloat.

I sold those infernal skates, just as I sat, for four dollars under a strong conviction that there's no fun in skating. It's all a humbug. I can't skate—I don't want to.

☞When a newcomer blows a loud trumpet and makes a great dash, he's sure to be shallow, and run a short race. Receive him cautiously.

☞A receipt for good health may be given in the following words: Good hours, good feelings, and a clear conscience.

☞Coleman, the dramatist, was asked if he knew Theodore Hook. "Yes," replied the wit. "Hook and Eye are old associates."