The Potter Journal.

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The Federal Chameleon.

One evening an hour after the sun had gone down, a couple of men dressed in soiled rebel uniforms, and each holding in his hand a good Austrian rifle, rapped at the door of a small frame building near the C.——road in Virginia. The knock was answered by an old woman whose face was almost concealed by the tangled mass of her gray, uncombed hair.

"And what may ye want here?" she exclaimed, as her deep set eyes flashed upon the two men. "I havn't the smallest bit of Jonny cake to offer ye, for it was all—"

"No, no," interrupted one of the soldiers, "we don't want anything to eat, but we want you to tell us, and that in quick time, too, whether you have seen a slight but strong looking slip of a man go by here of late."

"Dressed in blue and carrying a double barrelled rifle," added the other.

"Hey! hey!" cried the hag, lifting her hands and speaking in a sharp angry voice.

"If ye hadn't interrupted me I reckon you'd heard me speak of him before now as that was the very man who came here and bought all my cakes. It was about two hours ago, and—"

"Which way did he go after he left you?" inquired both men, eagerly.

"Before I answer that question you must tell me who he is," said the old woman with the curiosity natural to her sex.

"He's a celebrated Union scout whom we call the "Federal Chameleon,' because he changes his uniform so often. Sometimes it is blue, at other times gray, and and he has even been seen wearing the disguise of an old farmer. He has shot more of our men than is at all pleasant, and we have a roving commission from our colonel to go on a hunt after him and capture him if we can, either dead or alive. And now as we have replied to you," continued the speaker a little impatiently, "we demand that you answer our question and—"

"Demand!" interrupted the hag in shrill piercing tones. "Is that the proper way to speak to a woman, and an old woman at that?"

"Come, come; answer us if you please cried the soldier in a milder tone. "I mean no harm—it is my way of speaking."

"Well perhaps I may forgive you and perhaps not," said the old woman shaking her head.

"How far is your camp from here?"

"What is that to you? What has that to do—"

"There you go again with your accursed incivility!" shrieked the old hag, fiercely, "but you shall answer my question before you get a single word out of me. Now then, how far from here is your camp, and how many men have you in and around it? I intend to carry your fellows some corn-cakes, d'ye see, and I want to know the number of mouths that I have to cook for."

"Oh in that case," said the rebel. "I do not see any reason why I shouldn't satisfy you. Our camps, then, are about five miles from here near the——cross roads, and our number may be about five thousand."

"That will do," cried the old woman with a grin of satisfaction—"yes, that will do. And now you are sure that the man who came here to buy a supper is the one you are after?"

"We are sure of it, for although we have never seen the man's face we'd know him by his double barrelled rifle, as nobody else in the Yankee army carries a weapon of that kind."

"Ay, ay it's the right one then," said the hag. After he had finished and paid for his meal, he says to me: "Friend, I should like to put up here for the night if you have no objection." But as I did not like the idea of accommodating a Yankee any more than I could help I told him there was no room for him as I expected visitors before many hours.

"Well, then, said he, can you tell me of any place where I can pass the night a little comfortable. You see, he added, looking toward his big double barrelled rifle, "I don't like to camp out, as it looks like rain, and this piece might be hurt by it," "I don't know of any place, I answered, "short of four miles from here—an old barn which is tight enough I think, to keep off the rain." "Four miles is a long distance, said he, "and as I have been tramping about considerably to day I don't feel much like carrying this heavy load so far," pointing to his knapsack as he spoke. "Will you be kind enough to let it remain till morning?"

"Well yes," said I, hesitating a little and throwing a significant glance at the well filled pocket book in his hand. He understood the look and gave me a green-dollar. "All right," said I, and he then departed, saying he'd call for his luggage in the morning, after he should waken from his sleep in the barn. "Now then, continued the speaker, which will ye do—go after him at once or wait in ambush for him until morning?"

The two soldrers drew back a few paces and held a short consultation, after which they again advanced to the the side of the old woman.

"We will go now," said the one who had spoken first, "that is if you can describe to us the exact position of the barn."

"I don't think I could describe it so that you could find it in the dark," replied the hag, "but as I am willin' to do everything in my power for the confederacy, I will go with you and show you the place.

"That is right," answered the rebel, and we'll see that you are rewarded for your zeal.

"I don't want any reward for helping my countrymen," replied the old hag. I am always ready to help along the cause."

With these words she disappeared into an inner room, but came forth in a few minutes with a gray blanket thrown over he shoulders.

"I took this out of a Yank's knapsack' said she with a short, dry laugh; "don't you think it becomes me?"

"Aye, aye, my good woman, very much. But lead on, if you please, for we have no time to loose."

The hag then closed the door of the house.

"Forward march!" she exclaimed imitating the voice of a man with strong lungs. "Forward march! Close up! close up!" And she moved along the road at the slow, tottering pace natural to a person of her age.

The night by this time had become very dark. The sky was obscured with thick driving clouds, and the wind screamed and roared among the tall pines that towered upon each side of the road.—Occasionally a heavy branch torn from its native trunk would fall into the road with a terrible crash, and more than once the rebels started back and cocked their pieces in the belief that the din was caused by the discharge of some Yankee rifle.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the old hag upon one of the occasions, "it seems to me that you are easily startled. Don't you think your commander might have picked out a pair of bolder hearts than yours for this expedition?"

"You'd better keep a silent tongue in your head, my good woman, until you've had an oppertunity to witness as many battles as we have," answered one of the men; "a good soldier is always on his guard."

"Aye, aye!" replied the old woman; but he should know how to distinguish between the crashing of a dry branch and the ring of a rifled musket.

The rebel did not relish the noise made by the loud, sharp tones of the female guide, and, in order to put an end to the conversation, he controlled himself sufficiently not to reply to her last remark. The party then continued their way in silence—which was not broken by either of them until they had gone about three miles, and a loud clear challenge suddenly started the rebels.

"Halt! who comes there?"

"Friend answered the old woman in a clear ringing voice; "friend with prisoners!"

"We are betrayed!" yelled her companions and, even as the words passed their lips they were surrounded by a dozen Federal soldiers, one of whom carried a lantern.

As the rays of light flashed upon the hag the rebels saw the gray hair the blanket, and the female apparel dropped to the ground, revealing the slight but iron like frame of a Union soldier in prime of life.

"It is he, by—!" exclaimed the prisoners, simultaneously, as they glanced to the long double barrelled rifle which he now held in his hand; "it is he—the scout—the Federal Chameleon!"

"Aye, aye!" answered the latter, as he leaned upon his weapon, with a quiet smile. "You are trapped, sure enough thanks to my disguise, which is only one of many that I carry in my knapsack.—allow me to express my thanks to you for the information you gave me regarding the position of your camp and the number of your men. I have already sent a message to my colonel in relation to the matter, and I perceive that he has commenced to act upon it."

And as he spoke he pointed down the road where the dark outline of troops forming into line might be faintly distinguished.

They were soon in motion, and in the course of half an hour the booming of cannon the rattling of musketry, and the scheers of the Federal troops proclaimed that the combat had commenced. The din continued for about an hour, when the prisoners learned from others who were brought to share their quarters, that the Southern troops had been surprised and totally routed.

Gen. Logan says that "although he was formerly a strong Democrat, he is now an Abolitionist, and would give his 'mules' to see Jeff. Davis hung—which he has no doubt will be the fate of the arch-traitor."

Battle Field of Chickamauga.

A correspondent of the Cincinnati *Commercial* has just visited the battle field of Chickamauga, and gives, in a well written letter, his impressions of its appearance. He left Chattanooga on the morning of the 27th ult., and entered the field by the famed Rossville Gap. He says:

As soon as we entered the gap, our eyes met unmistakable signs of the skirmishing which took place through the narrow defile, as the rebels fell back slowly toward the final line of battle. A squad of tired rebel soldiers, on their way to their homes, sat by the road side as we passed, eyeing us with glum stolidity, evidently debating the risks of an encounter with the well filled holsters that hung on our saddles. We came upon the scene of the first day's battle—September 19th—on the left of the Lafayette road. Here it had been falsely represented that a rebel brigade was yet this side of Chickamauga creek, without support, and that a rapid movement might succeed in capturing them. A division was quickly hurried into the woods and ran against, instead of a "demoralized" brigade, Longstreet's corps, in good fighting condition, and the conflict soon became fearful. It was on opened ground, neither party having time to do anything more than throw up in a few places, rails or logs to the height of two or three feet. Our loss was very heavy, General Brannan's division alone losing, in a few hours, over 2,500 men. Our lines were forced back to the road and badly shattered.

THE EVIDENCES OF CONTENTION AND DEATH.

The ground was not lacking in evidences of the bloody work which had been enacted upon it. Although Nature had, for two years, been undisturbed in her kindly efforts to restore and to heal, yet the whole surface was strewn with ghastly proofs of the mighty wreck which had been made there. No army had before passed through there, the farms were quiet and prospering; the cattle were in the fields, and as the destroying columns swayed madly to and fro, crushing the fences before them, many of them met death, and in all directions are scattered heaps of bones that show where they fell. The ground is roiling, and about equally divided between field and forest, and through these lines were formed, with regard, mainly, to the fitness of the position, and little to its clearness, or otherwise. As we rode over the field, it was plainly evident where the rebel dead had been buried, and where our own, the few of them that were granted that poor boon. The rebel soldiers had been placed in graves, however shallow, and decently covered with earth or stones, and the spot marked by a neat head board, labelled, and the whole often surrounded by a square pen of rails. Our own boys had the hard fate of being left on the field, and when the rebels vouchsafed to bury them, they were collected in rows, or in groups of two or three, upon the ground, and a few spadefuls of earth thrown over them. I do not suppose that one-half of our dead were buried, even thus slightly, and before spring the rain had exposed the extremities of these. At one end of one of these little mounds lay a pair of skulls, bleaching in the sun, and, at the other, two pair of shoes, full of bones.—Better that they should have lain in the open air, wrapped in their blood stained blankets, than to have them subjected to this mockery. In one of these skulls the wasps had built their nest, and flitting to and fro with busy wing, they were hiving their little stores, and would defend them with boldness against any who intrude upon their strange dwelling place.

In another place, at the foot of a tree, lay a little heap of human bones, where some soldier had perished, and remained unburied. Here, mortally stricken, he had, perhaps, painfully dragged himself a few paces from the place where he fell, and leaned heavily against the friendly trunk of the great tree, while the route of battle raged fiercely about him, and his hard pressed comrades were driven back step by step, till at last the "breathless darkness" gathered thick about him, and he bowed his head in "stern agony," and the soul escaped from its prison house.

After surveying this part of the field we rode away towards Crawfish Springs, near the second day's fighting, with a view to discussing, by the aid of its cool waters, the collation we had brought. On the way I dismounted, reverently, to pick up a battered bullet lying by the wayside. Crawfish Springs should be visited by all who go to the battle field of Chickamauga. The water flows out in a broad, noiseless sheet from the foot of a hill about fifty feet in elevation, and is said to be always clear and of the same proportions in whatever weather. Here, during a part of the time on the memorable 19th and 20th of September, our soldiers sought in vain to slack their raging thirst; for, though neither party were in possession of the Spring, the rebels knowing the locality, shelled it so that it was dangerous to approach. On the hill which was rendered immortal by the final rally made by General Thomas, culminated the interest of the whole field. Here the carnage in the rebel ranks was very great and in the cleared fields which lie around its base, our horses tread at every turn upon the little tuft covered heaps, which cumber all the ground. No ruins of earthworks remain to show the positions of the forces; only here and there a slight barricade of logs, hastily thrown together in broken lines, marking the place where a regiment or a few companies still clung together, and shoulder to shoulder, breasted the storm. On three sides the waves of the rebel hosts surged; and were broken upon that hill like tides against a rock bound coast. Forming in the fields, they charged across them with a fury which threatened to overwhelm all in ruin; but, from among the trees which covered the sides and summit, there came so deadly a hail of bullets and cannon shot that they withered and sank to the earth before it. Nearly one half of the trees have been broken off by the shells, and among the fragments of flint, which thickly cover the ground, the relic hunter may gather bullets yet, scattered on the surface, like acorns after a storm in an oaken forest.

But here, as in all places where man in his passion has made such wreck, nature has displayed her kindly power in healing her own wounds, and her unwillingness to perpetuate the bloody footprints he leaves behind. Even this barren soil, wonderfully enriched by the libations of blood poured out upon it, blossoms with flowers, and the vines creep over the rugged ground, covering its hideousness and the bleaching bones from our sight, or wind about the shattered trees and lend their verdure to conceal the jagged rents which yawn among the branches. Fragrant roses, self-planted, bloom above the graves, as if set by the hand of affection, and the woodbine and the tender morning-glory trail over the rude worm-fences built by the men over the lowly dust of a comrade.

Casualties of the War.

Official statements at the War Department compute the number of deaths in the Union armies since the commencement of the war, including the starving prisoners, at three hundred and twenty-five thousand. There has doubtless been fully two hundred thousand Southern soldiers removed by disease and the casualties of battle, so that not less than five hundred and twenty-five thousand lives have been sacrificed in this unholy contest, begun and prolonged by the South in their vain effort to build up a republic and strengthen the slave power.

Our greatest losses during any one campaign occurred at Gettysburg, when 23,267 Union soldiers were killed, wounded and taken prisoners. Hooker's campaign of 1863 in the Wilderness ranks next to Gettysburg as far as regards Union losses, they having amounted to twenty thousand, though generally reported at only ten. Burnside lost 1,200 in the battle of Fredericksburg, McClellan 11,426 at Antietam, Porter 9,000 at Gaines' Mills, Rosencrans 12,085 at Murfreesboro and 16,851 at Chickamauga and Sherman about 9,000 in the two days' battles around Atlanta.

The official reports of Gen. Grants' losses from the time he crossed the Rapidan until receiving the surrender of Lee compute them at ninety thousand. In the various engagements fought by Gen. Grant in the West he lost 13,573 men at Pittsburg Landing, 9,875 in the severe contests around Vicksburg, and in the attack on Missionary Ridge about 7,000.

Though our losses in many of the campaigns have been heavy, they yet fall below those incurred in some of the European wars. This has been due, to a considerable extent, to the efficiency of the medical department and the lavish amount of supplies, at least one-third greater than those furnished to any European army. A report recently made to the Imperial Academy of Medicine, by Chenu, Physician of the French army, estimates the losses of the Crimean war as follows: killed on the field of battle or missing, 10,240; lost in the Semilante, 702; died of various diseases at Alma, 8,084; died of cold, apoplexy, &c., before Sebastopol, 4,342; died in the field and general hospitals, 71,247; total, 95,615. Thus, of 389,264 men sent by France to the Crimea, about one-third found a soldier's grave.

The siege and reduction of Jerusalem resulted, says Josephus, in the loss of 1,000,000 lives. 60,000 Persians were placed *hors de combat* at the battle of Arbela, and 100,000 Carthagenians in the engagement of Halermo. 12,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry perished on the fatal field of Issue. Spain lost 2,000,000 lives during the persecution of the Arabians, and 800,000 in expelling the Jews. Frederick the Great inflicted a loss of 40,000 on the Austrians in the conflicts of Leuthen and Leignitz. The battle of Jenna, and the lesser engagements immediately folowing, cost the Prussian army over 80,000 men. At the battle of Leipsic, the French suffered casualties to the number of 60,000, and the Swedes and their allies 40,000 more. 50,000 French and Russian soldiers lay dead and dying on the field after the battle of Muskowa, and Napoleon again lost 47,000 men at Waterloo, and the Duke of Wellington 15,000 more.—*N.Y. Commercial Advertiser.*

Gail Hamilton, in her direct and forcible, but not always elegant, style, sometimes advances sentiments which we can not approve; but the following practical view of religion commends itself to every one who desires to live a truly Christian life:

"We want a religion that softens the steps, and tunes the voice to melody, and fills the eye with sunshine, and checks the impatient exclamation and harsh rebuke; a religion that is polite, deferential to superiors, courteous to inferiors, and considerate to friends; a religion that goes into a family, and keeps the husband from being spiteful when dinner is late—keeps the wife from fretting when the husband tracks the newly washed floor with his muddy boots, and makes the husband mindful of the scraper and the door mat—keeps the mother patient when the baby is cross; amuses the children as well as instructs them; promptly looks after the apprentice in the shop, and the clerk behind the counter, and the student in the office, with a fatherly care and motherly love, setting the solitary in families, and introducing them to pleasant and wholesome society, that their lonely feet may not be led into temptation. We want a religion that shall interpose continually between the ruts and gullies and rocks of the highway of life, and the sensitive souls that are traveling over them.

"We want a religion that bears heavily, not only on the exceeding rascality of lying and stealing—but a religion that banishes short measures from the counter, small baskets from the stalls, pebbles from the cotton bags, clay from the sugar, chicory from the coffee, otter from butter, beet juice from vinegar, alum from bread, strychnine from wine, water from milk cans, and buttons from the contribution box. The religion that is to save the world will not make one half a pair of shoes of good leather and the other of poor leather, so that the first shall redound to the maker's credit, and the second to his cash; nor if the shoes be promised on Thursday morning, will let Thursday spin out till Saturday night. It does not send the little boy who has come for the daily quart of milk, to the barnyard to see the calf, and seize the opportunity to skim off the cream; nor does it surround stale butter with fresh, and sell the whole for good; nor sell off the slack baked bread upon the stable boy; nor 'deacon' the apples.

"The religion that is to sanctify the world pays its debts. It does not borrow money with little or no purpose of repayment, by concealing or glossing over the fact. It looks upon a man who has failed in trade and continues to live in luxury as a thief. It looks upon him who promises to pay fifty dollars on demand, with interest, and who neglects to pay fifty dollars on demand, with or without interest as a liar."

A FREAK OF THE TELEGRAPH.—Of all the freaks of telegraph, the following is the most laughable which has come under our personal knowledge. Not long since a graduate from one of our eastern theological schools was called to the pastoral charge of a church in the extreme Southwest. When about to start for his new parish he was unexpectedly detained by the incapacity of his presbytery to ordain him. In order to explain his non-arrival at the appointed time he sent the following telegram to the deacons of the church: "Presbytery lacked a quorum to ordain." In the course of its journey the message became strangely metamorphosed, and reached the astonished deacons in this shape: "Presbytery tacked a worm on to Adam!" The sober church officers were greatly discomposed and mystified, but after a grave consultation concluded it was the minister's facetious way of announcing that he had got married, and accordingly proceeded to provide lodgings for two instead of one!

A tornado passed through La Crosse, Wis., prostrating fifty dwellings in the town and vicinity, and doing other damage to an immense amount.

During a storm in Chicago, a few days ago, the lightning played some curious freaks. It took posession of the rails on the passenger railways, and ran along them back and forth, to the great fright of passengers. It also cut some fantastic tricks on the telegraph wires.