

The Middleburgh Post.

T. H. HARTER.

He that will not reason is a bigot; he that cannot is a fool; he that dare not is a slave.

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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POETRY.

An Old Favorite.

When the humid shadows, lover,
Over all the starry spheres,
And the melancholy darkness
Gently weeps in rainy tears;
What a joy to press the bow
Of a cottage chamber lid,
And to listen to the patter
Of the soft rain overhead.

Every tinkle on the shingles
Wakes an echo in the heart,
And a thousand dreamy fancies
Into busy being start;
And a thousand recollections
Weave their bright lines into woe,
As I listen to the patter
Of the rain upon the roof.

Now in fancy comes my mother,
As she used, long years ago,
To regard her darling dreamers
Ere she left them 'till the dawn.
Oh! I see her bending o'er me,
As I list to the refrain,
Which is played upon the shingles
By the patter of the rain.

Then my little seraph sister,
With her wings and wavy hair,
And my bright-eyed cherub brother—
A serene, angelic pair—
Glide around my wakeful pillow,
With their smiles and mild reproof,
As I listen to the murmur
Of the rain upon the roof.

And another comes to thrill me
With her eyes delicious blue;
I forget while gazing on her
That her heart was all untrue,
I remember but to love her,
With a rapture kin to pain,
While my heart's quick pulses vibrate
To the patter of the rain.

There is naught in art's bravuras
That can work with such a spell
In the spirit's pure deep fountains
Whence the holy passions well,
As the melody of Nature,
That subdued, subduing strain
Which is played upon the shingles
By the patter of the rain.

THE PICKET GUARD.

During the delay of the federal army of the Potomac for a month in the swamps of Warwick, in April, 1862, the duty of the picket guard was far from being what one might think pleasant. The constant firing kept up by both the Yanks and Johnnies reminded me of a small battle. The marshy swamps along which our line was established were not at all inviting. The hooting of owl, the croaking of millions of frogs and the constant zip of the mine had a tendency to make one feel melancholy. The orders were of the strictest nature. Audacity, resolution and watchfulness were three principal things impressed upon the minds of the pickets.

On the night of the 17th of April, 1862, myself and a comrade were posted along the above line about half a mile to the left of Lee's Mill. Our position being a critical one, the strictest orders were imposed upon us, and we were ordered to keep sharp lookout and to report promptly any movement the enemy might make in our front. About 8 o'clock we relieved the line, and after everything became quiet we began to plan in regard to which of us would take the first turn on the outer post, some 25 feet in advance of the main line. It was finally decided that I should take the first turn, while he would remain at the large oak tree which stood on the line. I advised him to sleep and said I would arouse him in case I heard any one coming. I left him, and in a short time I thought from the snoring that he was secure in the arms of Morpheus, in which position he remained until about 2 o'clock in the morning, when I cautiously retired, and awakening him I informed him of the time. He arose and carefully capping his gun advanced to the outer post, while I made arrangements to enjoy a short repose. Placing my knapsack at the foot of the tree and my haversack and canteen within reach, I uncapped my gun and withdrew much ceremony seated myself upon my knapsack, and putting my right arm through the gun strap and my hands under my greatcoat, was soon in the land of nod.

After a short nap I was suddenly awakened by some one trying to get my gun, and on opening my eyes I was convinced that such was the case, and a man with a gun, whom I supposed to be a rebel. Jumping up, I jerked the gun from him and capped it quicker, I think, than I ever did before or afterward, and was making preparations to begin warlike operations when I discovered that he was a union officer and man-

ing the picket line. Seeing at a glance what my object was he made himself known, and told me that the gun which he had secured from my comrade on the outpost, and that he was fast asleep. On going out I discovered that the report was correct. On awakening the comrade he was greatly surprised to learn that his gun had been taken from him. Sorry condition to find a picket in. I requested him to accompany me to the safe side of the tree, where the office was. He told us that he had violated the orders by sleeping upon post, and that it was punishable by death.

While this conversation was going on I was meditating as to what would be the best way to settle the matter. I finally concluded that two lives were better than one, and our only chance of escape would be to shoot the officer, drag him a short distance in front of the line, and repeat that he was killed by a rebel. While contemplating this cruel act, one of the Johnnies, hearing a noise in that direction, sent a whistling ball near the spot where we three were standing, which somewhat alleviated my revengeful feelings in regard to taking the officer's life.

After a few gentle suggestions and a promise to the officer that we would never be caught in the same dilemma again, he took his departure, giving us his word of honor that he would not report us, and I think he never did. After he left we quietly compared thoughts in regard to the disposition of the officer, and our plans corresponded exactly to the killing of the officer and the dragging of his body near the outposts.

In that dismal swamp, at the hour of 8 o'clock in the morning of April 18, 1862, we took a solemn obligation that we would never be caught sleeping on picket again, and from that day to July 1, 1865, when I was discharged, I never slept on the post again, no difference who my comrade might be. My comrade, who was crippled shortly afterward by wrestling and left the regiment, served the remainder of his term in the invalid corps, where the duties of a picket guard were most strict.

A BIG HALF-HOUR'S WORK.

On March 12 a gentleman of Cambridge University, England, backed himself against time to perform the following feat. Kill twelve pigeons, jump over six hurdles on foot, and leap a horse over six more, scull one mile and run one mile in the short space of half an hour. The piece selected for the performance of this undertaking was a mile from Baitheite Sluice. A large concourse of persons assembled. Betting commenced at three to one against him. About half-past 12 the gentleman made his appearance, and he soon began his work of destruction among the pigeons, and for the performance of this part of the undertaking five guns and eight traps were provided, with twenty-one pigeons. The signals were given down they came, one at a time, and before four minutes had expired the twelve pigeons were killed, out of nineteen fired at; of the remaining two, one escaped and the other was false, for which a quarter of a minute was allowed, according to agreement. This part of the feat which from the most moderate calculation was expected to have occupied eight minutes was performed in three minutes and three-quarters. He then started for the first six hurdles, which were placed about three yards apart; these he cleared in a twinkling, and, having mounted his steed, took the next six in gallant style, the whole of the leaping being completed in two minutes and a quarter. He then quietly jumped into a boat and with apparent ease sculled a mile down the stream in nine minutes, and amidst the plaudits of the persons assembled. The next and last thing to be performed was to run a mile, which he commenced by a walk, a quarter of the way, and the remainder was only a moderate pace. This took up seven minutes and a half, thus accomplishing the undertaking in the incredibly short space of twenty-two minutes and a half.

Facts About Fishes.

It was in 1741 that the art of fish culture was discovered by one Jacobi, a wealthy landed proprietor, living at Hohenhausen, in North-western Germany. He it was who first took the eggs of a female trout, fer-

tilizing them with milk of the male and then hatching them in boxes with running water.

In 1850 Professor Rathke, of Konigsberg, discovered the reproductive organs in a female eel, and not until 1874 was it demonstrated that there was an eel that differed from the female sufficiently to be called a male.

The salmon spawns the same as the trout, belonging, as it does, to the same family of fish.

The carp family deposit their eggs upon little twigs or roots on the borders of the pond, being glutinous or adhesive. They are left there to take their chances, without any of the fostering care exhibited by the black bass and other fishes, and should the mother be stricken with hunger, and nothing handy to eat, she will not hesitate to eat her own batch of eggs.

The codfish, which approaches the shores of Long Island during the months of November and December, apparently seeks the shallow sand bars and there the eggs or spawn are projected upon, the water in vast quantities along with the milt from the male and are left to evolve the ocean. A female codfish of average size deposits some 8,000,000 of eggs, while the brook trout of average size deposits only 500 to 800.

There are many curious phases of spawning to be found among the water fishes. A notable one is the little sealfish Lippocampus. When the spawning season arrives the female deposits its eggs into a little sack on the under side of the male fish, where they are carried until hatched.

A curious fish is found in South America, of which the male takes the eggs as they are deposited by the female into his mouth and carries them in two little pouches on the side of the interior of the mouth until they are hatched.

A Bad Boy's Doings.

Bill Nye tells of his landlord's boy down in the Old North State: One time he found that his eldest or oldest son—I do not know which, because I am away from home with out my library—had violated the rules of the house in a bad manner.

As near as I am able to come at the facts, the boy had taken a quart of corn and sowed a long thread through each kernel, showing great patience and perseverance in so doing. He had then tied the ends of the threads all together into one knot and scattered the corn where a flock of geese had been in the habit of associating and pooling for mutual profit and improvement.

A man who came along that way about dusk said he saw about thirty geese standing around in a circle looking reproachfully at each other and trying to agree on some method by which they could all go home together without turning a part of their crowd wrong side out, while behind a high board fence there was a boy who seemed to be enjoying himself in a small way.

SLY OLD FELLOW.

'I had been working for three years for one of our old-time wholesale houses,' said a Detroitier who was calling up reminiscences, 'and I finally concluded that I ought to have a raise of salary. I began on four dollars per week and was raised to six dollars, but there it had stuck for two years. The head man of the firm was a cold, stiff, austere man, who seldom recognized an employe and was known to be hard-hearted. I hesitated a long time before daring to approach him on the subject nearest to my heart, but one day I slid into the private office when I knew he was alone.

'Wall, sir,' he snaps out, short as piercest.

'I—I came to—to—'

'Come to what, sir?'

'I—I came to ask you if you— you didn't think—?'

'See here, William! he said, as he wheeled around on me, 'if my daughter loves you, and you love her, I've no objection to your marriage. Fix it up between you and don't bother me again.'

'The old Reynard! He had a daughter, but I had never spoken to her in my life, and he knew it. He answered me the way he did to stop me from asking for a raise of salary. It was a year and a half after that before I was lifted to eight dollars per week.'

GEN'L STONEWALL JACKSON.

About daylight upon the Sunday of his death Mrs. Jackson informed him that his recovery was very doubtful, and that it was better that he should be prepared for the worst. He was silent for a moment, and then said: 'It will be infinite gain to be translated to heaven.' He addressed his wife, in the event of his death, to return to her father's house, and adjured: 'You have a kind and good father, but there is no one so kind and good as your Heavenly Father.'

He still expressed a hope that he would recover, but requested his wife, in case he should die, to have him buried in Lexington, in the valley of Virginia. His exhaustion increased so rapidly that at eleven o'clock Mrs. Jackson knelt by his bed and told him that before the sun went down he would be with his Savior.

He replied: 'O, no! You are frightened, my child. Death is not so near. I may yet get well.'

She fell upon the bed weeping bitterly, and again told him, amid her tears and sobs, that the physicians declared that there was no longer any hope for his recovery.

After a moment's pause he asked her to call the family physician.

'Doctor,' he said, 'as the physician entered the room, 'Anna informed me that you have told her I am to die to-day. Is it so?'

When he was answered in the affirmative, he turned his sunken eyes towards the ceiling and gazed for a moment or two as if in intense thought, then looked at the friend about him and said softly: 'Very good, very good; it is all right.'

Then turning to his heart-broken wife he tried to comfort her. He told her that there was much he desired to tell her but that he was too weak for the undertaking.

Colonel Pendleton, one of the officers of his staff, came into the room about one o'clock. General Jackson asked him:

'Who is preching at the headquarters to-day?'

When told in reply that the whole army was praying for him, he replied:

'Thank God, they are very kind.' Then he added: 'It is the Lord's day; my wish is fulfilled. I have always desired to die on Sunday.'

Slowly his mind began to fail and waver, and he frequently talked in his delirium as if in command of his army on the field of battle. He would give orders to his aides in his old way, and then the scene was changed. He was at the mess table in conversation with members of his staff, now with his wife and child; now at prayers with his military family. Occasional intervals of a return of his mind would appear, and during one of them the physician offered the dying man some brandy and water, but he declined it, saying: 'It will only delay my departure and do no good; I want to preserve my mind to the last, if possible.'

A few moments before the end arrived the dying warrior cried out in his delirium: 'Order A. P. Hill to prepare for action!'

'Pass the infantry to the front rapidly!'

'Tell Major Hawks—' Then his voice was silent and the sentence remained unfinished.

An instant later a smile of ineffable sweetness and purity spread itself over his calm, pale face and then looking upward and slightly raising his hands, he said quietly with an expression of relief:

'Let us cross over the river and rest under the shade of the trees.' And then without sign of struggle or of pain his spirit passed away.

An Indiana man sat down on a log of powder with a pipe in his mouth, and some superstitious people in the vicinity think they can see two men in the moon now.

The little fourteen-year-old New York boy who walked off with a small and red-hot stove has a future before him. If he fails of election to the City Council he can organize a Salvation army.

It is said of a great man, just dead that he began life a barefooted boy. Come to think, we boys all began that way.

A MAIDEN'S INGENUITY.

There was once a tailor who had a beautiful daughter. All the young men from far and near came to visit her because of her beauty. Two rivals sought her one day, and said: 'It is on your account that we have come hither.'

'What do you want of me?' she replied, smiling.

'We love you,' returned the two young men, 'and each of us wishes to marry you.'

The maiden, being well brought up, called her father, who listened to the lovers, and then said: 'It is late, go home now, but come again to-morrow, and you shall then know which of you shall have my daughter.'

At daybreak the next morning the two young men returned. 'Here we are,' they cried to the tailor; 'remember what you promised yesterday.'

'Wait a little,' he replied; 'I am going to town to buy a piece of cloth; when I return home with it you shall learn what I expect from you.'

When the tailor returned from town he called his daughter, and on her appearance he said to the young men:

'My children, there are two of you and I have but one daughter. To whom shall I give her? Whom must I refuse? Behold this piece of cloth; I will cut from it two suits of clothes exactly alike; each one of you must sew one of them; he who finishes his task first shall have my daughter.'

Each of the rivals took his task and promised to set about it; the father called his daughter and said to her:

'Here is the thread, make it ready for the two workers.'

The maiden obeyed her father, and taking the bundle of thread seated herself near the young men.

But she was as clever as she was beautiful; though her father did not know which of the two he loved, nor the young men themselves, she knew well enough. The tailor went away, the maiden prepared the thread, the young men took their needles and began to sew. To the one she loved the beauty gave short needles, but to the other she did not love she gave long needles. They sewed and sewed, in eager haste; at 11 o'clock the work was not half done; but at 3 the young man who had short needles had completed his task, while the other had yet much to do.

When the tailor returned the conqueror brought to him the completed suit, while his rival sat still sewing.

'My children,' said the father, 'I did not wish to favor one more than another, that is why I divided the cloth into two equal parts and told you: 'He who finished his task first shall have my daughter.' Did you understand me?'

'Father,' replied the two young men, 'we understood you, and accepted the test; what must be must.'

The tailor had reasoned thus: 'He who finishes first will be the most skillful workman, and consequently better able to support a wife,' but he never imagined that his daughter would give long needles to a man she did not wish to marry. Cleverness carried the day, and the maiden really chose her own husband.

Somewhat Evasive.

Whether these answers to a lawyer's questions really occurred or not, they serve to illustrate the possibility of our language for being fatally distorted.

'Do you know the witness well?'

'I never knew him sick.'

'No, he is (sternly) Did you ever see the prisoner at the bar?'

'No; neither of us drinks.'

'How long have you known him?'

'From two feet to five feet ten inches.'

'Now, sir, will you tell me what you know about this case?'

'His name haint Case; it's Smith.'

'Have you and this prisoner been friends?'

'No; we haint Friend, nor Quakers or any sort. We're Presbyterians.'

'Stand down (sternly)'

'I can't. I'll sit down or stand up; that's all I kin do.'

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