

VOICE



FAIR.

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"The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what our brave men did here."
[President Lincoln's Address, dedicating the Soldiers' Cemetery, at Gettysburg.]

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SHERIDAN'S RIDE.

To the Editor of the New York Tribune:

SIR: The following magnificent lyric was written by Thomas Buchanan Read, to be recited by Mr. Murdoch at a complimentary festival given to the latter in Cincinnati, on Monday evening, October 31st, in acknowledgment of his noble contributions for the aid of our sick and wounded soldiers. I am indebted to the poet for permission to give to the public, through the *Tribune*, a poem which deserves to rank with "Young Lochinvar" and Browning's, "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix." BAYARD TAYLOR.
NEW YORK, November 5, 1864.

SHERIDAN'S RIDE.

Up from the South at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door,
The terrible grumble and rumble and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon's bar,
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold
As he thought of the State in that fiery fray,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good, broad, highway leading down;
And there through the flash of the morning light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night,
Was seen to pass as with eagle flight—
As if he knew the terrible need
He stretched away with his utmost speed;
He rose and fell—but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprung from those swift hoofs, thundering South,
The dust, like the smoke from the cannon's mouth,
Or the trail of a comet sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster;
The heart of the steed and the heart of the master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battle-field calls;
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed,
And the landscape sped away behind
Like an ocean flying before the wind;
And the steed, like a buck fed with farnace ire,
Swept on, with his wild eyes full of fire,
But, lo! he is nearing his heart's desire—
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the General saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and men the retreating troops;—
What was done—what to do—a glance told him both,
Then striking his spurs with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the line 'mid a storm of huzzahs,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause,
With foam on his mouth and the black charger was gray;
By the flash of his eye, and his red nostrils' play,
He seemed to the whole great army to say:
"I have brought you Sheridan all the way
From Winchester down to save the day!"

Hurrah, hurrah for Sheridan!
Hurrah, hurrah for horse and man!
And when their statues are placed on high
Under the dome of the Union sky
The American soldiers' Temple of Fame,
There with the glorious General's name
Be it set in letters both bold and bright:
"Herald the steed that saved the day
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
From Winchester—twenty miles away!"

INCONVENIENCES OF GREATNESS.

There are numerous inconveniences attached to human greatness which those who aspire after it would do well to consider, before sacrificing everything they possess in a desperate effort to reach the topmost round in the ladder of Fame. As soon as a man attains to a position of distinction in society, that moment do his movements, sayings, writings, and all there is of him, become public property, to be dissected, criticised and commented on by everybody, with but little caution, less reservation, and not a particle of care as to who or what may suffer detriment by the process. And the greater the celebrity attached to a man's name, the more of a target will he be. Not even the domestic affairs of a great man are held sacred, but usually they are paraded before the public eye, whispered into the public ear, and made the topic of the most critically uncharitable commentation. Whenever the great man goes abroad he is watched by millions of eager eyes, gazed upon with unsanctified curiosity, followed up and surrounded by applicants for personal favors, plied with meaningless interrogatories, flattered and feted by those who curse him when his back is towards them, and subjected to innumerable annoyances to which the common citizen is a stranger. On some accounts distinction may be desirable,

but it is certainly invested with many inconveniences and perplexities which detract sadly from its pleasures. In view of these considerations it is with us a matter of self-congratulation that we are neither an Emperor, a President, a Major-General, nor a "notable" of any kind. As matters now stand, we are never annoyed with "complimentary dinners," never bored by "reception committees," never tormented with applications for our autograph. We can travel without being lionized; can attend a concert, a lecture or an opera without being stared at or "called out"; can fall down and break our nose without having the circumstance blazoned over the land. In a word, we can enjoy our own obscurity without fear of being dragged from the quietude of private life into the hornets' nest of public notoriety. The reflection is consoling, in the superlative degree. We had rather be happy than President.

FAULT-FINDING WITH CHILDREN.

Mrs. H. B. Stowe, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, has done a good service for both parents and children, in exposing this common mistake. The following extract conveys the pith of her views on the subject:

"Children are more hurt by indiscriminate, thoughtless fault-finding than by any other one thing. Often a child has all the sensitiveness and all the susceptibility of a grown person, added to the faults of childhood. Nothing about him is right as yet; he is immature and faulty at all points, and everybody feels at perfect liberty to criticise him to right and left, above and below, till he takes refuge in callous hardness or irritable moroseness.

"A bright, noisy boy rushes in from school eager to tell his mother something he has on his heart, and Number One cries out, 'Oh, you have left the door open! I do wish you wouldn't always leave the door open! And do look at the mud on your feet! How many times must I tell you to wipe your feet?'—'Now then you have thrown your cap on the sofa again. When will you learn to hang it up?' 'Don't put your slate there; that is not the place for it.'—'How dirty your hands are! what have you been doing?'—'Don't sit in that chair; you break the springs bouncing.'—'Mercy! how your hair looks! Do go up stairs and comb it.'—'There, if you haven't torn the braid all off your coat! Dear me, what a boy!' 'Don't speak so loud; your voice goes through my head.'—'I want to know, Jim, if it was you that broke up that barrel that I have been saving for brown flour.' 'I believe it was you, Jim, that hacked the side of my razor.'—'Jim's been writing at my desk, and blotted three sheets of the best paper.'"

Now the question is, if any of the grown people of the family had to run the gauntlet of a string of criticisms on themselves equally true as those that salute unlucky Jim, would they be any better natured about it than he is? No; but they are grown up people; they have rights that others are bound to respect. Everybody can not tell them exactly what he thinks about everything they do. If every one did, would there not be terrible reactions?

WHITE MOUNTAIN GOSSIP.

The Boston *Transcript* of Friday evening says: "Many postpone their trip to the White Hills too long. They reward a tour made quite early in the season, and parties who understand this have already gone among them. We are advised from the 'Summit' of the 'Monarch' that the 'Tip-top Houses' are in tip-top order; transformed into comfortable hotels, so chained and ironed to the rocks as to defy the hurricanes. Both the edifices have in fact been rebuilt, and the latch-strings will be out by the 15th instant. There will be bedrooms to accommodate a hundred and twenty-five guests. These, with other sleeping arrangements that can be extemporized on an emergency, will render it quite as convenient to sojourn up above as down below. Those who rise, therefore, to see the sun rise, can wait for his coming of a clear morning, taking meanwhile their ease 'in mine inn.'"

"The carriage road suffered very little the last winter. A force of men is now putting it in perfect repair and will finish its labors in about a week. Thus the once laborious and slightly perilous climbing process, on foot or horseback, has given place to a method of making the ascent no more terrific to weak nerves, or fatiguing to feeble bodies than any ordinary ride.

"One of the wintry wonders not yet departed and likely to linger for some time to come, is the snow in Tuckerman's Ravine. A day or two since it was not less than from five to seven hundred feet in depth. This substantial deposit is promise of an arch and other phenomena before the packed drifts disappear, to give the rock-encircled amphitheatre a short vacation until the renewal of stormy visitations.

"It only needs to be added that the 'Grand Trunk' from Portland has been put in excellent running order, to enable our readers to see that everything has been done on the east and north side the famous hill country of New Hampshire to make an excursion among the mountains thereof safe and enjoyable."

OIL ON THE BRAIN—CORY O'LANUS AT THE OIL REGIONS.

I have reached the land of oil, having taken a safer route than the Erie.

Pennsylvania is a good sized State and it takes some time to get there.

When you do get here you wish you hadn't come. There is plenty of oil—and that is all, except lots of people.

I made for "Snaky Run," the most likely place for oil. They call these places runs, because everybody who is after oil runs here.

Every man you meet is the president, director or engineer of a petroleum company.

The natives, who are white people, and resemble country folks, live by selling land and greenhorns. They have a system in both transactions. They double the price of land every morning.

If you know anybody who has got a few vacant lots that he wants to sell, tell him to bring them out here.

The folks are so busy looking for oil they haven't time to build houses, and everybody is afraid to put up a house for fear that he might cover an oil well.

Consequently the hotels are a little crowded. The Muggins hotel, where I put up, is much so.

Muggins, the proprietor, is the most accommodating man you ever saw. A city railroad conductor isn't a circumstance with him.

He has only got six beds in the house, but he is always ready to take in everybody.

He took me in. Also two hundred more petroleum pilgrims.

The sleeping accommodations are various. We go to bed in platoon.

When the first platoon get asleep they are carefully taken out of bed and hung over a clothes line. The second platoon go through the same process until everybody is provided for.

Preferring to sleep alone, I slept on the mantel-piece, with a coal scuttle for a pillow.

As I observed, land is precious here. I bought a lot ten inches by four for three hundred thousand dollars and commenced operations.

The next thing is to commence boring.

You want a sharp bore. A public lecturer won't do.

I took a brace and bit, and went in. Got down about seven hundred thousand feet into the bowels of the land, when I came to an impediment.

Found that I had struck the preadamite rock of the ossified strata of the Silurian formation.

This is geology, and you perhaps won't understand it, but I will explain it all in the paper to the Historical Society I am about writing.

Got a candle and went down to see about it. I found a big Megatherium, about six hundred feet long, in a capital state of preservation.

I got him out and shall send him along by express.

Went on boring through forty thousand feet of sand-stone. Here encountered a strange smell of sulphur, which alarmed the native who sold me the land, and to ease his conscience he gave me half the money back, and wanted me to stop boring.

Told him I was bound to keep on till I struck ile, or come out on the other side of creation.

Bored on. Went through about sixty thousand feet more, when suddenly the brace and bit went in, and there was a grand report like that made by Butler's powder boat which didn't blow up Fort Fisher.

Things were slightly confused for a time. A section of Pennsylvania went up, and I went up with it. I guess I must have come down again, as the next idea I had was finding myself comfortably hung over the clothes line at the Muggins hotel.

An investigation into the matter showed that I had struck through into a gas factory in China, which had exploded at both ends of the bore, killing half a million of Chinese.

The casualties on our side were confined to one native and a small dog.

I haven't given up yet. The folks here are very encouraging; they will stick to a man as long as he has a cent left, and I never knew Muggins turn a man out of his hotel who had the means to pay his bill.

A kind-hearted chap offered me another piece of land the size of a stove plate within a mile and a half of a seven hundred barrel well, for the reasonable figure of half a million, and two-thirds of the oil.

I have concluded that boring for this oil is not so profitable as bleeding the public. I shall start an oil company on more liberal terms than any yet offered.

I shall be prepared to guarantee anything. The capital will be one million dollars, divided into two million shares at fifty cents each.

Dividends of two hundred per cent. will be paid weekly, in addition to which each subscriber will be entitled to a season ticket for Lannigan's ball, a new hat, a farm in Minnesota, and a ton of coal at market prices.

The "Soaly Run" petroleum company, will be the biggest thing in oil in the market.

I am coming on to arrange the business as soon as my friends remit me funds enough to pay my way back.

Yours oleagiously,
CORY O'LANUS.

DEATH OF MRS. SIGOURNEY.

Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney died at Hartford, on Saturday, in her seventy-fourth year. Her reputation as a poet dates back to a period antecedent to the birth of many of her present adult readers; her first volume having been published just fifty years ago. Her maiden name was Huntley. She was born at Norwich, Conn., Sept. 1, 1791. She engaged in teaching at the age of nineteen, and four years later removed to Hartford, where her talents and worth gained her the hand of Mr. Charles Sigourney, a merchant of that city. Her life was devoted to literature, and her productions have been very numerous, filling about fifty volumes. Her compositions were chiefly poetical, though several interesting prose works have appeared from her pen. Her subjects are generally of a religious character, and exhibit refined thought, a warm, but pure and healthful imagination, a cultivated ear, delicate sensibility, and earnest Christian faith. Had she written less copiously, it would perhaps have been better for her reputation; yet there are many of her poems that will long dwell in the memory and affection of the public.

TOO MUCH MOTHER.

ARTEMUS WARD gets off the following good paragraph:

"Our ballad writers put too much mother in their melodies. Thus we have 'Dear Mother, I've come home to die'—'Mother, is the battle o'er?'—'Mother dear, O pray for me'—'Write a letter to my Mother,' &c. The other night we heard an athletic Ethiopian minstrel dismally bleat, 'Mother kissed me in my dreams,' just as though she would do it until he washed the cork from his face. A mother is a good thing. Without mothers, in fact, life would be unpleasant. But why sing the maternal parent's merits so persistently, and in such shabby verse? Why not vary the thing, and occasionally produce a father or two. If we must continually sing about our parents, let us by all means give 'the old man a chance.'"

FAC SIMILE OF A LETTER BY RUFUS CHOATE.

Rufus Choate, the celebrated lawyer and orator of Boston, was hardly more famous for his eloquent speaking, than for his execrable writing. Forty anecdotes about it could be collected from the newspapers of the last twenty years. One story goes that a literary association invited him to deliver a lecture, and his reply was so wretchedly illegible that the board of managers could not tell for their lives whether the orator had accepted or refused their invitation; and they were driven to the alternative of sending a committee all the way to Boston to ask Mr. Choate to read his own writing.

Another anecdote is to the effect that a man who received a letter from Mr. Choate, and found it impossible to read it, took it with him whenever he traveled on a railroad, and when the conductor came round for "tickets gentlemen," he showed him this letter as a "pass from the president of the road." The blinded and bewildered conductor invariably took the traveler's word for it, rather than attempt to decipher what was so horribly undecipherable.

The Western Engraving Company (Chas. Knickerbocker, Secretary,) have lithographed a sample of this unreadable writing by Mr. Choate, and presented fac simile copies to be sold for the benefit of the Northwestern Sanitary Fair, and which will be found on sale at the various book and music stores in Chicago. To the lover of the curious this sample of the frightful chirography of this eminent orator and man of genius is a curiosity and a study indeed. As near as we can make this manuscript out, it is a letter addressed to Professor Amasa McCoy, then Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory in National Law School, and now giving lessons in Elocution in Chicago, on the occasion of his funeral oration on the death of Daniel Webster. The following is an attempt at translation; whether "literal" or only "liberal," let the purchasers of this "curiosity of literature" determine each for himself:

To Professor AMASA MCCOY,
National Law School, Ballston Spa:

DEAR SIR: I had read a report of your Funeral Oration, with great interest, before you were so kind as to put me in possession of a corrected copy; and I have re-perused that with heightened interest and appreciation.

I hope it may not seem arrogant or indelicate to say so, but I regard your discourse as, on the whole, the most adequate to the great subject which I have read. Your limits, any limits, could not suffice for elaborating and consummating every important view, on the grand aggregate of the conception you had of him. But the outline is perfect, I think; within your limits, the detail is just, vivid, and generous. What a tribute of eloquent feeling he has attracted and deserved! *Multis—omnibus—fidelis.*

If you publish your discourse in pamphlet, I should be most happy to know when I can procure a copy of that also. I am, most truly, your obedient servant,
RUFUS CHOATE.