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LITTLE BY LITTLE.

One step and then another,
And the longest walk is ended;
One stitch and then another,
And the largest rent is mended;
One brick upon another,
And the highest wall is made;
One flake upon another,
And deepest snow is laid.

So the little coral workers,
By their slow and constant motion,
Have built those pretty islands
In the distant dark blue ocean;
And the noblest undertakings
Man's wisdom hath conceived,
By oft repeated efforts
Have been patiently achieved.

THE ASHES OF CHARLESTON.

[From the N. Y. Daily News of the 22d Feb., 1865.]

With the fall of Charleston commences the tug of war. The conflict is about to assume its fiercest, bloodiest, deadliest phase. There is no longer any doubt as to the temper of the South. In the ashes of the doomed city, the retiring footsteps of its proud defenders traced their determination to conquer independence, whatever might be the sacrifice of comfort, property or life. Charleston was to the Carolinians what Moscow was to the Russians. Far beyond its material value they revered it for the sake of associations that linked it with their emotions of pride and affection. If they had obeyed their inclinations, they would have stood by the city to the last, spilling their life-blood, drop by drop, in its defence. But the hour had come for them to sacrifice all local prejudices, all pride, all passion, all sentimentality, all personal considerations to the cause in which they had embarked. They did not hesitate. The appeal was made to their moral courage, and it was answered by a devotion like that which fired the sacred city of the Muscovite, and gave to the invader a blackened ruin for his prize, and a desert for his laud of promise.

One journal in this city, the most fanatic of its kind, has asserted that it was cowardice which induced the abandonment of Charleston. All men of intelligence know this to be false; all just men will acknowledge it a slander, and all who appreciate true courage will blush for shame that it was ever uttered. It was that kind of cowardice that impelled the Black Douglas to fling the heart of Bruce into the centre of the Saracen host, that for its redemption his arm might be nerved to victory. It was the kind of cowardice that caused Tell to aim his shaft at the head of his loved best, that caused the first Brutus to pronounce the doom of death upon his son, and the second Brutus to slay his nearest friend. Some such cowardly instinct induced Fabius to shun the enemy, and Washington to follow his example, even when the falling spirits of his countrymen seemed to upbraid his cautious policy. It is, in fact, the cowardice that fears to jeopardize a cause by gratifying a vanity or ambition. It is moral courage; the loftiest and purest that God has given to his creatures.

What man is there, who is not a fanatic or a simpleton, who believes that the Northern people would burn and destroy their property to assist in subjugating the South. They would make every needful sacrifice to resist invasion; but for conquest, only such as are forced upon them by the military power that conducts the war. But at last the North begins to comprehend the stern, unflinching and invincible purpose of the foe. They understand at last the true character of the war, and they know that it means Southern Independence or extermination.

Three years ago, or two, or even a year ago, the capture of Charleston would have set the Northern pulse in a fever of excitement and exultation. To-day, although the flags are flying, and cities and villages wear a holiday aspect, there is discernible in the midst of strained enthusiasm and superficial rejoicing, a more reflective mood than has been apparent since the commencement of hostilities. Our people have not lost all their sagacity in the whirl of excitement. They know that the Southerners do not burn their cities and destroy their property because of despair or phrenzy; or if it be madness there is a method in it that is dangerous to others than themselves. The South has accepted a great humiliation as a prelude to a great triumph. The wonderful intellect that now controls the military action of the Confederacy has prompted the sacrifice that even the North beholds with wonder. Let us confess that beneath the outward seeming of rejoicing, there is bewilderment and foreboding, and a consciousness that the fruit we have so long reached for, and that, at last, has fallen of its own accord into our hands may turn to a bitter pill. When a work of freedom goes

forth to battle, with the flames of their homesteads lighting their way to victory or death, dedicating their household gods to destruction, and giving all their worldly treasures as a tribute to a political sentiment, the word rebellion, as applied to them, loses its significance, and history records them as patriots, whether they fail or win. Against this indomitable will, this dogged perseverance, this sublime devotion, it is in vain for fleets and armies to contend. The Federal Administration may find in the ruins of Charleston the beginning of the sequel to the late Peace Conference. They imposed conditions that no free, brave people could accept; and now, as a brave, free people, the Southerners are concentrating their energies for war to the uttermost. It has been said that the rebellion was a shell; the shell is ours, and while we hold the worthless fragments, its invulnerable core, the great strong heart, defies, baffles us.

To one who truly conceives the meaning of the change of policy that has been inaugurated by the abandonment and destruction of Charleston, the shadow of coming battles looks darker and more vast than ever before. To one brain, we know how fertile the resources—to one heart, we know how firm and true—to one intellect, we know how gifted with martial attributes—to one man, we know how capable to plan, to strike, to thwart, to retrieve error or to take advantage of it, the military fortunes of the South have been confided. Free to act at his volition, untrammelled by administrative interference, trusted, beloved and honored by soldier and civilian, he has lost no time in using his dictatorial power to remodel the whole system of warfare. The fall of Charleston is a consequence less of Sherman's prowess than of Lee's strategy. Who gives a castle looks to gain a queen.

LETTER FROM GEN. LEE ON THE SUBJECT OF USING NEGROES ASSOLDIERS.

HEADQUARTERS C. S. ARMIES,
18th February, 1865.

Hon. E. Barksdale,
House of Representatives, Richmond.

SIR—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th inst., with reference to the employment of negroes as soldiers. I think the measure not only expedient, but necessary. The enemy will certainly use them against us if he can get possession of them, and as his present numerical superiority will enable him to penetrate many parts of the country, I cannot see the wisdom of the policy of holding them to await his arrival, when we may, by timely action and judicious management, use them to arrest his progress. I do not think that our white population can supply the necessities of a long war, without over-taxing its capacity and imposing great suffering upon our people; and I believe we should provide resources for a protracted struggle, not merely for a battle or a campaign.

In answer to your second question, I can only say that, in my opinion, the negroes, under proper circumstances, will make efficient soldiers. I think we could do as well with them as the enemy, and be attached great importance to their assistance. Under good officers and good instruction, I do not see why they should not become soldiers. They possess all the physical qualifications, and their habits of obedience constitute a good foundation for discipline. They furnish a more promising material than many armies of which we read in history, which owed their efficiency to discipline alone. I think those who are employed should be freed. It would be neither just nor wise, in my opinion, to require them to serve as slaves. The best course to pursue, it seems to me, would be to call for such as are willing to come with the consent of their owners. An impressment or draft would not be likely to bring out the best class, and the use of coercion would make the measure disgraceful to them and to their owners.

I have no doubt that if Congress would authorize their reception into service, and empower the President to call upon individuals or States for such as they are willing to contribute, with the condition of emancipation to all enrolled, a sufficient number would be forthcoming to enable us to try the experiment. If it prove successful, most of the objections to the measure would disappear, and if individuals still remained unwilling to send their negroes to the army, the force of public opinion in the States would soon bring about such legislation as would remove all obstacles. I think the matter should be left as far as possible to the people and the States, which alone can legislate as the necessities of this particular service may require. As to the mode of organizing them, it should be left as free from restraint as possible. Experience will suggest the best course, and it would be inexpedient to trammel the subjects with provisions that might, in the end, prevent the adoption of reforms suggested by actual trial.

With great respect,
your obedient servant,
R. E. LEE, General.

Proposition to the Women of the South.

BATTLE HOUSE, Feb. 25, 1865.

Messrs. Editors:
I propose to pay the Confederate debt. Now don't smile, ye "lords of creation," at us poor women, for although we have encouraged you by our smiles even while we suffered, and given you the reins and urged you to die for liberty—yet after all, you've gotten us into a dreadful scrape; and now that the ship is drifting at random, we venture, albeit through the veil of modesty, to speak.

There are two million women over 12 years of age in the Confederacy—some heads have one and some three to four braids of hair—say they will average two; therefore, there are about four million braids—worth, in Europe, \$10 each in gold, which gives forty millions in gold, and in Confederate money two billions—nearly double our present indebtedness.

A ship loaded with this precious traffic might make hair breadth escapes, but angels would guard it (by Gen. Maury's permission) and land it safely at Havre! All Europe would purchase at speculative prices. Many braids—offerings on the altar of liberty—would bring in Paris, labeled with the name of the donor, thousands of francs. Our debt would be a mere circumstance to the amount realized; and I propose that every loyal woman in the South send forth with her hair, tied with a ribbon and labeled with her name, to Madame Le Vert, in Mobile. Here's mine, and two braids! Let every patriotic woman's head be shingled—a drop of whose blood in father, brother, son, or lover, has been shed, and even the vilest for will stand dashed in her presence. Our devotion and patriotism will be recorded by our children, and all nations will honor us.

A niece of James Madison.

ARREST OF A GAY LOTHARIO—A DESERTER WITH FOUR WIVES—Two or three days since a young couple, evidently rejoicing in all the summer delights of the honey-moon, reached the city and engaged apartments at the Augusta Hotel. They enjoyed the peace and quiet of that establishment, and the bustle and activity of our fashionable streets until evening before last, when the bridegroom who had already been noosed was forced to capitulate with a prospect of being haled.

It appears that a member of the 11th Tennessee Regiment recognized the gay lothario as a deserter, and caused his arrest. The fellow was originally from Nashville, where as Slade, he enlisted under the late Col. Rains, in May, 1861, leaving a wife behind him in the Rock City. Tired of war and sighing for the amorous sweets of domestic life, he deserted on the 27th of the following July at Knoxville, and took unto himself a wife at that place. How long the maiden of the valley of the Holston was enabled to retain the love and martial duty of this fickle youth, we are not advised. He is next heard of at Wilmington, where he changed his name to Bryant, and acted for two years as a Government detective.

Of course he married again, Knoxville and his two former wives having fallen into the Yankee hands. To the astonishment of his old comrades, he appears on the scene before them while they were in line of battle at Kennesaw mountain last summer. But his tastes were not for the music of shells, and though a mile and a half to the rear, he became demoralized and fled.

Nothing more was heard of Slade or Bryant by his former associates until Tuesday, when he develops himself as a newly married man. He had quitted Wilmington, when the city and his third wife fell into Federal possession, and was traveling on papers that granted him permission to visit Greensboro, Ga., for the fulfilment of a marriage contract. Some three weeks since he espoused his fourth wife at Saw Dust, in this State. But the honey-moon was not allowed to wax and wane before he came to grief.

And this ends our little chapter of romance—the hero in the Augusta Barracks, and the heroine lonely and sad in her solitary bridal chamber. Slade, or Bryant, (whichever he pleases) has a brilliant prospect before him. For desertion he is liable to be shot, and for indulgence in the Mormon doctrine of a plurality of wives, he subjected himself to a long duration of prison life.—Constitutionalist.

A TALE OF A FRYING PAN—E. Gov. Aiken, a man of immense wealth, as every one knows, sent a large quantity of splendid silver to Winnsboro—to get it out of the way of the Yankees. When the Yanks reached Winnsboro, it fell into their hands—or rather, a part into their hands—or rather, a part into the hands of certain negroes. After the withdrawal of the Yankee army, an ancient slave was found frying bacon in a magnificent silver waiter, of elegant workmanship and huge value.

Gen. Jeff C. Davis repeated in Carolina his Georgia tactics. At the crossing of Broad river he left behind him several hundred starving and helpless negro women and children, who had been seduced from their happy homes and kind masters.

News from Mexico confirms the report of the capture of Oajaca, with the garrison of 7,000 men, being the largest body of troops which defended the sinking fortunes of the Republic.

DIMENSIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL EUROPEAN CHURCHES.—The Roman Advertiser in an article compiled to show the impossibility of St. Peter's at Rome being ever crowded, gives some curious statistics as to the comparative capacity of the most celebrated churches in Europe. We add a column, exhibiting the number of square yards: "Those who attended at St. Peter's during the august ceremonies of Christmas Day might perhaps have imagined that temple in all parts open to the public during the function, as much crowded as possible. To show the impossibility of St. Peter's being ever crowded, we annex the following statistics of its capabilities, as compared with other great churches, allowing four persons to every quadrate metre (square yard):"

	Persons.	Sq. Yds.
St. Peter's,	54,000	13,500
Milan Cathedral,	37,000	9,250
St. Paul's at London,	32,050	8,000
St. Paul's at Rome,	35,800	6,400
St. Petronio, at Bologna,	24,400	6,100
Florence Cathedral,	24,300	6,075
Antwerp Cathedral,	54,000	6,000
St. Sophia, Constantinople,	23,000	5,750
St. John Lateran,	22,900	5,725
Notre Dame at Paris,	21,000	5,250
St. Mark's at Venice,	18,000	3,250
St. Stephen's at Vienna,	12,100	3,100
St. Dominic's at Bologna,	12,000	3,000
St. Peter's at Bologna,	11,400	2,950
Cathedral of Sienna,	11,000	2,750
St. Mark's, Venice,	7,000	1,700

The piazza of St. Peter's in its widest limits, allowing twelve persons to the quadrate metre (square yard) holds 624,000; allowing four to the same, drawn up in military array, 208,000. In its narrow limits, not comprising the porticos or the Piazza Rusticucci, 475,000 crowded, and 138,000 in military array."

How to Grow Tomatoes.—T. J. Winston, in a communication to the Tribune of (Ala) says: "In December, dig holes in a line two feet deep and two feet wide—making a square; fill in one foot and a half with good stable manure. Then mix the top earth from the ditch with the same quantity of manure, and fill in several inches above the surface. Let it stand until you're ready to set your plants in the spring. Then take pieces of timber 3 or 4 inches in thickness, and 12 feet long; put them in the ground firmly, say two feet—two pieces at one end of the row or line, and two every eight feet along its whole length. Set the plants out between these posts six feet apart, (not an inch nearer,) and as they grow up and require support, nail strips or slats from one post, to another, lengthwise, on each side, lifting the tender branches upon them. Before setting the plants, stir the earth well, one foot in depth, and remember that plants must be used, not sped.—By observing the above instructions closely, and having fair seasons, you will gather from twenty plants or vines, more fruit than a large family can use, and they will bear until a killing frost.

The writer of this tried this plan for himself the present year, and to-day, Nov. 2d, has plenty of tomatoes in his garden. Cultivated in this manner, the vine will grow from eight to ten feet high. He calls upon every lover of this delicious vegetable to try it for himself. The best tomato is the large smooth red."

"It is stated in an English paper that the piles sustaining the London bridge have been driven 500 years.—In 1845, they were critically examined, and found to have decayed but slightly. These piles are principally of elm. Old Savoy Place, in the city of London, is sustained on piles driven 650 years ago. They consist of oak, elm, beech and chestnut, and are perfectly sound. The bridge built by the Emperor Trajan over the Danube, affords a striking example of the durability of timber in the wet state.—One of these piles, was taken up and found to be petrified to the depth of three quarters of an inch, and the rest of the wood had undergone no change, though it has been driven 1600 years."

RICHMOND, MARCH 12.—European advices to the 25th ult., are at hand. The subject of the Canadian defenses was debated in the House of Lords. Earl Derby favored the adoption of vigorous measures in view of the hostile feelings of the Americans. Earl De Gary said the Government would ask for a vote of fifty thousand pounds sterling for the defence of Quebec, leaving Montreal to the Canadians. Lords Malmesbury and Ellenborough complained of the inadequacy of the amount asked for. Earl Russell regretted the discussion, and said the Government had declined to make any movement while the Canadians declined to take measures themselves, but as they now show a different position Government will assist them. The debate caused a depression in the funds and a fall in consols. No other news of interest.

During the passage of Sherman through South Carolina, a flat laden with about three hundred negroes was swamped, in attempting to cross the Saluda river. Only two of the unfortunates escaped, and no effort whatever was made by the Yankees to save their colored brethren.