

The Insolence of Official Position.

I can never forget the amusing remark once made in my hearing by a private, during the war, who had been tyrannized over by a captain he had ardently aided in choosing. "Why," said he, "does it make a cursed fool of many a good fellow to elect him a captain?" I did not answer the query, but mentally said: "My friend, your captain was and is a very little fellow mentally, and his self-importance, when he stands on the pedestal of a captain, brings him, in his own estimation, far above the level of ordinary men. He never has read, probably, the lines of the poet:

"Pigmies are pigmies still, though perched on Alps,
And pyramids are pyramids in vales."

Pomposity and insolence are the double hedges which ignorance builds around it to prevent the discovery of the weakness of the fortification. Men truly wise and learned—honest men, whom Bulwer terms "The gentlemen of nature"—need none of these barriers. Benjamin Franklin, the printer, the philosopher, the patriot, the idol of France and America, was as genial and approachable while Minister to France, or when Postmaster-General, as any ordinary citizen. John Marshall, America's ablest jurist, while Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, would spend an evening socially in the sitting-room of a Virginia tavern, conversing freely with the people on every-day topics; and Silas Wright, New York's great Senator, would work in his hay field with other laborers, and when noon time came, would expound to his companions the nature of our political institutions, and general knowledge on interesting subjects. A Franklin, a Marshall, or a Wright needed no hedge to prevent familiarity. The closer you approached them, the nearer the clouds they rose. Methinks here are noble examples a few of our prominent officials might more closely imitate. They appear to forget that they are mere instrumentalities to accomplish temporary purposes and then subside into obscurity. It is recorded of a certain Persian king that, having been chosen to his elevated place solely through his intelligence and virtue—for his wardrobe was of scanty and tattered—he ever kept those garments in view to remind him of his former humble position; so it would be advisable for the American office-holder ever to bear in mind that his official prominence grows out of popular favor, and when that is lost, on his retiring to private life, he will sink into a condition of contempt if his public career has been unmanly and tyrannical.

ORDERLY SERGEANT.

The French Army.

This year nearly 800,000 Frenchmen will actually serve with the colors for a longer or shorter period. Of these 470,000 belong to the active army, 144,570 men and 2,850 officers to the reserve of the active army and 117,800 men and 6,820 officers to the territorial army. The armed forces of the republic consist of the active army, in which a man serves, nominally, for five years; of the reserve of the active army, into which the soldier passes on the completion of his five years' service in the active army, and in which he remains for four years; of the territorial army, into which men pass after completing their service in the reserve, and in which they serve for five years; and of the reserve of the territorial army, into which men are passed for six years after serving their five years in the territorial army. The active army, consequently, comprises five classes of yearly contingents of recruits; the reserve, four; the territorial army, five, and the reserve of the latter, six classes. Of the five classes of the active army four are actually present with the colors; of the four classes of the reserve the class composed of the recruits who joined the active army in 1872 will be called out for 28 days' training, during which time they will take part in the annual autumn manoeuvres, while a portion of two classes of the territorial army—the classes composed of the recruits who joined the active army in 1866 and 1867—are at the present time embodied for thirteen days' training. The reserve of the territorial army is, therefore, the only component of the armed forces of France of which no portion will be exercised this year; and, as none of its members have ever been called out, it must for the present be regarded as a paper force only. Next year and every year afterward two classes of the territorial army will be required to temporarily rejoin the colors, so that every year nearly a million men will be actually drilled and exercised in France.

The Soldiers' Home, near Washington.

The President's family remove to the Old Soldiers' Home within a few days. There are few more delightful parks in the country than this, which belong to the old soldiers, and is kept up by monthly contributions by the soldiers of the regular army. There are nearly a thousand acres in the park, and the buildings and drives are very handsome. There are ten miles of drive, and about a dozen buildings. The Home was started by General Scott with \$300,000 pillage money levied by him on the City of Mexico. It is a question of economy that takes Mr. Hayes to this delightful park. He has all the advantages of a princely country residence, without expense. The grounds are kept in order by the old soldiers, and the house was built and furnished by the monthly tax of twelve cents a month on the soldiers in the army, and this fund keeps it in repair, and furnishes also stabling for the President's horses, and vegetables for his table. The President receives only \$50,000 a year; the private soldiers receive \$13 a month. I understand that the Secretary of War and his family will kindly occupy one of the handsome cottages, owned by the soldiers, this summer. The soldiers, who surrender their pensions when they enter this home, and get their tobacco and postage stamps by selling canes and working as they may on the place, must feel an honest conceit in entertaining the President and Secretary of War gratuitously during the summer months. At the contemplation of such a privilege each one must exclaim, with Sir Joseph Porter, "My bosom swells with pride."

At the funeral of General Shields, in Missouri, the two swords presented to him by the States of Illinois and South Carolina for gallantry in the Mexican war were crossed over the coffin. The gift of Illinois cost \$2,000 and that of South Carolina \$8,000, and both are richly studded with jewels. It is a remarkable fact in connection with the vicissitudes of the old hero that these swords were for a long time in pawn at one of the Carrollton banks for money to keep the General from actual suffering.

Good News for Soldiers—An Important Pension Act.

The following is the act of Congress passed at the recent extra session, and approved June 21, 1879, which has reference to payment of arrearages, examination of pensions, &c., and about which we have many inquiries:

That sections forty-seven hundred and seventy-one, forty-seven hundred and seventy-two, and forty-seven hundred and seventy-three, of the Revised Statutes of the United States, providing for biennial examinations of pensioners, are hereby repealed: *Provided*, That the Commissioner of Pensions shall have the same power as heretofore to order special examinations, whenever, in his judgment, the same may be necessary, and to increase or reduce the pension according to right and justice; but *in no case shall a pension be withdrawn or reduced except upon notice to the pensioner and a hearing upon sworn testimony, except as to the certificate of the examining surgeon.* In order to provide for the speedy payment of arrearages of pensions, the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized and directed to issue immediately in payment thereof, as they may be adjusted, the legal-tender currency, now in the United States Treasury, held as a special fund for the redemption of fractional currency under section one of joint resolution number seventeen of the Congress of the United States, approved July twenty-second, eighteen hundred and seventy-six; and fractional currency presented for redemption shall be redeemed in any moneys in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated.

Our next number will embrace an editorial in regard to this bill.

The Three Months Extra Pay to Mexican Veterans.

Some of our old Mexican soldiers wish to see the free text of the bill making this grant. Here it is:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Treasury be, and he is hereby, directed, out of any moneys in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to pay to the officers and soldiers "engaged in the military service of the United States in the war with Mexico, and who served out the time of their engagement or were honorably discharged," the three months' extra pay provided for by the act of July nineteenth, eighteen hundred and forty-eight, and the limitations contained in said act, in all cases, upon the presentation of satisfactory evidence that said extra compensation has not been previously received: *Provided*, That the provisions of this act shall include also the officers, petty-officers, seamen, and marines of the United States Navy, the Revenue Marine Service and the officers and soldiers of the United States Army employed in the prosecution of said war.

Approved, February 19, 1879.

Anti-Dyspeptic.

A WOMAN cured her husband of staying out of night by going to the door when he came home, and whispering through the keyhole, "Is that you William?" Her husband's name is John, and he stays at home every night now, and sleeps with one eye open and a revolver under his pillow.

SCIENCE now says that kissing on the lips must be abolished in the interests of health. Most potent, grave and reverend seigniors, scholars and philosophers, there are moments that you know nothing of, when a man don't care two cents for science, and when he is going to plant kisses where they belong, if the laws of health are ripped from Alpha to Beersheba.

COUNSEL had been questioning a certain witness named Gunn, and in closing, he said to him: "Mr. Gunn, you can now go off." The judge on the bench, seeing the pun, gravely added: "Sir, you are discharged." Of course, an explosion in court immediately ensued.

Butcher: "Come, John, be lively now; break the bones in Mr. Williamson's chops and put Mr. Smith's ribs in the basket for him." John (briskly): "All right sir, just as soon as I've sawn off Mrs. Murphy's leg."

Mrs. Partington says the only way to prevent steam-boat explosions is to make engineers bile the water on shore. In her opinion all the bustin' is done by cooking the steam on board.

"Sure, an' it wasn't poverty that drove me from the old country," said Michael the other day, "for my father had twenty-one yoke of oxen and cows, and they all gave milk the year round."

An Iowa girl received a proposal from an admirer in Nebraska, and her response was, "Come on with you; minister."

A wealthy bank officer, on being applied to for aid by a needy Irishman, answered petulantly: "No, no; I can't help you I have fifty such applicants as you every day." "Shure, ye might have a hundred without costing you much, if nobody gets more than I do," was the response.

A Virginia negro boy, who professed to be dreadfully afraid of cholera, took to the woods to avoid it, and there was found asleep. Being asked why he went to the woods, he said: "To pray." "But" said the overseer, "how is it that you went to sleep?" "Don't know, massa, 'zactly," responded the negro: "but spect I must have overprayed myself."

An old farmer in England hugely puzzled by our meteorological reports and transatlantic prophecies concerning the weather, is said to have delivered himself of the following astounding sentiment: "Well, sir, I did not mind the weather so much when it was arranged and ordered by Providence, but now that it has been handed over to them interfering Yankees, why, be hanged if I can stand it."

FAITH may be able to remove a mountain, but when a woman takes her knitting and patch-work and visits her next door neighbor, it will take a derrick as well as faith to remove her to her own house in time to prepare her husband's dinner.

A LITTLE girl was asked by her mother on her return from church how she liked the preacher. "Didn't like him at all," was the reply. "Why?" asked her mother. "Cause he preached till he made me sleepy, and then hollered so loud that he wouldn't let me go to sleep."

Our Flag.

If there is a statute, imperitively demanded, among the laws of the United States, at this time, it is one which will prevent the symbol of our nationality and freedom, from constant desecration. Really, it would appear as if some of our people were so given to greed, as to sacrifice decency, as well as ordinary patriotism, to gratify their covetousness. Look at our newspapers displaying the American Flag, on which is printed, "Go to Moses Abraham's for your Clothing;" see pasted on walls and fences, our national emblem in colors, on which are the words: "Hop Bitters! Hop Bitters!—Buy Hop Bitters;" behold on the stars and stripes, painted on the rocks, by the side of railways, "Try Andrew's Ague Tonic." These mercenary scamps look altogether upon the flag as an advertising medium. The eye will naturally rest upon the emblem and when it does, the clothing and bitters and ague tonic medicine words will be read. The current of public opinion is all wrong, in regard to this subject. The man, who thus treats the flag, should be fined, if not imprisoned or expatriated from the land he dishonors. There are idiots, who smirk when the sacredness of our flag is spoken of. Such beings are destitute of those loftier and nobler attributes, which men are supposed to possess and not brutes. What is our flag? A few stripes of red and white bunting, with a yard of blue, on which are attached white stars? Yes, it is, to baser and meaner minds only this. But to those who understand its true meaning, it is the emblem of our freedom. When it trails in the dust, that freedom receives a blow—it is the emblem of our nationality—when it is lowered our national pride is humiliated—it is the emblem of all that is loved and venerated in our land, our homes and firesides, our free churches and schools—all that America cherishes, as the best gifts of Heaven. And, then, too, what a flag we can boast of! What land displays one so beautiful and with such a history? It sprang from the coat-of-arms of the Washington family. Washington, of whom Lord Byron wrote:

Where may the weary eye repose,
When gazing on the great,
Where neither guilty glory glows,
Nor despicable state?

Yes, one, the first, the last, the best,
The O'Connell of the West,
Whom envy dared not hate:
Bequeathed the name of Washington,
To make men blush there was but one.

How fitting indeed, that the name of Washington should forever be wedded to the flag of the country of which he became the venerated savior. The coat-of-arms referred to, originally possessed but three stripes and a single star, and a committee of Congress decided to increase the stars to the number of the original States, adding one for each State admitted into the Union, but for all time, preserving the thirteen stripes. The flag of what other nation presents such a history? And then its colors, how expressive! How harmoniously blended! Red, white and blue! Red, the hue of our life fluid—the type of wisdom and force. White, the sign of virtue and purity. Blue, the image of immensity, of sincerity and of truth. Behold its exquisite beauty, as it streams from the mainmast of yonder ship, just speeding into port. How poetically it is described, in the circumstances of its birth:

When freedom from her mountain height,
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore away that robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there.

She mingled in its gorgeous dyes,
The milky baldrick of the skies,
And striped its pure celestial light,
With streakings of the morning light.

In conclusion, then, we beg leave with earnestness, to solicit the attention of Congress to such prompt action, as will legally prevent the desecration of an emblem, hallowed by glorious associations and ever venerated by those whose patriotism has not been sunk in the filthy pool of greed and selfishness.

Who was the author of that little poem beginning:
'Tis sweet to love, but oh, how bitter,
To love a girl and then not git her!

"CLEM, what's yo' pinion ob de iyster?" "Well, Relyus, I calls de iyster de mos' knowin' ob yarbs; if ye put 'im in yer mouf, he takes de hint, an' makes de res' ob de v'yago without any boostin'."

"I take my tex dis morning," said a colored preacher, "from dat portion ob de scriptures whar de Postal Paul pints his pistol to de Pessions."