

DOWN IN DIXIE.

There was, once upon a time, a very nice Mesian sergeant, who, while in command of a picket down in the Shenandoah Valley, gradually became aware that there was a very pretty girl in the habit of passing "quite promiscuous" while he was on post.

Very pretty girls, indeed, were all three of the Miss Jeffs. Dark of hair, bright of eye and keen of wit, they knew the rule of coquetry from Alpha to Omega better than they did their prayers, and took an interest in observing their practical effect.

Their family lived just within our lines and were neutral—that is to say, they had two brothers with Ashby, and used to sell meals, &c., (&c., in Virginia generally means whisky) to our officers and soldiers, at about ten times their real value, all the while wishing "this horrid war would cease."

Our young friend's natural modesty having been overcome with great difficulty, he speedily became quite intimate, not to say gallant, with the young lady and her other two sisters.

Why shouldn't he? He had not seen a white female in three months who had not scowled or spat at him, but one—she threw a brick—a sort of thing which, though amusing enough at first, grew tiresome by repetition; so when he met two good-looking females who did neither, he was fascinated.

Though he took his meals at their house, (at fifty cents each) and made himself generally agreeable to the best of his ability, our sergeant never forgot that he had command of an unusually large picket, sent out purposely to give timely warning of an expected raid on the station, and never left the road without posting a force too strong to be cut off by a cavalry dash before an alarm could be given, and would not leave his men alone after dark for all the beauty of Virginia.

After declining several invitations to pass the evening a few days before the time of his return, he received a most pressing invitation to bring his men and partake of a dinner prepared by the Miss Jeffs.

"They had behaved so gentlemanly; so unlike the usual coarse mercenaries, that really they must accept of our hospitality. And you will come, I know."

Who could resist such a speech, accompanied, as it was, with a blush and a look which would have brought Gen. Wool on his marrow bones?

"But I can't leave the road unguarded. My orders are—"

"O, never mind that. Isn't the road in sight from here? Why can't you leave one man and bring the rest up? There is no danger in the middle of the day, to be so much afraid of. This is Northern courage, is it?" with a sniff highly derogatory to the aforesaid Northern production.

Of course, it was the old story of Sampson and Delilah; and this speech, with a little more wheedling, produced an acceptance of the invitation, and the sergeant after taking a short leave of the family in the parlor, and a long and affectionate one of Miss Jeff on the stairs, effected a retreat.

"Flattering, isn't it? that she should take such an interest in me," he soliloquized. "But then to ask the men. I'm blessed if I can see through it, anyhow. And then he fell into a brown study, from which he was startled by a whisper.

"Massa, Sergeant!"

The sergeant, started, looked around and half-drew his revolver; but seeing nothing but a juvenile darky ensconced in an angle of the warm-fence, he thrust it back again.

"Hello, nigger, you imp of darkness?" he cried, recognizing one of the house servants of the Jeffs, upon whom he had bestowed several small favors.

"Step here, Massa Sergeant. Don't let no one see you, and I will tell you somethin'."

A long and anxious confab ensued, interspersed with considerable cursing on the part of the military gentleman, at the end of which the sergeant took his way to the camp instead of the post, in a study far browner than that from which he had so recently emerged.

At precisely noon the next day, a look into the dining-room of the Jeffs would have disclosed the sergeant, and with one exception, the entire picket under his command, sitting at the table, their arms stacked in the hall, making an onset before which the dinner vanished like chaff before the wind.

One hour passed.

Suddenly steps were heard on the piazza.

"Don't disturb yourself," said one of the young ladies, going to the window; "it's only some of the niggers."

"I won't," replied the sergeant with a tender glance.

The steps came on the stairs—up them—the young ladies looked uneasily around, but the sergeant never stirred. There was a stir in the hall, filled by a sudden rush of about twenty-five of Ashby's cavalry, who made their entrance with an utter disregard of the proprieties of life and the presence of the ladies.

"You may as well give yourself up quietly," smiled the sergeant's conquest to her adorer and his followers, who were consulting in the corner to which they had retreated. "My brothers always treat their prisoners well, and we have your guns."

"Well, darned if I ever saw such perfidy," said the sergeant, throwing his hat from the window in a rage.

"Give me five minutes to collect myself, Lieutenant," said the Sergeant, turning to the commander of the troop, "and I'll tell you what I'll do."

"All right, my boy—take six," returned the young lady's brother, in the most good-natured manner, sitting down and pitching into the dinner like a half-starved dragoon, as he was—an unceremonious example which was imitated by his followers.

Five minutes were passed; a tramping was heard outside.

"Darn those bosses," exclaimed Lieutenant Jeff, with his mouth full of cornbread and boiled chicken; "there's no guard there. Tom, go down and see if they're getting unhitched."

Tom filled his mouth full of the same article, picked up his carbine and started to go out.

He looked back as he reached the door.

"Keep me some fodder, Lieutenant. I am—what the deuce—is

Bang!

Blue wreaths of smoke circle into the room and sluggishly roll upwards. Tom pitches heavily forward with a bullet through his brain, never more to rise, while several files of the Two Hundred and Ninety-eighth regiment emerged from the smoke and walked over him, their muskets at a charge, and at the same time each of the pickets at the other end of the room produced his revolver and marked his man.

"Have to trouble you to surrender, gentlemen," remarked the sergeant, with a condescending wave of his hand toward the secesh. "You see you haven't got all our arms."

"Just my luck," cried the Lieutenant. "Here I am taken prisoner before I have half eaten the only dinner I have seen for the last month."

"Don't let me interfere," interrupted the Sergeant, with a native politeness; "take you to camp at any time."

The Lieutenant looked at his men and winked. They grinned back their response. But the Sergeant was oblivious, and the meal proceeded.

All at once its process was interrupted by dropping shots on the road, the galloping of horses and the hurrahs of charging cavalry.

The Lieutenant pricked up his ears and winked to his men.

"I reckon, Sergeant," he remarked to his captor, who remained as cool as a cucumber, "that the tables are changed again. Those are our boys; there's no mistaking that noise. That's—"

He was interrupted by a sudden cessation of the cheering, and the heavy boom of cannon so near the house that the windows rattled and the glasses danced upon the table. The sound was repeated and followed by a heavy volley from infantry.

"What the deuce is that?" he exclaimed, starting up in great agitation. "Our boys had no heavy cannon."

"I know it," remarked his captor, with serenity, "but our Colonel thought them such handy things to have around, that he posted two pieces and a few men last night in the brush where the road forks, and I rather guess they have given Ashby particular fits."

The Lieutenant dropped into his seat and made a faint attempt to swallow some more corn bread, but it was no use. Slowly he laid aside his knife and fork, and rose from the table with the air of a man who had rather more than was good for him.

"Take us, Sergeant," said he resignedly. And he did take them, men, women, horses, darkies and all.

Their fate was the usual one. The contrabands eked addled; the horses went to the Post Quartermaster—that is, some of them did; the rest were somehow lost, though envious people said the line officers of the 298th all got new horses about that time.

The ladies, of course, took the oath of allegiance and were discharged, for our great Republic does not war on lovely women.

DRESSING WITH TASTE.

If American ladies would learn that it is not so much by expensive materials as by good taste in arranging, that good taste in dress is exhibited, it might save a deal of pinching in many homes, and save husbands and fathers from a dreaded bankruptcy. There is good sense in the following paragraph:

It is strange that with all time that American women bestow upon dress, so few know how to prepare a simple toilet with taste. To be well-dressed means, with most, to wear rich material, made up in gorgeous style, and with all the usual accessories of lace and jewelry, to add to the magnificence of the general effect. Never was greater mistake. To be well-dressed is only to have attire suited to time, place and circumstance, made in a becoming manner. This attire may be a shilling calico or a rich silk, and yet in either, if it is adapted to the condition we have mentioned, a woman may be said to be well-dressed. Where household duties have to be performed and the care of children devolves partly upon the mistress of the house, a neat dress, fitted gracefully to the figure, is much better for morning wear than the faded remains of more pretentious costumes. Nothing looks more forlorn than to see a would-be lady performing household offices, of the most refined character, in an old, torn or dirty silk dress, or a soiled and dragged open wrapper. One of the secrets of dressing well is to dress appropriately; another, to be careful of the details, the minute of the toilet. Thorough personal cleanliness, glossy well brushed hair, neat shoes and stockings, are as essential to good personal appearance as the material of and fashion of the dress. Indeed, a lady who is particular in these minor matters can hardly ever be said to be ill-dressed, as this delicate refinement will not only excuse faults, but

naturally show itself in the good taste which guides her selection, no matter how small the cost may be. Some persons have an extreme horror of being "caught," as they call it, in a morning dress. Why they should be so sensitive on this point it is difficult to say. If it is clean, and adapted to the work in which she is engaged, there is no shame in wearing it, and above all, it ought to be remembered that no attire is good enough for the family which is not good enough for mere acquaintances who may chance to favor you with their society. It is much better to be caught in a plain morning dress than to be caught very much over-dressed, as some unlucky individuals are, at a small evening party. In one case there is real cause for mortification, in the other there is none.

A HARD SENTENCE.

I was conversing not long since with a returned volunteer. "I was in the hospital as nurse for a long time," said he, "and assisted in taking off limbs, and dressed all sorts of wounds; but the hardest thing I ever did was to take my thumb off a man's leg." "Ah!" said I, "how was that?" Then he told me. It was a young man, who had a severe wound in the thigh. The ball passed completely through, and amputation was necessary. The limb was cut off close up to the body, the arteries taken up, and he seemed to be doing well. Subsequently one of the small arteries sloughed off. An incision was made, and it was again taken up. "It is well it was not the main artery," said the surgeon as he performed the operation; "he might have bled to death before we could have taken it up." But Charley got on finely, and was a favorite with us all.

I was passing through the ward one night, about midnight, when suddenly, as I was passing Charley's bed he spoke to me. "H—, my leg is bleeding again." I threw back the bed clothes, and the blood spirted in the air. The main artery had sloughed off. Fortunately, I knew just what to do, and in an instant I had pressed my place and stopped the bleeding. It was so close to the body that there was barely room for my thumb, but I succeeded in keeping it there, and arousing one of the convalescents, sent him for the surgeon, who came in on the run. "I am so thankful, H—," said he, as he saw me, "that you were up and knew what to do, for he must have bled to death before I could have got here." But on examining the case he looked exceedingly serious and sent out for other surgeons. All came who were within reach, and a consultation was held over the poor fellow. One conclusion was reached by all. There was no place to work save the spot where my thumb was placed; they could not work under my thumb, and if I moved it he would bleed to death before the artery could be taken up. There was no way to save his life.

Poor Charley! He was very calm when they told him, and requested that his brother, who was in the same hospital, might be called up. He came and set by the bed-side, and for three hours I stood, and by the pressure of my thumb, kept up the life of Charley, while the brothers had their last conversation on earth.

It was a strange place for me to be in; to feel that an act of mine must cause that life to depart. Loving the poor fellow as I did, it was a hard thought, but there was no alternative. The last words were spoken. Charley had arranged all his business affairs, and sent tender messages to absent ones, who little dreamed how near their loved one stood to the grave. The tears filled my eyes more than once as I listened to those parting words. All were said, and he turned to me—"Now H—, I guess you had better take off your thumb." "O, Charley! how can I?" I said. "But it must be, you know," he replied cheerfully; "I thank you for your kindness, and now, good bye." He turned away his head, I raised my thumb, once more, the life current gushed forth, and in three minutes poor Charley was dead.—Cor.

HOW WE ARE REVENGING SUMTER.

The following is from *The Old Guard*, a monthly journal recently established in New York:—"The following are the reported casualties of this war from its beginning to January 1, 1863:—Federal killed, 43,874; wounded, 97,029; died of disease and wounds, 250,000; made prisoners, 68,318; total, 459,374. Confederates killed, 20,893; wounded, 59,915; died from diseases wounds, 130,000; made prisoners, 22,199; total, 222,671. They have killed twenty-two thousand, eight hundred and seventy-four more of our men than we have theirs. They have wounded, not mortally, thirty-nine thousand four hundred and fourteen more of our men than we have of theirs. One hundred and fifty thousand more have died of disease and wounds than of theirs. They have made prisoners of forty-six thousand more of our men than we have of theirs. Our total casualties are two hundred and thirty-seven thousand two hundred and ninety-seven more than theirs—that is, our casualties have been four thousand more than as much again as the rs. This is the way we have 'revenged the firing on Fort Sumter.' But this is not all. We have spent almost two thousand millions more of money than they have spent. We have made two hundred thousand of our women widows. We have made one million of children fatherless. We have destroyed the constitution of our country. We have brought the ferocious savagery of war into every corner of society.

We have demoralized our pulpits, so that our very religion is a source of immortality and blood. Instead of being servants of Christ our ministers are servants of Satan. The land is full of contractors, thieves, provost marshals, and a thousand other tools of illegal and despotic power, as Egypt was of vermin in the days of the Pharaohs. We are rapidly degenerating in everything which exalts a nation. Our civilization is perishing. We are drifting into inevitable civil war here in the north. We are turning our homes into charnel houses. There is a corpse in every family. The angel of death sits in every door. The Devil has removed from Tartarus to Washington. We pretend that we are punishing the rebels, but they are punishing us. We pretend that we are restoring the union, but we are destroying it. We pretend that we are enforcing the laws, but we are only catching negroes. That is the way we are 'revenging Sumter.' Selling our souls to the Devil and taking Lincoln and Co's promise to pay. We have it in greenbacks and blood. That is the way we are 'revenging Sumter.'"

WHO MAXAMILLIAN IS.

Ferdinand Maxamillian Joseph, Archduke of Austria, whom the Assembly of Mexican Notables has just elected Emperor of Mexico, is the oldest brother of the reigning Emperor of Austria. He was born on the 6th of July, 1832, and is consequently thirty-one years old. He was married on the 27th of July, 1857, to Maria Charlotte, daughter of the King of Belgium, but has no issue from the marriage. Archduke Maxamillian is a Vice-Admiral, and chief commander of the Austrian Navy, and is reported to have a thorough familiarity with everything belonging to the naval service. He has the reputation of being the most liberal among the Austrian princes, and a warm supporter of the constitution which his brother is now trying to develop in Austria.

The candidature of Archduke Maxamillian for the Mexican throne is not new, for he was the first choice both of Gen. Almonte and of the French Government. He was sounded personally by Gen. Almonte and other prominent men of the Monarchical party; and although no official announcement of his intentions was made, he may be presumed to have made objections to accepting the offered throne; otherwise the assembly of Notables would have hardly elected him by so large a majority.

It was so rumored at the beginning of the French invasion that negotiations were pending between Austria and France respecting the Mexican throne—France asking Austria to consent to a cession of Venetia to the new Kingdom of Italy, if the new throne of Mexico were given to a prince of the Austrian house. To this intimation Austria is understood to have given a flat refusal. In Madrid the candidature of Archduke Maxamillian was anything but popular, and the common feeling was, that if a purpose to convert Mexico into a monarchy was entertained, a Spanish prince should have been selected for the honor.

FACTS AND FICTIONS.

—A lady, well advanced in maidenhood, at her marriage requested the choir to sing the hymn commencing:

"This is the way I long have sought,  
And mourned because I found it not."

—The chairman of a political meeting seeing a rowdy who was raising his arm to throw a stale egg at him, cried out—"sir, your motion is out of order."

—Wanted—A fifer and drummer, to beat time for the "march of intellect;" a pair of snuffers to trim the "light of other days;" a ring that will fit the "finger of scorn;" a loose pulley to run on the "shaft of envy;" and a new cushion for the "seat of government."

—Mrs. Tom Thumb is going to have a little baby!

—When the confederate General Barksdale fell mortally wounded, he was brought within our lines, and his last words were: "Tell my wife I fell like a man; but we fought like hell."

—What is the difference between a mischievous mouse and a beautiful young lady? One turns the cheese and the other charms the heels.

—"My brethren," said a good old backwoods preacher, "I'm gwine to preach you a sermon, that even the women can understand. You find my text in the five verse of the two-eyed chapter of the one-eyed John."

—The dissolution of co-partnership heretofore resting twixt me and Moses Jones, in the barber profession, am heretofore resolved Pussions who ose must pay the inscriber; dem what the firm ose must call on Jones as the firm is involved.

—During an examination, a medical student being asked the question, "When does mortification ensue?" he replied, "When you pop the question and are answered no."

—Over one hundred colored men have left Canada within a few months to enlist in the black regiments. The old classical proverb used to say: "The feet of the average deities are shod with wool." Present appearances indicate that their heads are covered with it.