TUNING UP A HERO

As told in the picturesque language of PROFESSOR SHORTY McCABE.

BY SEWELL FORD.

ME? Well, I ain't been around the studio much lately, that's right. You'd never guess it, but I've been out to Primrose Park mixin' it with the neighbors. And say, there's less money and more excitement to that game than anything else I've struck.

The way I got dragged into it was like this: Just across the road from my place is one of those swell big ranches that hog the shore-front all the way from Mott Haven up to the jumpin'-off place. From the outside all you can see is iron gates and stone wall and stretches of green-plush lawn. Way over behind the trees you can get a squint at the chimney tops, and you know that underneath is a little cottage about the size of the Grand Central Station. That's the style you live in when you've hit the stock market right, or in case you've got to be a top-notch grafter that the muck rakers ain't dug up yet.

I'd been wonderin' what kind of folks hung out in there, but I'd never seen any of 'em out front, only gardeners killin' time, and coachmen exercisin' the horses. But one mornin' I gets a private view that was worth watchin' for.

The first thing on the programme was an old duffer dodgin' in and out around the bushes and trees like he was tryin' to lose somebody. That got me curious right away, and I begins to pipe him off. He was togged out in white ducks, somethin' like a window cook in a three-off joint, only he didn't sport any apron, and his cap had gold braid on it. His hair was white, too, and his under lip was decorated with one of them old-fashioned teasers—just a little bunch of cotton that the barber had shied. He was a well-built old boy, but his face had a sort of a sole-leather tint to it that didn't look healthy.

From his motions I couldn't make out whether he was havin' a game of hide-and-go-seek, or was bein' chased by a dog. The last thought seemed more likely, so I strolls over to the stone wall and gets ready to hand out a swift kick to the kloodle in case it was needed.

When he sees me the old gent begins to dodge livelier than ever and make signals with his hands. Well, I didn't know his code. I couldn't guess whether he wanted me to run for a club, or was tryin' to keep me from buttin' in, so I just stands there with my mouth open and looks foolish.

Next thing I sees is a wedge-faced, long-legged guy comin' across the lawn on the jump. First off I thought he was pushin' one of those sick-abed chairs, like they use on the board walk at Atlantic City. But as he gets nearer I see it was a green wicker tea wagon—you know. I ain't got to the tea wagon stage myself, but I've seen 'em out at Rockywold and them places. Handy as a pocket in a shirt, they are. When you've got company in the afternoon the butler wheels the thing out on the veranda and digs up a whole tea-makin' outfit from the inside. When it's shut it looks a good deal like one of them laundry push-carts they have in Harlem.

Now, I ain't in love with tea at any time of the day except for supper, and I sure would pass it up just after breakfast; but I don't know as I'd break my neck to get away from it, same's the old gent was doin'. The minute he gets a look at the wagon comin' his way he does some lively side-steppin'. Then he jumps behind a bush and hides, givin' me the sign not to let on.

The long-legged guy knew his business, though; for he came straight on, like he was on trail of a scent, and the first thing old Whitey knows he's been run down. So he gives in then, just as if he'd been tagged.

"Babbitt," says he, "I had you hull down at one time, didn't I?"

But either Babbitt was too much out of breath, or else he wasn't the talkative kind, for he never says a word, but just opens up the top of the cart and proceeds to haul out some bottles and a glass. First he spoons out some white powder into a tumbler. Then he pours in some water and stirs it with a spoon. When the mess is done he sticks it out to the old gent. The old one never lifts a finger, though.

"Salute, first, you frozen-faced scum of the earth!" he yells. "Salute, sir!"

Babbitt makes a stab at salutin', too, and mighty sudden.

"Now, you white-livered imitation of a man," says the old gent, "you may hand over that villainous stuff! Bah!" and he takes a sniff of it.

Babbitt keeps his eyes glued on him until the last drop was down, then he jumped. Lucky he was quick on the duck, for the glass just whizzed over the top of his head. While he was stowin' the things away the old fellow let loose. Say, you talk about a cussin'! I'll bet you never heard a string like that. It wasn't the longshoreman's kind. But the way he put together straight dictionary words was enough to give you a chill. It was the rattlin' style he had of rippin' 'em out, too, that made it sound like swearin'. If there was any part of that long-legged guy that he didn't pay his respects to, from his ears to his toenails, I didn't notice it.

"It's the last time you get any of that slush into me, Babbitt!" says he. "Do you hear that, you peanut-headed, scissor-shanked whelp?"

"Ten-thirty's the next dose, Commodore," says he as he starts off.

"It is, eh, you wall-eyed deck swab?" howls the Commodore. "If you mix any more of that infant food for me I'll skin you alive, and sew you up hind side before. Do you hear that, you?"

I was wearin' a broad grin when the old Commodore turns around to me.

"If that fellow keeps this up," says he, "I shall lose my temper some day. Ever drink medicated milk, eh? Ugh! It tastes the way burnt feathers smell. And I'm dosed with it eight times a day! Milk! But what makes me mad is to have it ladled out to me by that long-faced, fish-eyed food destroyer, whose only joy in life is to hunt me down and gloat over my misery. Oh, I'll get square with him yet, sir; I swear I will!"

"I wish you luck," says I.

"Who are you, anyway?" says he.

"Nobody much," says I; "so there's two of us. I'm livin' in the cottage across the way."

"The deuce you say!" says he. "Then you're Shorty McCabe, aren't you?"

"You're on," says I. "How'd you guess it?"

Well, it seems one of my reg'lars was a partner of his son-in-law, who owned the big place, and they'd been talkin' about me just the day before. After that it didn't take long for the Commodore and me to get a line on each other, and when I finds out he's Roaring Dick, the nervy old chap that stood out on the front porch of his ship all through the muss at Santiago Bay and hammered the daylights out of the Spanish fleet, I gives him the hand.

"I've heard about you in the papers," says I.

"But not so often as I used to read about you," says he.

And say, inside of ten minutes we was like a couple of G. A. R. vets. at a reunion. Then he told me all about the medicated-milk business.

It didn't take any second sight to see that the Commodore was a gay old sport. He'd been on the European station for three years, knockin' around with kings and princes and French and Russian naval officers that was grand dukes and such when they was ashore; and he'd carried along with him a truck driver's thirst and the capacity of a ward boss. The fizzy stuff he'd stowed away in that time must have been enough to sail a ship on. I guess he didn't mind it much, though, for he'd been in pickle a long time. It was the seventeen-course night dinners and the foreign cooking that gave him the knock-out.

All of a sudden his digester had thrown up the job, and before he knew it he was in a state where a hot biscuit or a piece of fried potato would lay him out on his back for a week. He'd come home on sick leave to visit his daughter, and his rich son-in-law had steered him up against a specialist who told him that if he didn't quit and obey orders he wouldn't last three weeks. The orders was to live on nothin' but medicated milk, and for a man that had been livin' the way he had it was an awful jolt. He couldn't be trusted to take the stuff himself, so they hired valets to keep him doped with it.

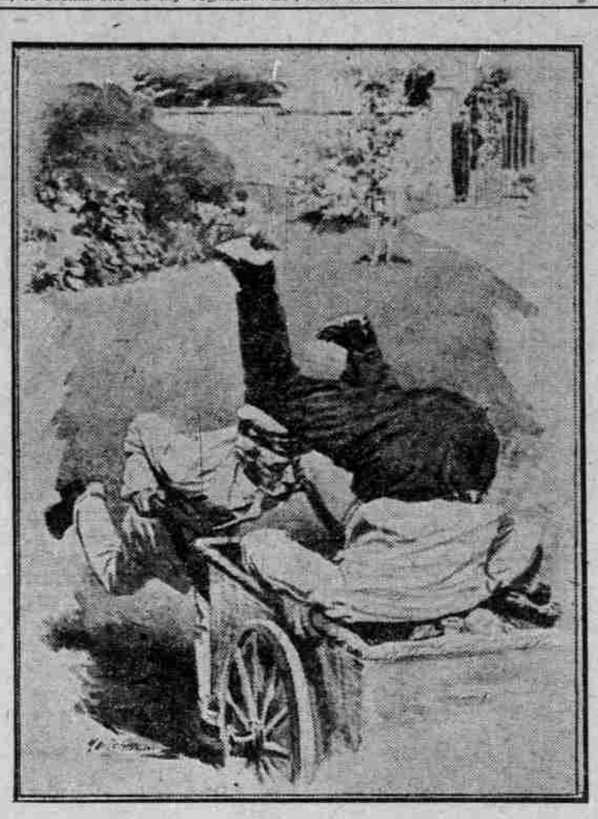
"I scared the first one half to death," says the Commodore, "and the next one I bribed to smuggle out ham sandwiches. Then they got this fellow Babbitt to follow me around with that cursed go-cart, and I haven't had a moment's peace since. He's just about equal to a job like that, Babbitt is. I make him earn his money, though."

You'd have thought so if you could have seen the old Commodore work up games to throw Babbitt off the track. I put in most of the day watchin' 'em at it, and it was as good as a vaudeville act. About a quarter of an hour before it was time for the dose the valet would come out and begin to look around the grounds. Soon as he'd located the Commodore he'd slide off after his tea wagon. That was just where the old boy got in his fine work. The minute Babbitt was out of sight the Commodore makes a break for a new hidin' place, so the valet has to wheel that cart all over the lot, playin' peekaboo behind every bush and tree until he nailed his man.

Now, you'd think most anyone with a head would have cracked a joke now and then with the old gent, and kind of made it easy all round. But not Babbitt. He'd been hired to get medicated milk into the Commodore, and that was all the idea his nut could accommodate at one time. He was one of these stiff-necked, cold-blooded flunkies that don't seem much more human than wooden Indians. He had an aggravatin' way, too, of treatin' the old chap when he got him cornered. He was polite enough, so far as what he had to say, but it was the mean look in his ratty little eyes that grated.

With every dose the Commodore got madder and madder. Some of the names he thought up to call that valet was worth puttin' in a book. It seemed like a shame, though, to stir up the old gent that way, and I don't believe the medicine did him any more good. He took it, though, because he'd promised his daughter he would. Course, I had my own notions of that kind of treatment, but I couldn't see that it was up to me to jump in the coacher's box and give off any advice.

Next mornin' I'd been out for a little leg work, and I was just joggin' into the park again, when I hears all kinds of a ruction goin' on over behind the stone wall. There was screams and yells and shouts, like a Saturday-night riot in Double alley. I pokes up a giraffe neck and sees a couple of women runnin' across the lawn. Pretty soon what they was chasin' comes into view. It was the Commodore. He was pushin' the tea



IT WAS THE COMMODORE PUSHING HIS TEA WAGON.

wagon in front of him, and in the top of that, with just his legs and arms stickin' out, was Babbitt.

I knew what was up in a minute. He'd lost his temper, just as he was afraid he would, and before he'd got it back again he'd grabbed the valet and jammed him head first into the green cart. But where he was goin' with him was more'n I could guess. Anyway, it was somewhere that he was in a hurry to get to, for the old boy was rushin' the outfit across the front yard for all he was worth.

"Oh, stop him, stop him!" screams one of the women, that I figures out must be the daughter.

"Stop 'im! Stop 'im!" yells the other. She looked like one of the maids.

"I'm no back-stop," thinks I to myself. "Besides, this is a family affair."

I'd have hated to have blocked that run, too, for it was doin' me a lot of good, just watchin' it, and thinkin' of the bumps Babbitt was gettin', with his head down among the bottles.

I follows along on the outside, though, and in a minute or so I sees what the Commodore was aimin' at. Out to one side was a cute little fish pond, about a hundred feet across, and he was makin' a bee line for that. It was down in a sort of hollow, with nice smooth turf slopin' clear to the edge.

When the Commodore get half-way down he gives the cart one last push, and five seconds later Mr. Babbitt, with his head still stuck in the wagon, souses into the water like he'd been dropped from a balloon. The old boy stays just long enough to see the splash, and then he keeps right on goin' towards New York.

At that I jumps the stone wall and prepares to do some quick divin', but before I could fetch the pond Babbitt comes to the top, blowin' muddy water out of his mouth and threshin' his arms around windmill fashion. Then his feet touches bottom and he finds he ain't in any danger of bein' drowned. The wagon comes up, too, and the first thing he does is to grab that. By the time I gets there he was wadin' ashore, and the women had made up their minds there wa'n't any use fainting.

"Babbitt," says the Commodore's daughter, "explain your conduct instantly! What were you doing standing on your head in that tea wagon?"

"Please, ma'am, I—I forget," splutters Babbitt, wipin' the mud out of his eyes.

"You forget!" says the lady. And say, anyone that knew the old Commodore, wouldn't have to do any guessin' as to who her father was. "You forget, do you? Well, I want you to remember. Out with it, now!"

"Yes, ma'am," says Babbitt, tryin' to prop up his wilted collar, "I'd just give him his first dose for the day, and I'd dodged the glass, when somethin' catches me from behind, throws me into the tea wagon, and off I goes. But that dose counts, don't it, ma'am? He got it down."

I sees how it was then; Babbitt had been getting a commission for every glass of the medicated stuff he pumped into the Commodore.

"Will you please run after my father and tell him to come back," says the lady to me.

"Sorry," says I, "but I'm no antelope. You'd better telegraph him."

I didn't stay to see any more, I was that sore on the whole crowd, but I hoped the old one would have sense enough to clear out for good.

I didn't hear any more from my neighbors all day, but after supper that night, just about dusk, somebody sneaks in through the back way and wabbles up to the veranda where I was sittin'. It was the old Commodore. He was about all in, too.

"Did—did I drown him?" says he.

"You made an elegant try," says I; "but there wasn't water enough."

"Thank goodness!" says he. "Now I can die."

"What's the use dyin'?" says I. "Ain't there nothin' else left to do but that?"

"I've got to," says he. "I can't live on that cursed stuff they've been giving me, and if I eat anything else I'm done for. The specialist said so."

"Oh, well," says I, "maybe he's made a wrong guess. It's your turn now. Suppose you come in and let me have Mother Whaley broil you a nice juicy hunk of steak?"

Say, he was near starved. I could tell that by the way he looked when I mentioned broiled steak. He shook his head, though. "If I did, I'd die before morning," said he.

"I'll bet you a dollar you wouldn't," says I.

"That almost gets a grin out of him, "Shorty," says he, "I'm going to risk it."

"It's better'n starving to death," says I.

And he sure did eat like a hungry man. When he'd put away a good square meal, includin' a dish of sliced raw onions and two cups of hot tea, I plants him in an arm-chair and shoves out the cigar box. He looks at the Fumadores regretful.

"They've kept those locked away from me for two weeks," says he, "and that was worse than going without food."

"Smoke up, then," says I. "There's one due you."

"As it will probably be my last, I guess I will," says he.

Honest, the old gent was so sure he'd croak before mornin' that he wanted to write some farewell letters, but he was too done up for that. I tucked him into bed, opened the windows, and before I could get out he was sawin' wood like a hired man.

He was still workin' the fog horn when I went in to rout him out at 5 o'clock. It was a tough job, but I got him out of his trance at last.

"Come on," says I. "We've got to do our three miles and have a rub down before breakfast."

First off he swore he couldn't move, and I guess he was some stiff from his sprint the day before, but by the time he'd got out where the birds was singin' and the trees and grass looked like they'd been done over new durin' the night, I was able to coax him into a dog trot. It was a gentle little stunt, but it limbered the old boy up, and after we'd had a shower and a rub he forgot all about his joints.

"Well, are you set on keepin' that date in the obituary column, or will we have breakfast?" says I.

"I could eat a cold lobscouse," says he.

"Mother Whaley's got somethin' better'n that in the kitchen," says I.

"I suppose this will finish me," says he, tackin' the eggs and corn muffins.

Now, wouldn't that give you the pip? Why, with their specialists and medicated dope, they'd got the old chap so leery of good straight grub that he was bein' starved to death. And even after I'd got him braced up into something like condition, he didn't think it was hardly right to go on eatin'.

"I expect I ought to go back and start in on that slop diet again," says he.

I couldn't stand by and see him do that, though. He was too fine an old sport to be polished off in any such style. "See here, Commodore," says I, "if you're dead stuck on makin' a livin' skeleton of yourself, why, I throws up me hands. But if you'll stay here for a couple of weeks and do just as I say, I'll put you in trim to hit up the kind of life I reckon you think is worth livin'."

"By glory!" says he, "if you can do that, I'll—"

"No, you won't," says I. "This is my blow."

Course, it was a cinch. He wa'n't any invalid. There was stuff enough in him to last for 20 years, if it was handled right. He begun to pick up right away. I only worked him hard enough to make the meals seem a long ways apart and the mattress feel good. Inside of a week I had the red back in his cheeks, and he was chuckin' the medicine hall around good and hard, and tellin' me what a scrapper he used to be when he first went to the cadet mill, down to Annapolis. You can always tell when these old boys feel kinky—they begin to remember things like that. Before the fortnight was up he wasn't shyin' at anything on the bill of fare, and he was hintin' around that his thirst was comin' back strong.

"Can't I ever have another drink?" says he, as sad as a kid leavin' home.

"I'd take as little as I could get along with."

"I'll promise to do that," says he.

He did, too. About the second day after he'd gone back to his son-in-law's place, he sends after me to come over. I finds him walkin' around the grounds as spry as a 2-year-old.

"Well," says I, "how did the folks take it?"

He chuckles. "They don't know what to say," says he. "They can't see how a specialist who charges $500 for an hour's visit can be wrong; but they admit I'm as good as new."

"How's Babbitt?" says I.

"That's why I wanted you to come over," says he. "Now, watch." Then he lets out a roar you could have heard ten blocks away, and in about two shakes old wash-day shows up. "Ha! you shark-nosed sculpin!" yells the Commodore, "Where's your confounded tea cart? Go get it, sir!"

"Yes, sir; directly, sir," says Babbitt. He comes trottin' back in a hurry.

"Got any of that blasted decayed milk in it?"

"No, sir," says Babbitt.

"Are you glad or sorry? Speak up, now!"

"I'm glad, sir," says Babbitt, givin' the salute.

"Good!" says the Commodore. "Then open up your wagon and mix me a Scotch high-ball."

And Babbitt did it like a little man. "I find," says the Commodore, winkin'

"I can get along with as few as six of these a day."

at me over the top of his glass, "that I can get along with as few as six of these a day. To your very good health, Professor McCabe."

"Stand it? Well, I shouldn't wonder. He's a tough one. And ten years from now, if there's another Spanish fleet to be filled full of shot holes, I shouldn't be surprised to find my old Commodore fit and ready to turn the trick.

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COL. EDWARD D. BAKER MATCHLESS ORATOR

Tribute to Oregon's First Senator From a Man Who Heard His Great Speech in the Senate Replying to Breckenridge

"My Day and Generation" is a book by Hon. Clark E. Carr, prominent for many years in the politics and general affairs of Illinois. He had personal acquaintance with Lincoln, Douglas, Ingersoll, Cullom, Greeley, Grant, Jefferson Davis and most other eminent men of his day, and his book is a storehouse of short articles or original character on them and many others of national fame. He knew Edward D. Baker, while this matchless orator was a resident of Illinois, and gives a sketch of him, which we reproduce here—commending at the same time all the sketches to the reader. The book is published by A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago.

AMONG the first names I heard, when at 13 years of age I found myself in Illinois with my father's family, was that of Colonel Edward D. Baker. He had been well known in the state for several years when the Mexican War came, and in that war, as colonel of an Illinois regiment, had gained distinction. He had already, when I first heard his name, been a member of Congress, having been elected and re-elected under circumstances peculiar, but of such a character as to add to, rather than detract from, the distinction hitherto achieved. He was ambitious, so much so that it was a matter of general comment. When both were young men, Lincoln used to tell a story of Baker which showed the popular feeling in regard to this peculiarity. Mr. Lincoln said that an acquaintance surprised young Baker seated on a log in a grove adjoining Jacksonville, an open law book lying at his feet, sobbing as if his heart would break. "What can be the matter?" exclaimed the friend, in sympathy. "I have—just—read in that book," answered Baker, between his sobs, "The—Constitution—of—the—United—States—and find that—no man can be President—who was not born in the United States." Baker was born in London, England.

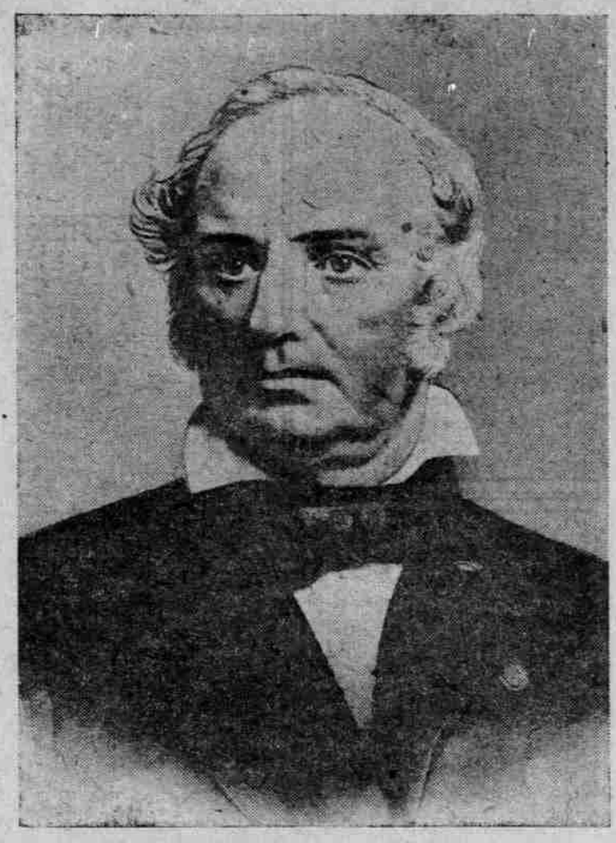
The great glory of Baker was in his public speaking. He was in this regard gifted to so high a degree as to be considered by all who heard him as one among the greatest of orators. While his orations did not, in finished scholarship, equal those of Webster or Everett, there were occasional flashes of eloquence that surpassed either, and he was always the most charming and persuasive of speakers. Even to this day, in Illinois and all up and down the Pacific slope, the older men and women tell of the magic of Baker's words as they fell from his lips with such irresistible power as to carry all before him.

In riding the circuit throughout Central Illinois practicing law, Baker visited and attended court at the different county seats. I know no better description of him than that given in an able address delivered before the Illinois State Historical Society by Hon. William T. Davidson, of Lewistown, editor of the Fulton County Democrat, as follows:

"Ned Baker was in a class by himself. If he only spoke for five minutes to the court on some point of law, the crowded courtroom was all attention. But if in a murder case he spoke for hours, his audience was thrilled to the verge of collapse. Two-thirds of a century has passed, but I can see that straight, lithe, graceful blonde youth as he swayed his audience, jurors, the bar, and even the judge upon the bench, with the music of his voice, his word pictures, his irresistible logic and illustrations, and the unconscious, spontaneous, perfervid oratory that even now come fresh to me."

Colonel Caleb Finch, who emigrated to California from Galesburg in 1849, was fond of telling of a triumph of Baker's at Marysville.

This frontier town, like many of the others, was then populated by desperate, devil-may-care men, whose sympathies were usually with the pro-slavery, negro-hating party. Many of the Marysville men were from Central and Southern Illinois. Baker, who had emigrated from Illinois only a year or two before, was already well known in San Francisco, and his fame was gradually extending throughout the state. Colonel Finch had known and often heard him in Illinois, and, with others of his political party, invited him to Marysville. So soon as they became aware that Baker had been invited, the bad element, which preponderated, knowing his radical views rose up against him and declared that he should not speak. They were so numerous and so desperate that even those who had invited him felt misgivings about his safety, and finally, when he arrived, advised that, after all, he should not attempt to speak. Baker agreed, but suggested that if they objected to his making a political speech, it be given out that he would simply say a few words recalling old times in the states. To this everybody assented, but all came with their revolvers in their hip pockets to see the arrangement carried out to the letter. The meeting was in a rough board theater, such as was always erected in frontier mining towns, upon the stage of which actors, men and women of not the best character, nightly appeared.



COLONEL EDWARD D. BAKER.

Colonel Finch said that his heart almost sank within him as he saw with what malignity those desperate men, all armed to the teeth, received Colonel Baker as he came forward, looking the hero he had proved himself to be in Mexico. There was a slight tremor in his voice—which Colonel Finch said he afterwards thought, familiar as was the speaker with all the arts of oratory, was assumed—together with such evident kindliness and tenderness of feeling as they had never before seen manifested. The first sentence the speaker uttered was: "We are far from home and friends and kindred, far from those who love us, but they do love us still, just as when we harnessed the mule teams and they followed us as we drove down the road starting upon our long journey to California."

He described the incidents of parting. "When we bade adieu to parents and wives and children and brothers and sisters and sweethearts," he took them, as it seemed, back into the log houses they had left on the prairies, gathered the family about the great fireplace, the good father and mother and elders seated, the children and the dog lying on the floor, the viands cooking upon the hearth, the pots swinging from the crane, the latch-string always hanging out—picturing an Illinois home so completely that they were there once again enjoying its delights. He gave an account of the conversation that was perhaps being held in that home at that very moment about those who had gone to California, some of whom were there present.

"Before the great orator had spoken half an hour," the Colonel said, "nearly every man in the audience was blowing his nose and wiping his eyes on his sleeve. Finally he paused and said, "But you don't want to hear me any longer. I came to make a political speech!"

"'Go on! Go on! Go on!' came from a hundred voices.

"'But I want to say something about politics,' said the orator.

"'Say what you Gawd damn please,' growled the worst desperado in the crowd, who had emigrated from the Wabash region down in Egypt," wiping his eyes and blowing his nose.

"And as sure as you live," concluded Colonel Finch, "Ned Baker spoke for over two hours on politics, and I never in all my life heard the Democrats get such a roasting."

I never myself heard Colonel Baker make a political speech before a popular audience, but fortunately I twice heard him in the United States Senate, once in reply to Senator Breckinridge.

I was at Washington during the extra session of Congress called by President Lincoln upon the breaking out of the war, and spent considerable time in the galleries of the Senate. Congress was occupied almost entirely during that session in the consideration of war questions and in providing means for raising armies and revenue.

Colonel Baker was then a Senator from Oregon, but had already accepted a commission in the Army, and was making ready to take the field. As may be supposed, I took great interest in a man who had conferred so much glory upon my own state and with whose public career I was familiar. He wore what I think they called in the Army an undress uniform, with no other ornament than brass buttons. I had only seen him when, as elsewhere stated, he introduced his old friend, President Lincoln, upon the occasion of his inauguration. I have never seen a more striking personality. His was a fine figure and his carriage and bearing suggested, even in citizen's clothing, the military man. He had literally what might be called eagle eyes, with a high forehead and a decidedly Roman nose, "the front of Jove himself." In figure and bearing and movement he seemed to me to be Julius Caesar, as in my mind I had pictured him. I have never, and I think very few have ever, heard so wonderful a voice—not too strong, nor loud, nor piercing, but as clear as a bell, and perfectly modulated as it resounded through the Senate Chamber. I had never heard tones so thrilling as they rose in denunciation, in appeal, in passionate entreaty, in depicting the glories of his country, in commendation of the patriotic services and sacrifices of her heroes, and in scornful invective against her enemies.

I have heard one of the old-timers, himself an orator of distinction, declare that he would give everything he possessed if he could learn to say, "The laurel wreath that decks the soldier's brow" as Baker said it. As I then heard him, there was grandeur in every sentence.

John C. Breckinridge was the foremost Southern Senator, the last of those of distinction sympathizing entirely with the South, who had up to that time retained his seat. He had only a few days before retired from the Vice-Presidency, closing his career in that position as candidate for the Presidency, for which high office he had been supported by almost the entire South.

Senator Breckinridge was a man of striking personality, elegant in deportment and charming in manner—the best ideal of Southern chivalry. Although not so strong nor so rugged a character as Jefferson Davis, and although he never rose to such heights of oratory as did other Southern statesmen, no other seemed to have been cast in so fine a mold. He was not a brilliant speaker, but he rose to a considerable height of eloquence which he sustained throughout his address, however extended.

I did not hear all of Senator Breckinridge's carefully prepared address, in which he attempted to justify the Southern people who had withdrawn from the Union and set up a separate government, but I heard enough of it to realize how able it was. Scarcely ever did any orator on the wrong side of a bad cause make a better plea of justification.

I have hardly ever heard a speaker so complimented for an achievement in oratory as was Senator Breckenridge by Senator Baker in his reply. But there was no mistaking Senator Baker's estimate of the significance of that oratory. I recall such sentences as this, spoken with impassioned earnestness, "The address of the Senator from Kentucky, Mr. President, was the most beautiful, polished, charming TREASON that was ever uttered," and with his finger pointed at Breckinridge. Baker seemed to hang upon the word as if to impale him.

But the climax of Senator Baker's reply was when he depicted Hannibal, after the battle of Cannae, menacing Rome, and a Roman Senator excusing and justifying those enemies of their country. I can never forget the appearance, the attitude, the sublimity of Baker as, his arm raised, his voice ringing through the chamber, he shouted, "What would have been thought of him?" And the reply of Senator Fessenden, which, although sotto voce, was heard throughout the Chamber, "He would have been hurled from the Tarpeian Rock." Baker took up the sentiment and complimented Senator Fessenden as "learned far more than myself in such lore." The passage was so brilliant that I am constrained to give it in full:

What would have been thought if, in another capital, in another republic, in a yet more martial age, a Senator as grave, not more eloquent and dignified than the Senator from Kentucky, yet with the Roman purple flowing over his shoulders, had risen in his place, surrounded by all the illustrations of Roman glory, and declared that advancing Hannibal was just, and that Carthage ought to be dealt with in terms of peace? What would have been thought if, after the battle of Cannae, a Senator there had risen in his place, and denounced every levy of the Roman people, every expenditure of its treasure, every appeal to the old recollections and the old glories?

Senator Fessenden—He would have been hurled from the Tarpeian Rock.

Senator Baker—Sir, a Senator, himself learned far more than myself in such lore, tells me, in a voice that I am glad is audible, that "he would have been hurled from the Tarpeian Rock." It is a grand commentary upon the American constitution that we permit these to be uttered. I ask the Senator to recollect, too, what, save to send aid and comfort to the enemy, do these predictions of his amount to? Every word thus uttered falls as a note of inspiration upon every Confederate ear. Every sound thus uttered is a word—and falling from his lips, a mighty word—of kindling and triumph to a foe that determines to advance. For me, I have no such word as a Senator to utter. For me, amid temporary defeat, disaster, disgrace, it seems to me that duty calls me to utter another word, and that is, bold, sudden, forward, determined war, according to the laws of war, by armies, by military commanders, clothed with full power, advancing with all the past glories of the Republic urging them on to conquest.

There was never a more brilliant oratorical climax in the United States Senate, if indeed there ever was anywhere. In order to have even a faint conception of it, and of the circumstances which justified it, one must reflect that the address was made only ten days after the disastrous defeat of the Union Army at Bull Run, and that from the windows of the Capitol one could then, with a glass, see the Confederate flags and the shadowy forms of the Confederate battalions as they moved about on the distant fields of the Old Dominion, preparing to advance upon Washington.

Just beside the grand portal of the Capitol at Rome, which stands upon one of the seven hills, is the Tarpeian Rock, from which malefactors were hurled to be dashed in pieces upon the stones 100 feet below. Happily there is no such awful chasm near the Capitol of the United States, but at that moment we were so wrought up that, had such condign punishment been inflicted upon the object of this scathing denunciation, we could have looked on unmoved. When the climax was reached, all eyes turned to Senator Breckinridge. He sat there undaunted, the personification of Southern chivalry. As we looked into his face, it bore unmistakable evidence of his noble birth and lineage. But the unnatural pallor that blanched his cheeks and the nervous twirling of his thumbs, as his hands were clasped upon his desk, gave sure indications that it required a supreme effort for him to appear unmoved.

Of several brilliant passages that flashed forth from the inspired lips of Baker during that session, I recall another that I heard, so striking that it made almost as vivid an impression upon my mind as the one just quoted.

The Southern Senators and, in fact, all those who wished the Government to stop the war and recognize the Confederacy, descanted eloquently upon the horrors of war and the beauties of peace, to which Senator Baker replied,

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