

American Volunteer.

OUR COUNTRY—MAY IT ALWAYS BE RIGHT—BUT RIGHT OR WRONG OUR COUNTRY.

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AMERICAN VOLUNTEER.

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TERMS:

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Poetical.

Lines

On the Death of a Father, Mother and Brother.
By Miss R. Tucker.

Our friends are gone, they slumber now,
In death's dominion bound;
In calm, unbroken peace to rest,
Till the judgment trumpet sounds.

A solemn, death-like silence reigns,
Unmingled by a word,
As we remember brighter days,
When a Mother's voice was heard.

The hours and days that tried to us,
Almost unnoted glide,
Are slow in loneliness passed,
Since our dear Mother died.

When morning light with ruddy beams,
Breaks forth to human view,
It brings to mind a Father's smile,
So loving, kind and true.

When evening shades are spread,
In silence o'er the earth,
We sadly miss our Father's form,
Around the blazing hearth.

Oh times we think it cannot be,
Death has taken them away,
And memory oft in busy hours,
Calls back familiar names.

No other one on earth can fill,
Our absent Brother's place,
The care, the form may not be there,
But not our Brother's face.

Miscellaneous.

VIDOCQ.

THE CHARCOAL BURNER OF BOUEN.

Nut miles from the city of Rouen, in France, is located a wild and somewhat extensive forest. This wood is principally inhabited by charcoal burners; and many are the dark legends in which they figure. Of course the tales are most exaggerated, and in most cases, have no foundation at all.

During the year 1833, however, several travelers, whose way lay through this forest mysteriously disappeared. The whole place was searched, and the inhabitants rigorously examined, but no clue was obtained, and they were dismissed. For several months after this no travelers were missed, and finally the public excitement was allayed. It was at this time that the incidents related in this sketch occurred.

It was a fine morning in early autumn, and the woods presented a beautiful appearance. The birds were gaily singing, and the rays of an afternoon sun, not too warm, were gliding through the tops of the trees, and lighting the forest, surrounded by the hoops of smoking earth, stood one of those burners. He was a splendid specimen of a man, as far as physical proportions were concerned; fully six feet in height, and stout in proportion. His head shoulders might have contained the strength of a Hercules. His head was large and covered with a shaggy mass of hair, and his features were decidedly repulsive. His eyes were small and nearly covered with bushy eyebrows. He had altogether a cruel and malevolent appearance.

As we introduced him to the reader, he was leaning upon a large axe, apparently in a listening position. The road ran by the place where he was standing, but he could not see far along it on account of a sudden turn a little distance from him. The clatter of horse's hoofs, however, could be distinctly heard, and in a few minutes the horse and rider came in sight. The new comer was a small, thin, active looking man, and from his dress was a gentleman well off. His eyes were unusually keen and searching, and were bent upon the charcoal burner in such a manner that the latter quailed before him.

"A fair day, my good man," said the horseman, in the easy manner of one speaking to an inferior.

"Excellent, Monsieur, for one of my trade. I have not the boiling-suits of summer, nor yet the blanketing of winter."

"Since you are so nicely suited, I suppose you are what so few are in the world—happy?"

"You say truly, Monsieur—few, few indeed, are truly happy. There is no happiness without contentment."

"And are you contented?"

"At times I think I am; but when I see the nobleman riding by in his coach and following in riches, with servants to obey his every wish, and I have to toil hard for my daily bread, I cannot help thinking that God is sometimes unjust."

"And you never think of appropriating any of the superfluous riches to yourself?"

"What does Monsieur mean? I read that the thoughts of disobeying the laws of God and man ever entered into my mind. I meant nothing; it was merely an idle question; but I did not stop to talk thus, but to ask the way to the mill. It is getting late, and I must go on the move."

"If Monsieur is in a hurry, I can direct him to the mill in half the time."

"I shall be very much obliged to you, my friend."

"This lane begins very near to my home, which is about a half mile further on. You had better stop there, as my wife can point the way to you."

"I will do so. Here is a reward," exclaimed the horseman, offering him a piece of

gold, "The other drew back and refused to take it, alleging he had done nothing to deserve it. The horseman then put spurs to his horse and rode away, a bend in the road soon hiding him from sight. Riding on until he had imagined that his horse's hoofs could not be heard by the charcoal burner, he alighted, the latter he dismounted, and silently retraced his steps. He arrived at the place where he had left his friend, the charcoal burner, but the latter was not to be seen. The stranger hastened back to his horse and remounted.

"Is it as I expected," he muttered. "This road makes a large bend here, and by cutting across he can reach his home before me. I care little, though, as I am forewarned. We thus see what'll come out of this. I am a friend who he refused my gold piece; he considers it as his own, and he thinks he may as well take it altogether; but I must hurry on and finish this business before nightfall."

So saying he put spurs to his horse and rode on until he had retraced his steps. As he first caught sight of it, he thought he detected a man's face pressed against one of the windows. Of this, however, he could not be certain, because, as such was, instantly disappeared. At the sound of his horse's hoofs, an old woman appeared in the doorway, and gazing curiously at him, waited till he rode up. The horseman could not help thinking that he had seen the most fitting companion for his husband. The expression of her countenance was even more villainous. The stranger, however, did not stop to criticize her appearance, but saluted her, saying:

"I beg pardon, madam, that you are the wife of the charcoal burner, whom I met up the road?"

The woman replied in the affirmative.

"Then I will tell you that I am bound for Paris, and I wish to reach before nightfall. He told me of a lane which was much shorter than the regular road, which, he said, you could point out to me."

"Certainly, if this is all Monsieur wishes, he is easily satisfied. You may see, a little way up, above the large tree which towers above the rest. Just beyond that is a large rock, and the lane enters the road on the other side of it. As it is very narrow and grown up with bushes, you would hardly notice it, with these directions you can hardly fail."

"Never you fear; I shall not miss the road."

"Is that all Monsieur wishes?"

"I believe so, but stop a minute. I offered your husband a piece of gold, but he refused to take it. Perhaps you may be more successful."

"The old woman greedily took the proffered coin, saying:

"I have not so sensitive. We might both save before he would take a cent."

"I see you differ from him a little," returned the horseman, laughing. He then put spurs to his horse, and rode on. In a few minutes he reached the large rock alluded to, and he could then perceive the entrance to a narrow lane artfully concealed by bushes. He soon made his way through them, and when once in the lane, found it a little narrower than he had expected. He was about to turn back, when he perceived a group of bushes, as he proceeded. He stopped a moment to examine the priming of his pistol, muttering:

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"So he buried his spurs into the horse's side, and the panted beast sprang forward to clear the way, as to dash the charcoal burner to the ground, and completely sprang over him, dashing the knife from his hand, leaving him stunned in the middle of the road. The horseman turned instantly, and drawing his remaining pistol from his holster, wait-

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Having seen that his arms were ready for use, he rode slowly forward keeping a careful watch on each side of the road, that he might not be surprised. As long as the woods kept open as they were, he had no fear as there was no good hiding place for a man. Eup long the woods began to get thicker and more sombre. Little hillocks, covered with ferns, sprang up here and there, and at last they became a large range skirting at each side of the road. The horseman felt that the time which was to try him was near at hand, and he dropped the reins until his hand over his right shoulder, and he felt that he was in such a manner as a person would not notice, and he then assumed an air of carelessness, though his watch was keener than ever. At length he came to a place where the road was very narrow, and the bushes seemed to have adapted this place for the purpose of concealment. The rocks which skirted the road at this place were about breast high, and so perpendicular as to have the appearance of a wall; they were covered with a growth of ivy, so thick as to be nearly impenetrable. The tall trees on each side of the road twisted their tops together, forming a natural roof of leaves and branches, and rendering the place as dark as midnight.

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Having seen that his arms were ready for use, he rode slowly forward keeping a careful watch on each side of the road, that he might not be surprised. As long as the woods kept open as they were, he had no fear as there was no good hiding place for a man. Eup long the woods began to get thicker and more sombre. Little hillocks, covered with ferns, sprang up here and there, and at last they became a large range skirting at each side of the road. The horseman felt that the time which was to try him was near at hand, and he dropped the reins until his hand over his right shoulder, and he felt that he was in such a manner as a person would not notice, and he then assumed an air of carelessness, though his watch was keener than ever. At length he came to a place where the road was very narrow, and the bushes seemed to have adapted this place for the purpose of concealment. The rocks which skirted the road at this place were about breast high, and so perpendicular as to have the appearance of a wall; they were covered with a growth of ivy, so thick as to be nearly impenetrable. The tall trees on each side of the road twisted their tops together, forming a natural roof of leaves and branches, and rendering the place as dark as midnight.

It was a scene sufficient to appal the stoutest heart, but the horseman, although he knew that the next moment might be his last, rode forward with as careless an air as he might have shown had he been traveling the streets of a populous city. His hand still grasped the butt of his pistol, and his keen eyes still searched each covert. Suddenly a pistol shot rang out upon the air, and the horseman fell to the ground, his head striking the ground with a force that was almost instantly fatal. A wild shriek rang upon the air, and the next moment there sprang from behind the tree, not the charcoal burner, as he had expected, but his wife. She was flowing copiously from her forehead, and presented a horrible spectacle. She tottered to the edge of the wall of rocks and fell into the road, a corpse.

"Had I known to be a woman, the horse would not have been so quick. The charcoal burner held a gleaming knife in his hand, already uplifted to strike.—While the horseman's attention had been engaged by the tragical end of the woman, he had silently crept up behind her, making a would-be assassin spring forward, making him hold the discharged pistol in his hand, and with his long barrel managed to parry the blow.

"So he buried his spurs into the horse's side, and the panted beast sprang forward to clear the way, as to dash the charcoal burner to the ground, and completely sprang over him, dashing the knife from his hand, leaving him stunned in the middle of the road. The horseman turned instantly, and drawing his remaining pistol from his holster, wait-

ed for the other to rise. The latter staggered to his feet and leaning over the edge of the road, gazed sullenly and revengefully upon his conqueror. Thus the strange couple regarded each other for some time, until at last the horseman broke the silence.

"So, my friend," he said, "your career is ended at last."

"Yes, curse you! I'd rend you asunder, too, if—"

"You dared, I presume, put in the stranger. I doubt not your good intentions, and can only thank heaven you have not a power proportionate to your will, but I am doubly thankful that I have been the means of ridding the earth of such a monster. I presume you see what'll come out of this. I am a friend who he refused my gold piece; he considers it as his own, and he thinks he may as well take it altogether; but I must hurry on and finish this business before nightfall."

So saying he put spurs to his horse and rode on until he had retraced his steps. As he first caught sight of it, he thought he detected a man's face pressed against one of the windows. Of this, however, he could not be certain, because, as such was, instantly disappeared. At the sound of his horse's hoofs, an old woman appeared in the doorway, and gazing curiously at him, waited till he rode up. The horseman could not help thinking that he had seen the most fitting companion for his husband. The expression of her countenance was even more villainous. The stranger, however, did not stop to criticize her appearance, but saluted her, saying:

"I beg pardon, madam, that you are the wife of the charcoal burner, whom I met up the road?"

The woman replied in the affirmative.

"Then I will tell you that I am bound for Paris, and I wish to reach before nightfall. He told me of a lane which was much shorter than the regular road, which, he said, you could point out to me."

"Certainly, if this is all Monsieur wishes, he is easily satisfied. You may see, a little way up, above the large tree which towers above the rest. Just beyond that is a large rock, and the lane enters the road on the other side of it. As it is very narrow and grown up with bushes, you would hardly notice it, with these directions you can hardly fail."

"Never you fear; I shall not miss the road."

"Is that all Monsieur wishes?"

"I believe so, but stop a minute. I offered your husband a piece of gold, but he refused to take it. Perhaps you may be more successful."

"The old woman greedily took the proffered coin, saying:

"I have not so sensitive. We might both save before he would take a cent."

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