The Lancaster Intelligencer.

"THAT COUNTRY IS THE MOST PROSPEROUS WHERE LABOR COMMANDS THE GREATEST REWARD."—BUCHANAN.

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MY BROTHER AND I.

From the door where I stand I can see his fair land
Sloping up to a broad sunny height,
The meadows new shorn, and the green wavy corn,
The buckwheat all blossoming white:
There a gay garden blooms, there are cedars like plumes,
And a rill from the mountain leaps up in a fountain,
And shakes its glad locks in the light.

He dwells in the hall where the long shadows fall
On the checkered and cool esplanade;
I live in a cottage secluded and small,
By a gnarly old apple-tree's shade:
Side by side in the glen, I and my brother Ben—
Just the river between us, with borders as green as
The banks where in childhood we played.

But now nevermore upon river or shore
He runs or he rows by my side;
For I am still poor, like our father before,
And he, full of riches and pride,
Leads a life of such show, there is no room, you know,
In the very fine carriage he gained by his marriage,
For an old-fashioned brother to ride.

His wife, with her gold, gives him friends, I am told,
With whom she is rather too gay—
The senator's son, who is ready to run
For her gloves and her fan, night or day,
And to gallop beside, when she wishes to ride:
Oh! no doubt, 'tis an honor to see smile upon her
Such world-famous fellows as they!

Ah! brother of mine, while you sport, while you dine,
While you drink of your wine like a lord,
You might curse, one would say, and grow jaundiced and gray,
With such guests every day at your board!
But you sleek down your rage like a pard in a cage,
And blink in meek fashion through the bars of your passion,
As husbands like you can afford.

For still you must think, as you eat, as you drink,
As you hunt with your dogs and your guns,
How your pleasures are bought with the wealth that she brought,
And you were once hunted by duns.
Oh! I envy you not your more fortunate lot;
I've a wife all my own in my own little cot,
And with happiness, which is the only true riches,
The cup of our love overruns.

We have bright, rosy girls, fair as ever an earl's,
And the wealth of their curls is our gold;
Oh! their lisp and their laugh, they are sweeter by half
Than the wine that you quaff red and old!
We have love-lighted looks, we have work, we have books,
Our boys have grown manly and bold,
And they never shall blush, when their proud cousins brush
From the walls of their college such cobwebs of knowledge
As careless young fingers may hold.

Keep your pride and your cheer, for we need them not here,
And for me far too dear they would prove;
For gold is but gloss, and possessions are dross,
And gain is all loss, without love.
You severing tide is not fordless or wide—
The soul's blue abysses our homesteads divide:
Down through the still river they deepen forever,
Like the skies it reflects from above.

Still my brother thou art, though our lives lie apart,
Path from path, heart from heart, more and more.
Oh! I have not forgot—oh! remember you not
Our room in the cot by the shore?
And a night soon will come, when the murmur and hum
Of our days shall be dumb evermore,
And again we shall lie side by side, you and I,
Beneath the green cover you helped to lay over
Our honest old father of yore.

A NIGHT IN A SNOW-DRIFT.

In the following narrative I have avoided mentioning names, dates, or places. I need not assign a reason; the incidents of my story will supply one.

Several years ago—never mind how many—I was in America, employed in surveying, prior to the construction of one of those vast lines of railway which are now found of as great utility for warfare, as they were then intended for peaceful traffic.

I had gone out from England with very few pounds in my pocket, but with a good education, and, I may say, with some ability.

I entered heartily into my work, and found it highly remunerative.

Although I thoroughly enjoyed the occupation, and the many rough and sometimes romantic incidents inseparable from it, I could never really assimilate myself with the American character; and, as I was the only Englishman on that part of the line, my loneliness was extreme—relieved, indeed, occasionally by violent quarrels with men who sneered at the 'sulky Britisher.'

One day, in the depth of as severe a winter as I ever experienced, I had to take a long journey, the greater part by rail—then only a single line. At the wretched shed dignified with the name of 'station' a somewhat curious party attracted my attention.

They were four:

An old and apparently totally paralyzed gentleman, so swathed in shawls, comforters, fur cap, and buffalo robe, that only a small strip of his face was visible, and that was of a death-like hue.

A young lady, thickly veiled, apparently not the daughter of the invalid; for she seemed to avoid looking at or approaching him, as he half sat, half lay, propped up by boxes and bags in a corner of the one bench.

Two sallow, evil-looking men completed the number. They were dressed in a much inferior manner to the others, but evidently had charge of both invalid and lady.

I got into the same car with this strange party; anything a little out of the common being acceptable to me.

Whether I should have done so could I have foreseen the tragic termination of our journey I cannot tell.

The snow was lying very deep on the ground, and occasionally, where a drift had formed across the line, we had much to do to force our way through it.

I was the only occupant of the car besides the party I have described, and amused myself by speculating on the connecting links between such a strange quartette.

The lady was a lady evidently. Though I had not caught a glimpse of her face—as she had not once lifted the heavy veil she wore—yet every fold of her dress, every movement of her figure, showed refinement.

We had been plodding on at a miserable rate for many hours, the snow becoming thicker and thicker.

To look out of the windows was useless; for the ground was snow, and the air seemed to be snow, so thickly was it falling.

What could I do but watch my companions?

I had forgotten to say that in the early part of the journey I had made some casual remark to the two men about the entire hopeless state of their charge; but I received such a short answer, accompanied by such an evil look, that I resolved to hold my tongue for the remainder of the journey.

The young lady, when I spoke to the men, gave a quick sort of half turn towards me, as if *she* would have spoken; but was instantly checked by one of the men desiring her, in a rough and peremptory manner, to change her seat.

Still dragging along—and more snow, more snow! * * *

The men, having refreshed themselves several times from a spirit flask, took a bottle and a spoon, and prepared to feed the paralyzed gentleman.

I could not see what they gave him, or whether he ate; for the men carefully placed themselves and the young lady between the sick man and me.

I should here say that the young lady had absolutely refused to take any food whatever, though several times pressed by the men.

They are bending over the invalid; the young lady, by their direction, also standing, with her side face towards me.

With a quick and silent movement she raises her veil, and looks for an instant with a questioning, agonized glance in my face.

She must have seen honest pity there; for, slightly leaning towards me, pallid as death, she formed a word with her lips—but without sounding it—pointing to the men; then lowered her veil again.

Although the whole had taken place in a second or two, the men had observed some movement, and turned fiercely to her, looking like devils at both of us.

I, however, was already sitting with folded arms, and eyes half shut, as if sleepy; not so sleepy, though, but that I caught a moment's view of that strip of face I had seen at the station.

That second look satisfied me of what I had doubted—the word dumbly spoken by the young lady. The word was '*Murder!*'

I sat still and thought—

'Here I am with a couple of murderers—probably armed—their victim apparently the father of that lovely girl. Yes—this is the explanation of her shunning him at the station, and in lifting him into the cars. I have my revolver—not loaded; if it were, I couldn't shoot these men down without more proof against them than a word—only seen, not heard. It is of no use giving them up at the end of our journey, for, of course, they will say that, half dead when he started, he died of the cold in the cars. Cold! Yes—bitterly, piercingly cold; and our stove does not seem to give the heat that it should; and there is no more fuel!'

Although I could not see through the young lady's veil, *she* doubtless could see me through it. I nodded slightly to her, and fumbling in the folds of my cloak, half exposed the barrel of my revolver.

The answer was a scarcely perceptible shake of the head.

For the twentieth time we are pushing and battering at a drift; this time it must be a deep one, for we are come to a dead stop.

'I guess I must get some wood from that darned conductor, or we shall be friz,' said one of the men, the shorter and least evil-looking of the two.

'Do, said I, 'for it is awfully cold, even for us who are strong; what must it be for your invalid charge!'

'Oh! he won't hurt,' replied the man.

'You shut up, and fetch the wood!' said the other.

He returned soon, and said the engineer would not let him have a stick, declaring it was not his business to supply the cars, and that he had barely enough to keep his own fire up.

On going out to see the state of affairs for myself, I found the drift, in which we were fast, was of a most formidable size; and saw at once that, without digging, the engine could not possibly force its way through.

I went to the engineer, whom I knew, and asked if he could spare us a log or two; but even whilst asking I saw how useless the request was, *for he had no wood!*

Nine o'clock at night—still snowing—no fire, and no fuel!

Fast buried in a snow-drift, on a single line of rail—miles away from any house.

I must spend the night with a dead man and his two murderers!

But the poor girl! How can she bear the cold?

All the men set to work vigorously to clear the line, whilst there was yet fire enough and steam enough to carry us through.

We were not many miles from our destination.

Dig! Yes—but who can dig without a spade?

Small progress was made; it soon became apparent to all that we were fast, until two o'clock, when the night mail followed us.

Five mortal hours in that piercing cold!

The conductor, half frozen as he was, walked a quarter of a mile, down the line, and extemporized a danger signal, as best he could; I and the other passengers getting into the cars, and wrapping ourselves up, grimly to bear the five hours of misery. As I enter, I see only the shorter of the two men; on asking him for his friend, he says:

'Oh! he's crouching down by the fire-box of the engine to get warm.'

I mentally add—'And will go to sleep, and when the fire goes out will be frozen to death!'

I now saw the young lady watching her companion closely, seeing him become sleepy from copious draughts of rum and water.

A loud snoring soon proclaimed him fast asleep.

The poor girl then with half frozen fingers lifted her veil, and whispered with trembling voice:

'Can you help me? You are English, are you not? I think I can trust you!'

'Sit perfectly still for an instant,' I answered.

A happy thought had struck me.

I had for some time past suffered much from face and toothache, and was in the habit of carrying a stoppered bottle of chloroform.

I took out my bottle, and, signing to the young lady to be silent, poured the whole upon my handkerchief, and held it over the face of the sleeping murderer!

In five minutes I knew he was safely disposed of for some hours to come.

I called loudly in his ear, and shook him roughly, but he did not stir.

I shall never forget the earnest joy with which the poor girl clasped my hands and thanked me.

I don't know whose heart beat faster then—hers, or mine, I know that I forgot all about the dreadful cold, and only felt an instant longing to take her in my arms and kiss her.

Taking the sleeping man's great buffalo robe and wrapping it around her, I bade her sit down, and asked her the cause of her father's murder, and why she seemed to be a prisoner.

As I spoke, I could not help an involuntary shudder at the appearance of the corpse.

In administering the chloroform to the man I had accidentally displaced the rug, which the murderers had carefully arranged so as to hide the face of the supposed paralytic.

The eyes were closed and blue, the nose pinched, the mouth partly open, with curled and strained lips, the teeth set, and grinning horribly in the half light reflected from the snow in which we were imbedded.

It had now ceased snowing.

In answer to my question, she said:

'I am alone in the world; I can trust you—I will tell you all. The—the *body*'—here she turned paler than ever she was before—'the body is not that of my father—oh no! I could not have borne it! It is my uncle. I am a Virginian; my father and mother both died when I was very young, leaving me, a rich orphan, to the care of my uncle.

'All I know was that I was well educated, and had whatever money I wanted; but when I left school, my uncle was strangely altered; my presence seemed to irritate him.

'He tried to make me marry that wretch who has gone out; he was my uncle's overseer, and a more cruel or wicked man never lived.'

Here I suddenly thought, 'What if he should not fall asleep by the engine, but should return!' I went out and found him in what I knew would be his death sleep—crouching completely under the fire-box of the engine.

The engineer had left his cold and now useless machine, and sought shelter in the cars.

I returned, and my lovely charge continued.

'I was often talked to by some of our old slaves, and in particular by our dear old nurse, about this man. She said he had come a few years ago, and in some way had obtained an undue influence over her massa—ordering everything and treating the slaves, who had never experienced anything but kindness from my father, and uncle, with the greatest severity.

'This villain persecuted me with his odious attentions; and one day—I can't tell you—but I rushed to my uncle, who, when he heard, called him into the house, and in a furious manner said:

'Although you have by your hellish cunning obtained my promise of my niece as your wife, I will not tamely submit to see her insulted! Take that, you villain!'—firing a pistol full in his face.

'Fortunately passion defeated itself, and my uncle was not a murderer.

'The overseer smiled an evil smile, and said:

'Never mind! it was only a little mistake! We will settle affairs another day!'

'Not long after this, the fellow who is asleep there, and who is the overseer's brother, came and joined him. He is a doctor. My uncle became daily more and more miserable; my old nurse, saying it was remorse preying upon his mind, because he had appropriated my property.

'A few weeks ago my uncle's health began to fail seriously; the 'Doctor,' as he was called, constantly expressed his opinion that paralysis might be expected.

'Last Monday I was awakened by my old nurse in a dreadful fright, to tell me that my uncle was dying. I rose, and found the 'Doctor' and the overseer with him.

'The 'Doctor' said that, as he had predicted, my uncle had had a paralytic attack, entirely lost the use of his limbs and speech, and that he probably would not be able to move for some time to come. He felt the responsibility too great for his brother and himself, and consequently, should remove him to S——, where he would be placed under the care of the celebrated Dr. W——.

'This was said intentionally in the hearing of several of the servants, and passed for truth; although I, in common with all, protested against removing my uncle in such a state.

'Knowing the evil character of both men, I resolved that I would not part from my uncle, but would accompany him to S——.

'I fancied I saw a sinister smile on the face of the overseer, as I said this; but he only remarked:

'Oh, certainly; no objection can be made to that.'

'Yesterday we started.

'My suspicions were roused by the 'Doctor' and overseer refusing to let me approach my uncle, either to dress him, or to help him into his carriage.

'In spite of their caution, however, I obtained a glimpse of his face, and knew in an instant he was dead.

'I was too excited and horrified to faint.

'The overseer saw by my looks that I now knew all.

'He at once said, in a brutal tone:

'Oh! I guess you see it all now. You're a sensible girl, so a few words will suffice. There wasn't much love lost between you and your uncle, so you need not make a fuss.'

''The truth is, the Doctor there physicked him a *leetle* too strong, and it would not do to bury him here, for the job would have been blown! So we thought we would take him where no one will be the wiser; the poor old gentleman has died of cold and over-exertion, don't you see?'

'I can't tell you what the wretch said to me; only that he said he had got all the old gentleman's plunder from the estate; that he meant to marry me whether I would or not; and that if I so much as spoke or looked at any one on the journey, he would kill me at once.

'I knew he would not hesitate to carry out his threat, so dare not utter a word.

'Oh! how thankful I was to see you enter our car!

'I felt a presentiment that you would in some way save me from these horrid men.'

Here the poor girl burst into tears.

I don't know what I did or said, only that I comforted her, and vowed I would never forsake her.

The time was now approaching when the two o'clock train was due. There was a death-like silence, broken only by the mournful tones of occasional gusts of wind, which, like evil spirits sporting round us, rushed to and fro through the ill-made cars, unseen, but painfully heard and felt.

Every one had huddled themselves in whatever they could find as a protection from the biting cold.

Although hardy and strong I began to feel exhausted and benumbed, and probably should have fallen into a dangerous stupor but for my mind being racked with thought.

How should I act?

If I gave these two men up to justice (supposing the overseer survived) what proof was there that they had poisoned the 'paralytic'?

I asked Alice—so we will now call her—whether the overseer had the spoils with him or not?

She said he had admitted to her that he had gold, notes and securities to a very large amount upon him.

I then searched the still sleeping 'Doctor;' he was so motionless and death-like that I began to fear lest the chloroform had had a fatal effect upon him.

I found nothing but a few dollars and a revolver, which I took; and, with his own neckerchief, securely tied his hands behind him.

It was now snowing heavily again; but I sallied forth once more into the snow, and found the overseer still under the engine, frozen as hard as the iron which covered him, and doubtless quite dead.

With fingers almost lifeless as his own, I searched him, and found, besides the expected loaded revolver and bowie knife, a large canvass belt fastened round his waist, containing the stolen money.

I hastened back with it to Alice, fearing she might be overcome with the cold, and fall asleep.

Just as I had my hand on the door of the car, I heard a well-known sound; there was no need to think twice—the driver of the expected train, blinded by the snow, had not seen the danger signal? With criminal negligence they had not telegraphed our non-arrival from R——; the train was rushing on us.

I shouted loudly to the occupants of the cars to save themselves, and sprang into ours for Alice.

Even in the short time I had been absent she had nearly gone to sleep.

No wonder, poor girl! She had experienced hunger, thirst (for she dare not take food from the overseer, lest he should poison her), excitement, and cold—bitter cold, such as happily we don't know in England.

I seized her in my arms, and had scarcely leaped from the car before the crash came!

I will not dilate on the horrors of the collision—we have too many such descriptions in our daily papers. Happily my shouting had aroused most of the passengers, but some three or four never knew how death came.

I laid the fainting body of Alice for a few moments, carefully wrapped up, on the snow, whilst I searched for our late evil companions.

The murderers had met a milder fate than they deserved.

The frozen overseer was completely smashed beneath the engine.

Whether the 'Doctor' really died from the effects of cold and the chloroform I cannot tell, and do not like to think.

He, also, was a bruised and almost shapeless mass; both had died painless deaths.

The engineer and stoker of the train which ran into us had jumped into the snow, and were unhurt.

The passengers were very few, and, surprising to say, only one was killed.

We made great fires of the *debris*, and waited the morning, when help should come.

Amid all the horrors of the scene I felt a thrill of happiness in having Alice looking at me as her sole protector, and through the night laying her head on my shoulder, in sheer weariness and exhaustion, suffering my arms to support her.

I felt as if I had known her for years. Was the gentle girl who leaned unconsciously on me whom I had met under such strange circumstances—was she soon to be severed from me? No! never! And with that thought I clasped her closer to my heart.

At last help came; about five o'clock in the morning an express came from R——, expecting to find a breakdown; they took us up, and we arrived at R—— about eight o'clock.

I asked Alice what she would wish to do?

In some confusion she said:

'I know not what to say!' But, putting her little hand in mine, she said: 'Will you, who have watched over me through that dreadful night, who have saved me from the horrors of which I cannot think, see me safe back to my own home—my own, indeed, now; it will be very lonely, no one to welcome me but the servants; but it is my right place! Am I asking too much?'

Need I tell the reader my answer?

I offered myself, a poor surveyor, as her husband as well as protector.

She did not say no. * * *

We gave up the plantation; for I could not reconcile myself to my owning slaves, although theirs was anything but bondage.

The railway accident was universally believed to be the cause of the death of Alice's uncle, the overseer and the 'Doctor;' Alice, with pardonable deception, explaining that the 'Doctor,' not finding Dr. W—— at his own town, insisted on going to the next to some other surgeon.

Alice and I have now lived happily in England many years; but we never see the snow lying thickly on the ground without shuddering at the recollection of the night which we passed in the snow-drift.

NINA RAYMOND'S OFFER.

Golden curls and laughing eyes, bounding footfall and a voice full of ringing music, a laugh like the chiming of silver bells, and a tiny figure, lithe and graceful as the fairy Titania.

This was my love Nina Raymond.

'Be your wife? I never heard of such nonsense in my life! Your wife, indeed! I should as soon think of marrying papa or brother Will, or—or— Why, I can't think of any other masculine so impossible!'

This was the answer to my suit.

'But, why?' I persisted.

'Why? Why don't a girl marry her grandmother? I'll tell you. It is because she gets tired of seeing the old lady around. I can't remember a day when I have not seen your phiz the first thing in the morning and the last thing in the evening. I never went to a party with any other escort. I never was in a scrape but you were my companion in misery, or my shield from punishment. I never did a foolish thing but you were by to laugh and rebuke. Oh! Marston, dear, go and make love to some foreign lady; but don't be so absurd as to want to marry your cousin, who has lived under the same roof with you since she was a baby.'

'But all you say only goes to prove my devotion.'

'Devotion! You snub me quite as often as you praise. Besides—'

She hesitated.

'Well?'

'I am only sixteen, and I am not going to accept my very first offer. And then, Marston, you don't come within a thousand miles of my beau ideal.'

'Oh! I don't. Pray, describe your beau ideal.'

'Tall.'

'I stand six feet one inch.'

'Handsome, with black whiskers and the manners of a traveler. A man who has not lived all his life in this miserable cooped-up village, but has seen the world and profited thereby. One who has mixed in distinguished society, and learned refinement of dress and manner, and who can talk of something besides books with a lady.'

'Ah! Well, if you won't have me you won't. So there's an end of it.'

I got up lazily from the garden seat, where we had been sitting, and strolled towards the house. I saw her blue eyes open with amazement at my coolness. I did not enact despair for her benefit, but laid my plans for her future edification.

Two days later I had left home and gone into the city for a visit. Nina gave me a merry farewell, and did not seem at all heart-broken at the prospect of the separation. If she felt any emotion, she was soon soothed, as the following letter directed to my new address convinced me:

'DEAR MARSTON: My hero has arrived. Such lovely black whiskers, not at all like your smooth face, cousin; such jetty curls, not auburn ones like yours; such black eye-brows and lashes—yours are yellow. He has been everywhere, has seen everything, speaks foreign languages, and has the most polished manners. He brought a letter of introduction to Will, so, of course, he is here quite often, and seems very well pleased with a certain cousin of yours.'

And so on the letter was filled up with home gossip. I read it at the little inn of my native village, where all my letters, re-directed to 'Mr. Alonzo Courtney,' followed me. The black whiskers lay on the table by me, the wig hung from the looking-glass, while the dyed eye-brows and lashes still adorned my face. My fine broad-cloth suit, cut in the latest city style, my patent-leather boots, kid gloves and dandy cane lay on a chair, while I lounged, in dressing gown and slippers, before the window, conning my cousin's letter. As I was engaged to drive her out in an hour, I began my elaborate toilet. Every curl was in position, and every fold correct, as I rang the bell of my uncle's house, to which my fellow conspirator Will had introduced me. No suspicion of my identity crossed my aunt's mind as she gave me a polite welcome, and Nina's blinded eyes saw only in Mr. Courtney the traveled dandy.

'I trust I see the rose of Glendale in full health,' I said, with a low bow. 'Ah! those fair hands were destined for daintier tasks than this!' and I deprived her of her sewing. 'The soft air woos us. Will you drive with me?'

With a bewitching little flat, and every curl in glossy beauty, she was soon ready for our excursion. I cannot tell all the flattery I poured into her ears, half disgusted at her blushes, and half amused at her innocent pleasure in my exaggerated gallantry. It was the first time I had been alone with her in my disguise, and I took occasion to delicately hint at my entire devotion to her charms, and grinding my teeth at her coquettish acceptance of the same.

I saw her every day for a month, pressing my suit on all occasions, and filling her ears with drawling affectations and flat descriptions of Italy and France, with broad comparisons of the daughters of Europe and America.

At last I proposed. To my amazement she refused me flat; to my delight she informed me that her cousin Marston was a man, not a dressed-up idiot. I do not mean that these were her exact terms, but her warm defence of her cousin, after my sneering hints of jealousy, was fully equivalent to such a declaration.

Of course, my proper self returned radiant and hopeful. Will you believe it?—She was as offish as ever when I made any advances. She was cousinly and sisterly till I was in a perfect fury over her cool ease and matter-of-course affection, but would only laugh at my proffered love, and compare me slightingly to her recent admirer, and actually had the audacity to hint that her heart walked out of the door at his departure.

I was half inclined to quit the field; but I loved the gipsy heartily, and could not give her up. Luckily, I had a sun-stroke. Now, a sun-stroke is generally not a fortunate event, but for me it opened the way to my present happiness. I was in the garden, hatless and busy about some fruit which was being gathered, when all the face of nature turned dark, and I fell.

'Marston! Marston! Only speak to me! It is Nina! Oh! Marston, do speak to me!'

Hot tears fell fast on my face. I had been carried into the house, and it was the second hour of my stupor when the words struck my ear, muffled and dim; but deliciously sweet the dear voice sounded in its agony. Then Will said:

'I feel his pulse now, Nina. He is coming round. I will leave you here while I go and find mother.'

We were left alone. I could not move, but I could feel her kisses rained on my face, her sobbing regrets for past unkindness, and her low prayers whispered for my safety. At last, I opened my eyes.

With my head resting on her arm, my face raised to hers, and my hand clasping hers, she could not escape. So she surrendered at discretion, and we were married nearly three months before I told her who made her her second offer.

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