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THE FIVE KNAVES.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

Once on a time, in Indostan,
A thief conceived a cunning plan
(So potent is the voice of Hope)
To save his throat from the rope.
Though now the day was drawing nigh
When he by law was doomed to die,
He bade the jailer tell the King
He fain would show a wondrous thing—
A precious secret, fairly worth
The ear of any prince on earth.
And now the culprit, being led
Into the royal presence, said:
"This golden coin which here you see,
If planted, will become a tree
Whose fruit—increased a hundred fold—
Will be like this, the purest gold.
I pray your majesty to try
If this be true before I die."
With this the King and courtiers went
Into the garden with intent
To plant the curious coin of gold.
But now when all was ready, "Hold,"
Exclaimed thief, "this hand of mine
Would surely spoil our whole design:
The hand that plants the gold must be
(Else all is naught) entirely free
From stain of fraud; and so I pray
Your gracious majesty will lay
The seed in earth." "Yes—no—in sooth,"
The King replied, "for in my youth
I pilfered from my sire; some stain,
For all my sorrow, may remain.
My good prime minister is hereby;
His hand, no doubt, is wholly clear
Of any taint." "Nay," he replied,
"That's more than I can well decide:
As tax-receiver—now—I may
Have kept a trifle. So I pray
To be excused for prudence' sake,
And let our commissary take
The coin in hand. Sure that were best,
For he, no doubt, can stand the test."
"Faith," said the commissary, "I
Would rather not. I don't deny
My good intent; but since I pay
Large sums of money every day
For soldiers, sailors, and a herd
Of apes—I wouldn't give my word
I have not kept a small amount
Not entered in my book account,
Since an error—e'en the least—
Would spoil the charm, pray let the priest
Proceed to plant the coin of gold."
"Nay, that I fear would be o'er-bold;
Despite my prayers and pious zeal,"
Replied his reverence, "I deal
In titles and sacrificial dues;
And so I beg you will excuse
My sharing in a work like this,
Where nothing must be done amiss."
"Then," said the thief, "since no man here
(As we have learned) is wholly clear
Of knavish tricks, I ask you whether
We should not all be hung together?"
The monarch, laughing, made reply;
"Why, yes, if every rogue must die;
Well, since we are five knaves confessed,
I pardon you and spare the rest!"

Della Doran.

IT WAS at the close of a sultry day
About the first of May, 1864; that a single
horseman might have been seen riding
along the turnpike a few miles west of
Chancellorsville.
He was apparently about forty or fifty
years of age, large powerful frame, bold
open countenance, and possessed of a
daring, restless eye. His attire being
semi-military and semi-citizen, it would be
hard to determine to which of the opposing
parties he belonged.
He wore the blue cap of the Yankees,
the grey blouse of the Confederates, and
the remainder of his apparel was that of an
ordinary citizen.
His horse, a large powerful bay, swept
along with an easy rapid pace.
By making an abrupt turn he left the
main road, and entering a bridle path was
soon in a dense forest.
The sun had already gone down, when
he emerged from the forest, and riding up
to a large farm-house, asked lodging for
the night.

The farmer, who was a perfect "South-
ern Fire-eater," eyed him a moment suspi-
ciously, and then in multifarious tones
said:
"Well, yes, I reckon stranger, as you
might stay; though the country be so torn
up that one can't tell who to take in. Who
are ye anyway?"
"Simply a weary and benighted traveler,
who will leave with the morning's
dawn."
The traitorous looking farmer called to a
negro who was near, and bade him put the
traveler's horse in the barn. The stranger
accompanied him and had the horse put in
the stall nearest the door, with the saddle
on.

"Debbish strange," muttered the negro.
"Must be afeared some one's comin' to
gobble 'um up."
As soon as the negro had a chance to
speak privately with his master, he in-
formed him of the manner he had left the
horse at the stable.
"I'll watch him Jake, and you remain
handy for I suspect he is Mead's Scout,
GLORCUS. If he should be, I want you to
go to the forest after Hawkers."

The negro's eyes sparkled greedily, as
he replied:
"Golly Marsa only find dat out and I'm
off to de woods in no time."
During this short conversation the sub-
ject of it was in the sitting room, quietly,
smoking a short, black pipe, while he
seemed buried in thought. He had un-
buckled his sabre and leaned it against the
wall, but his pistols were still in his belt,
around his waist.

His blue cap was placed on his knee, and
his iron-grey hair fell about his shoulders
in profusion, while his keen, restless eyes
kept constantly in motion. As he sat there
he looked what he really was, a desperate
character.

His reverie was at length broken by the
entrance of a very pretty, black-eyed girl,
who announced supper.
"Very glad," said the stranger. "In
fact I am very hungry Miss. What may I
call you?"
"Della?"
"Della? A very pretty name. You are
the gentleman's daughter?"
"No sir!"
"His niece then?"
"No sir!"
"A relative then, anyway?"
"I think no relation at all. I am simply
an orphan girl—Della Doran—whom Mr.
Biswick has taken to raise; but supper
waits."

The stranger started up at the sound of
the name, bent a keen glance on the lovely
girl; but said not a word.

The landlord, his foster daughter, and
the stranger were the only occupants of the
supper table.

Mr. Biswick being somewhat talkative,
intimated that the fair girl was not his
child, but the daughter of a scamp who had
deserted her at her mother's death, gone to
California, and he had kept her merely out
of gratitude.

The stranger seemed almost to strangle
as the farmer still continued to degrade the
girl.
He raised his hand to brush a cold sweat
from his brow, and as he did so a small
slip of paper fell from his blouse pocket to
the floor.

It was unnoticed by any save Mr. Bis-
wick.
When supper was over they all arose
from the table, and the planter passing
around adroitly slipped the note in his
pocket.

Conducting the stranger to the sitting
room he left him, and going into a private
room lit a candle, and glanced at the note.
It was brief and as follows:
"Forward to the front, GLORCUS.
GEN. MEAD."

"Ho, ho! I know him now," chuckled
the farmer. "He is Glorious the famous
scout. There's a reward for him and I'm
a fool if I don't get it."
At a signal the negro entered.
"It's as I expected Jake, he is Mead's
scout. Go at once for Hawkers. The re-
ward is ours."

"I'll go Marsa, I'll go," said the negro,
and pulling on his cap ran out into the
night air. Once out he muttered to him-
self:
"Golly if it am' Glorious, debbil be to
pay when dey catch 'um. Dis chile be
skeerer den!"

Having dispatched the negro for the
Confederates, the wicked, traitorous farm-
er, returned to the room in which the ob-
ject of his betrayal sat, and entered into
conversation with him.
The eyes of Glorious roiled suspiciously

about, but he otherwise evinced no appre-
hension of danger.

Complaining of ennui from the effect of
his day's travel, he proposed to retire.

This was what Biswick desired, and he
cheerfully led the way to the bed chamber.
As soon as the confederate left the room,
the scout buckled on his sabre, instead of
retiring to bed, and remained at the win-
dow in a listening attitude.

He had not long been in this position
when a tap at the door aroused him.
With revolver in hand he opened the door
cautiously.

Pale and trembling the girl, Della Doran,
entered, making frantic gestures for
him to keep silence. Seizing the fright-
ened maiden by the hand, the brave old
scout said:
"What is it my dear that frightens
you?"

Seeming to gain strength from his kind
words, she replied:
"Oh! sir, fly from here; you are in
deadly peril! Each moment you remain
increases your danger!"

The scout received this startling announ-
cement as coolly as if it had been an
order from his General, and merely said:
"You will have to give me some infor-
mation as to the nature of my danger if
you wish me to avert it."

"Mr. Biswick thinks you are the great
scout Glorious, and has sent for guerillas to
arrest you."
"For Mosby?"
"No, worse. Mosby has some humanity
and honor; but he has sent for the wretch,
Steve Hawkers."

"Never fear," said the scout.
"But you will go nevertheless?"
"I will not be taken; but you must
answer some questions first."
"Ask them quick."
"Is your name really Della Doran?"
"It is."
"Do you remember anything of your
parents?"

"Not a great deal. My mother died
when I was young, and I can just remem-
ber my father leaving me with Mr. Bis-
wick and going to California."
"Do you love your foster father?"
"No sir, I cannot. He is very cruel and
swears I shall marry Captain Hawkers."
"That is sufficient, I shall go now,
but I will return soon and tell you some-
thing."

Arising he glided out of the room, and
Della having accomplished her errand of
mercy, retired.

The famous scout managed to reach the
stable unperceived, and securing his horse,
led him to the rear of the house and hitch-
ed him to a tree. Then holding a revolver
in each hand he crept over the wall and
walked up the garden path.

Flashing lights and confused voices told
him that the Confederates had come. A
heavy tread of feet was heard coming
down the garden walk, and he distinguish-
ed the voice of the negro saying:
"Let 'um kill 'im; but golly don't catch
me near; I might get a stray bullet!"

In an instant the scout leveled a pistol at
the head of the treacherous black and fired.
Without a groan the negro fell dead in the
garden walk.

With yells of vengeance the guerillas
rushed towards the scout, who nimbly
leaped the garden fence, vaulted into the
saddle, and amid flashing swords and
whizzing shots, dashed off in the forest.

"To horse; after him," shouted Capt.
Hawkers. "Five thousand to the man
who brings him down."
Then there was mounting in hot haste,
and the Confederates thundered on after
him.

The scout having reached an open spot
about three miles from the farm-house,
paused on the opposite side in a thick
growth of underbrush, with a cocked pistol
in each hand, the rein in his teeth, and
thus waited for his pursuers to come up.

In the course of half an hour the guer-
illas, seven in number, rode into the open
spot and paused for consultation.
Various conjectures were made as to the
whereabouts of the scout, and the rebel
captain vowed he would give a good round
sum to know just where he was.

His speech was cut short by the crack
of a pistol, and Captain Hawkers fell from
his horse.
Two guerillas drew holsters and returned
the fire, but now pistol shot after pistol
shot came from an unseen quarter, and
three Confederates fell. The remainder
terror stricken, fled.

The scout rode out on the plain to ex-
amine his fallen foe. Three were quite
dead, and the fourth was dying. Leaving
the field of carnage, he made his way back

to the farm-house. Fastening his horse
near the gate he entered it. As he was
passing across the hall he heard a voice,
in a room on the right, begging for mercy.

"Don't plead to me for mercy," said the
harsh voice of Biswick. "You know you
told the Union scout that Hawkers was
coming. Now take that!"

A blow and a scream followed.
"Hold!" thundered the scout, bursting
into the room.
"What right have you to command me
to hold?" cried the astounded rebel.
"The right of a father!"
"A father?"

"Yes, James Biswick. I am Albert Doran,
who years ago trusted my infant
daughter with you while I went to Cali-
fornia to amass a fortune. I made it in an
obscure mine, and concealed it in a cache,
but was at that time captured by the sav-
ages and kept a prisoner for years. I made
my escape, secured the hidden treasure, and
returned to the States just as the war
broke out. I joined Mead's corps under
the assumed name of Glorious. My ex-
perience in Indian warfare has made me
the great scout I am. I am now here to
claim my child."

With the beautiful Della behind him on
his powerful horse, he rode into Mead's
camp the next morning at sunrise. It was
in the midst of the terrible Battle of the
Wilderness, that Doran met and struck
Biswick dead with his vengeful sword.
"This," said he, "is for your cruelty to
my child."

Chinese Ideas About Death.

THE Chinese are almost indifferent to
the phenomenon of dissolution, and
frequently compass their own end when
life becomes to them wearisome. A wife
sometimes elects to follow her husband on
the still road of death, and parents will
often destroy their offspring in time of fam-
ine and great distress rather than allow
them to suffer. Still more remarkable is
the custom of selling their lives in order
that they may purchase the superior ad-
vantage of obsequies, which are considered
to insure the body in safety for the future
resurrection. A wealthy man condemned
to death will arrange with his jailer to buy
him a substitute for a certain sum of mon-
ey, to be spent upon the poor wretch's
interment and preservation of his body.
Should he have parents, so much is usually
paid to them in compensation for their
son's life. Chinamen invariably help to
support their parents; filial respect and
devotion is the great Chinese virtue and
religious precept in which they rarely fail.
Regarding death as inevitable, he makes
the best of a bad bargain, and cunningly
and comically gets paid for dying. The
wholesale destruction of life in this country
is greatly the result of indifference. Hence
the massacre of Europeans, so terrible to
us, seems to them a matter of little mo-
ment, and they cannot comprehend why
we should make a fuss about it. They re-
gard our indignant protestation very much
as we might treat our irate neighbor whose
dog we had shot. "Well, well, be pacified;
if it was such a favorite, I am sorry; but it
is only a dog, and there are plenty more.
How much do you want to be paid for it?"
"You English think so much of a life,"
argues the Chinese; "have you not plenty
of people at home?" Death, in China, is
awarded as the punishment for the most
trivial offences, and often for none at all
except being in somebody's way. A story
was told to me as a fact that, during the
visit of one of our royal princes, a theft
was committed of a chain or watch be-
longing to the royal guest. The unfortu-
nate attendant was caught with the prop-
erty on him, and without any further cere-
mony his head was chopped off. The man-
darin in attendance immediately announced
the tidings to the prince as a delicate at-
tention, showing how devoted he was in his
service. To his astonishment the prince
expressed his great regret that the man's
head had been taken off. "Your high-
ness," cried the obsequious mandarin,
bowing to the ground, "it shall immedi-
ately be put on again!" So little did he un-
derstand that the regret was for the life taken,
and not the severed head. In times of in-
surrection or famine the mowing down of
human life is like corn stalks at harvest
time, appalling to European ideas. I must
confess to a nervous shuddering when I
stood upon the execution ground at Canton
—a narrow lane or potter's field—where so
many hundreds had been butchered per
diem during weeks together, the execu-
tioner requiring the aid of two smiths to
sharpen his swords, for many of the wretch-
ed victims were not allowed to be destroyed
at one fell swoop, but are sentenced to be

backed to pieces by twenty to fifty blows.
I was informed by a European who had
traveled much and seen most of the fright-
ful sides of life, but witnessing Chinese ex-
ecutions was more than his iron nerve could
stand; and in some of the details which he
was narrating I was compelled to beg him
to desist. And yet he said there was noth-
ing solemn about it, and the spectators
looked on evidently amused. It was the
horrible and the grotesque combined.

How They do it in Illinois.

IT was in Shawneetown, Ill., that the
very latest love story of the period was
enacted, and the hero was Tobias Skaggs.
The heroine was Martha Burlap, and this
happy couple are now enjoying the sweets
of their honeymoon in a manner becoming
and proper for newly married people in
Illinois. Tobias Skaggs was a showman,
and traveled over the country with old
John Robinson's circus. No hostler could
clean more horses in an hour, nor drive a
circus wagon through a muddy country in
a dark night with fewer upsets or milder
swearing, nor carry away more ordinary
grub from a country tavern, nor leave a
greater number of disconsolate chamber-
maids in every town than Tobias Skaggs.
As for Martha Burlap, she was twenty
years old, and had thus far wasted
herself upon the masculines of Shawnee-
town. She read all the story papers,
dreamed of lovers, but had none, and
with tenderness and sweetness—which
are the current names in Shawneetown for
beefsteak and corn bread. When there is
an affinity between two souls in Shawnee-
town there is immediate sympathy and
love. Martha Burlap saw Tobias riding in
the grand procession dressed in a yellow
jacket, pink trousers, long boots and zinc
helmet. It was Martha's ague day, and
she stood in the kitchen door with a bottle
in her hand and the spoon in her mouth
when Tobias rode past. She saw his manly
form, his gay uniform, his flashing hel-
met, and she forgot the potatoes baking in
the oven and the eggs frying on the fire.
The smell of burning food brought Mrs.
Nibbs, the landlady, to the kitchen, and
her language brought tears to the gentle
eyes of Martha. But her heart was with
the gallant man who rode the spavined
horse. When the members of old John
Robinson's circus were seated at the supper
table then it was that Martha Burlap saw
and felt that Tobias was indeed the man
for whom she had longed all these years
of her maidenhood. At supper he received
a nicer beefsteak and hotter corn bread
than his fellows, and his cup was filled again
and again with coffee while others waited.
And she—well, she was rewarded with
a free ticket to the show. When the show
came to an end, as all shows must, and
Martha started out in the moonlight for
that home of the homeless, the Wabash
House, she found a strong arm offered
and a hoarse voice asking the privilege of
becoming her escort. A half hour later
an impatient man was banging at the door
of a justice of the peace. The Justice was
prompt in the discharge of his duty, but
when he reached the Wabash House the
bride was cooking a farewell meal while
the groom was in the stable. He left his
horse, and she stopped cooking long
enough to join hands at the command of
the Justice. "Do you take this woman
to be your lawful wedded wife?" said the
Justice. "Yes, he does, you bet," was
the prompt reply of the bride. "Do you
take this man to be your husband, Mar-
tha?" "Come now, 'squire, don't be
foolish!" said the lady, and the justice
pronounced them man and wife—"Why
don't you kiss the bride?" said a gruff
voice, and they saw the painted face of
the clown through a crack of the door. "You
shut up; its none of your wedding," was
the ready answer of the bride, and it
brought down the house. But her finest
effort was displayed a moment later when
she snatched up a ladle and ordered them
all out of the kitchen till she was done
cooking.

The next morning Old John Robinson's
Circus lost a man, and the Wabash House
lost a maid; but the drug store has added
another quinine customer to its list, and
Shawneetown has gained a new family.

A Detroit Justice remarked to a
fighter the other day: This affair will
wrench a \$10 bill from you unless you want
to go up for ninety days. Be careful how
you slug your fists around after this.
John C. Heenan gained something by blow-
ing his muscle up, but public opinion has
changed. If you want to be famous you
must discover a comet or hang around a
reservoir and look out for breaks.