THE PRAIRIE FIRE.

[For The Press.]

Fanchito! my Fanchito!
Press on my noble steed,
For flying, or for dying,
According to thy speed.
We're struggling with the strong,
And with the swift we race,
For the fire—the red fire
Is gaining round apace!

Fanchito! my Fanchito!
On, on, for life or death!
And panting though thou be,
Nor stop to draw a breath!
But onward and right onward,
My noble steed, we rush,
And dashing, and crashing,
Scale rock, and brake, and bush!

Then see at the fiery glare,
Around us and above,
The flames are licking up
Grass, herb, and cotton grove!
And up the mountain side,
With forked tongues they creep,
And lap the rocky ridge
And blaze adown the steep.

We're gaining ground, Fanchito!
We're gaining on the foe;
The air is not so scorching,
And fainter is the glow.
Though strong in limb and heart,
Thy courage it is higher,
Than the might of blasting flame
Than the madness of the fire.

Now stop, and draw thy breath,
But, where, alas! are they,
The faithful friends who toiled
With us for many a day—
My hunting-mule and pack-mule,
Who always loved us so,
And trudged thro' rough and smooth,
From far-off Mexico!

Though active and though patient
The gentle creatures be,
Yet Nature gave them not
The speed she gave to thee;
And, struggle though they will,
Thy must, they *must* be lost,
Ere the bushwood of the glen
And its torrent can be crost!

Through hunger and through thirst,
Through snow-drifts, and through all,
They've followed at my whistle,
Obedient to my call.
The warmest of my cloaks,
Through freezing nights they've shared,
And they "winnied" me their thanks,
However hard they fared.

I dreamed not we should part
On so terrible a day;
But I see them through the smoke,
Fanchito! It is they!
They are safe and they are sound,
Kind Heaven hath lent them speed,
And, with the fire behind,
In this their hour of need!

Fanchito! at sight his joy!
One mid-meal—only one—
They may draw a hurried breath,
For the flames are hastening on.
Again we forward press,
The fire hath gained in might,
We almost breathe its breath,
We're blinded with its light.

The flames have met across
The portals of this cleft,
And we are hemmed in
And no exit left!
Fanchito! my Fanchito!
Dost onward now or never?
A path way through the furnace!
Of flaming fire we'll sever!

'Tis past—the blaze hath scorched
His silky tail and mane,
But he heedeth not the heat,
He recks not of the pain,
But turns his gentle head
To see what shall befide
His snorting, trembling friends,
Grouped on the other side.

He neighs a call of courage,
As if he meant to say,
"Come on, leave fellow-travellers,
It is the only way!"
They trust their friend Fanchito,
And, faster than the wind,
They cleave the wall of fire,
And leave the flames behind!

What though their mane be singed,
Their ears all scorched and hot,
In triumph and in gladness,
The creatures heed it not—
Before us is a plain,
Bare, barren, bleak, and wide;
They know twill stint the flames,
And stay their greedy stride.

Now rest, ye faithful friends,
Your brave day's work is done;
Your rice was with the swift,
And gallantly you've won.
Amidst the shadowy forests,
Beside thy cooling stream,
Fanchito, mules and I
May sit, and drink, and dream!

I. CRAWDON.

A PRINCESS ROYAL.

[From Household Words.]

I remember to have fallen in once with certain American captains and colonels and men-at-arms, in a small place on the Brazos river, a few miles north of Jose Maria, in Texas. I had paid a visit to this place, near which a dear companion of my youth had been murdered. We were school-fellows, and for five years we had been brother officers in the same regiment. He went to the United States just when the war broke out with Mexico, and became captain of a company of Kentucky riflemen. A few months after the battle of Vera Cruz, he was deputed by the officers of his brigade to present to General Taylor—who was on leave of absence at New Orleans—a gold medal as token of their respect. Choosing the nearest way from the camp, across country, he set out on his errand with a guide and two servants, all on horseback, armed to the teeth. My Jose Maria, my poor friend unwisely exhibited the medal to a crowd of respectable-looking persons, calling themselves colonels, majors, and captains, who seemed to take great pleasure in studying its engravings. He did not even remark in what a hurry some of those colonels were to start before him. But the medal has, in ten years, never more been heard of, and my old comrade and two of his companions were found shot dead in a ravine. He was never tired of telling that it also fell among thieves. There was one of them who took a great liking to my horse, when he saw me giving it to the ostler. He tapped it repeatedly on the neck, declaring it, with an oath, to be a nice hanimal and no mistake—which assertion he repeated afterwards over and over again to his fellow-men in the coffee-room, who, when they had been out to satisfy their curiosity, agreed with him upon the matter. Now, wouldn't that be a nice for you, major? he said to a tall, powerful man, with a rough beard and disguising features, who sat a little apart from the rest, and wore a large gray coat. The major said nothing, but stalked out of the room, soon afterwards, followed by the colonel. The others had again taken up their old topic of conversation, and were talking politics, rather vehemently as I thought, when the waiter—a German—came up to me, and told me in our own language, that I had better take care, as those two ruffians outside had set eyes upon my horse, and would be sure to steal it if I gave them the slightest chance. Annoyed at this intelligence, I asked my countryman what he thought it would be best for me to do.

"Why," said he, "you have fallen in with a bad set, and, if you want to keep your horse, I should advise you to escape as soon as possible."

After a little reflection I resolved to start at once, and made for the stable. There I found the colonel again, most urgently talking to the ostler, who, only looked at me in a rather impudent manner, when I told him to bring out my horse, and paid me no further attention. I therefore began to bridle for myself.

"I say, captain!" said the colonel, coming up to me after a while, and tapping me on the shoulder.

"Sir!"

"Come on, man! don't make a fool of yourself! I want to buy that 'ere 'orse, captain!"

"Do you?"

"Thank Heaven! I was in the saddle by that time.

"Do I? Am I the man to be put out of my way by one of these 'ere chawed up Germans?"

He laid both his hands upon the bridle of my horse. My blood generally boils at an insulting word against my countrymen, especially when I am far from home in foreign lands. In a trice, the stick of the riding-whip came down upon the colonel's head, whilst the horse, urged to a powerful leap, threw him ten yards away upon the ground. As I knew very well that, according to the customs of the country, this was a revolver affair now, and as I had no wish to become entangled in such business, I did not wait until the colonel had picked himself up, but rode forward without delay.

I was stopped by the waiter, whom I heard calling after me, and who was out of breath when he came up to me at last. The honest fellow gave me a direction, which I was afterward glad to have followed. He said that the colonel, though a coward, was a most desperate villain, and at all likely to give way so soon, but that the worst of the whole set was that tall fellow, the major, whom he suspected to have gone in search of some of his companions. "You will be chased by a couple of these rogues, he said. "I am a Saxon! Let me advise you! Follow your way up to the North until you do so of night, then do you turn back to the south, as far as Jose Maria. At the ravine, southeast of that place turn to the left, and, following the course of the Brook, ride for your life. Twenty miles up the stream you will come to a settlement, called the Wood Creek. Old Delamotte lives there, and he's the man for you to trust."

I forced the waiter a few pieces of money, but he would not take them; then a hearty shake of the hand, and this he took most gladly.

"Stop!" he said, when I had already set spurs to my horse. He lifted up each of the horse's legs, and looked carefully at the shoeing. "All right," he said. "I thought the ostler might have played you one of his tricks, but he has not yet had time, I suppose. Now, go a-head, and don't forget the Frenchman!"

I darted off.

It was eleven o'clock in the morning. I had to make twenty miles to the ravine which my countryman had pointed out to me. But my horse was worthy of the colonel's admiration; and, in spite not only of the round-about way I had taken in accordance with my friend's advice, and half-an-hour's delay for rest at Jose Maria, it was but five in the evening when I reached this melancholy spot.

I stopped and looked about me. The surrounding country was all barren and desolate, the soil sterile. There was a wooden cross erected on the spot of the murder, and beneath it lay the mortal remains of the man whom I had known in the full glow and joy of youth.

A strange feeling made me linger in that place. The little rivulet, smoothly gliding eastward, showed me the way I was to go. I could follow its course with my eyes to a far distant forest, the high grass of the prairie having burnt a track down, as it always does at this time of year. Yet I still lingered.

The horse began to neigh softly, and to prick up his ears. He was familiar with these prairies, as I had bought him but a few months ago at Little Rock, in Arkansas. There was something the matter.

I listened, but heard absolutely nothing. I alighted, and, pressing my ear to the ground, listened again. The earth trembled faintly with the tread of horses yet at a long distance; but, when I mounted again I could hear the sound. It was rapidly approaching from the direction of Jose Maria, and, although the woods on that side of me prevented me from seeing anything, I had but little doubt who were the horsemen. Now, colonels, majors, captains, let usses what can be done! My horse gave such a sudden and vigorous jump when I merely touched him with the whip, that I was almost thrown from my seat. I lost my cap, and a gust of wind threw it against that very mound by which I had been bound to the ravine. To pick it up would have been waste of time; and, as I wished to be out of sight before my pursuers had set foot upon the prairie, I left it and sped away, taking as straight a line as possible in the direction of the distant forest, to avoid the windings of the little brook, yet without losing sight of it. In the brave horse there was no slacking of pace; there was no stumbling. I turned round three or four times during my rapid course, but, except a long, thin cloud of dust and ashes, raised by myself, I saw nothing whatever. In an hour or so the forest was before me, and then reining up a little, I again made for the brook.

I had traced its windings for about another hour when I arrived at a clear space in the wood, and got sight of a block house.

"Qui va la?" asked a deep voice.

"Un ami!" was the answer.

There were two men near the house, one with gray hair and weather-beaten features, and the other in the prime of youth, both Frenchmen.

The old man looked with some astonishment at my panting horse, covered with foam, at his dilated nostrils and quick-beating flanks.

"Why, it seems you are in a hurry," he said.

In a few words I explained the motives of my visit, and told him my adventure at Santa Madre; not forgetting to report the advice of the German waiter at the coffee-house that I should trust in him for help.

He listened eagerly to my narrative; and when I gave him a minute description of the colonel and the major, his attention grew to be intense.

"Again those two scoundrels!" he said. "Well, man, step into the house: never mind the horse, the lad will rub him dry. We have a few hours before us yet. They know by this time where you are, and will consider twice before they call here, though we are quite sure to hear of them at nightfall.

I expressed regret at the trouble I was bringing on him; but he only laughed, and replied, "Never mind, we are their match."

"But we are only three, and you say we don't know how many ruffians the tall fellow may bring with him."

"Let him bring a score, we are their match, I tell you! Do you account the Princess Royal nobody?"

"The what?"

"The Princess Royal—la Princesse Royale!" he laughed again. "Don't stare at me, you'll see her by-and-by."

The block-house had a very durable appearance: it was two stories high, and the upper room was neatly furnished. On the wall I observed a portrait of Gen. Moreno: if I mistake not, the grand-father of the first Emperor of the French; the present Emperor he mentioned only once during our conversation, and I had better not say what he said.

He lighted a candle and began to block the windows up, whilst I was eating and drinking what he had placed on the table. The lad made all safe on the ground-floor, and secured the door.

"Now, we are all right!" said the old man, taking his seat at the table, and mixing rum and water in a large bowl.

"Au triomphe dela bonne cause!" he said, touching glasses with me.

"But I don't see any arms," I presently suggested; "no—"

"Arms? I have plenty of that stuff. How do you think a man could get on in these woods without arms? But we shant want them to-night." Again he laughed. "We have the Princess Royal."

He removed the candle with the other things from the table, and went out of the room.

The door was opened again about five minutes afterward. I heard the crack of a whip. I saw a rapid flash before my eyes; and, with a mighty bound, that made my very blood run cold, a large jaguar leaped in, alighting with a heavy pounce upon the table.

"La Princesse Royale!" announced my host.

I do not know exactly what figure I may have presented at that moment; but I should not wonder if anybody were to tell me that I looked like a craven.

"Don't be afraid of her," said the laughing Frenchman, when he saw me still as a mouse, scarcely venturing to turn my looks to her bright cruel eyes. "She is as docile as a cat when I am by. Caress her, she likes to be fondled; it's the weak side of the sex, you know."

I touched her delicate fur but slightly with my hand, stroking it softly down her strong and beautiful back, the right way of the fur, you may be sure.

She bent her powerful and elastic limbs under my frail hand, and fanning the air with her curved tail, seemed to encourage me to bestow more caresses.

"Well, how do you like the Princess?" asked my host.

"She is indeed handsome, and I have seen none in the old world more majestic."

"Take her down stairs, George," he said to the lad, handing the whip over to him, "and keep a lookout yourself; but mind, don't you give her any supper. She shall help herself in-right."

He placed the candle and our glasses again upon the table, and began to sip his grog quite leisurely.

"By heavens, man," I said, after a pause, "it cannot be your real purpose to set the tiger on these people?"

"Eh, parbleu!" replied he, "and why not? What else do they deserve? Are they not also tigers? You don't know them as I do! The tall rascal is a convicted felon, and ought to have been hanged two years ago at San Francisco. He contrived to escape, and fled to Kansas. As to the other rogue, there is hardly a crime he has not stained his hands with. Make your mind easy about that."

A sudden thought came into my mind, and I asked him whether he knew anything about that murder of my friend ten years ago in the ravine near Jose Maria?

"No, he knew nothing about that. It was before his time; only he should not wonder if the major had had a hand in it; it looked very like him."

We were interrupted by a loud knocking at the door. The lad came in soon afterwards, telling us that he could descry five of them, all on horseback.

The old man rose, and moving one of the mattresses a little aside, he looked cautiously through the window. It was about 9 o'clock, and the darkness began to set in with the rapidity peculiar to southern climates.

The knocks were repeated more vehemently, accompanied now with a loud summons to open the door.

"Here they are, sure enough," said the old man. "I wonder why this major doesn't go to Kansas; he is the very man for Kansas politics."

"If you don't open now, you French dog," said a coarse voice, we'll break the door."

The eyes of the old man flashed fire, but he spoke never a word.

"You know me, Delamotte," said another voice, which I had heard before. "You know Colonel Brown. But though we 've to settle an old account, I 've no business with you this time; its the stranger I want; he has stolen a horse; give him up to us, and we'll be off in a minute."

"No use talking to that old miser," said the former voice, with an oath. "Come on, boys, break the door in, and end it!"

He seemed to suit the action to the word, for a tremendous crash came.

"En avant," said the old man to the lad, and they both went down stairs.

I rose and paced up and down the room with rapid steps. Something terrible, awful, was going on.

The whole block-house shook and trembled with the violent kicks and blows which were dealt at the door, but nevertheless I could hear distinctly when the iron bar was removed from it; and then—I felt as if all my blood were rushing suddenly to my heart, leaving not one single drop in any limb of my whole body.

A roar—not at all like those you may hear in the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, at feeding time, but a hundred times wilder, sharper, more piercing, more furious—then human cries of horror and despair, the trampling of flying horses, the quick report of firearms; then, again, the roar; but this time much louder, more savage, more ferocious, more horrible; then a heavy fall and a confused noise of grinding of teeth; then nothing more, because I stopped my ears with my hands.

When I turned round my host sat at the table again, sipping his grog, as if nothing had happened.

"I am afraid," he said, after a while, the Princess has been wounded; I have never heard her roaring in that way. Well, we must see after this to-morrow. It would be a dangerous job for any man to go near her to-night."

Next morning I stood by his side when he opened the door. My first glance fell upon the tiger cowering in a thick brown red pool. She was licking at a red spot upon her left flank, which seemed to have bled profusely, but with both, her powerful fore-paws, she clung to a deformed and shapeless mass which bore no likeness to anything I had ever seen. The corpse of a horse, frightfully mutilated, lay close by, and the whole ground was strewn with fragments of a horrible appearance. My host having examined them all with intense curiosity, cracked his whip and moved straight towards the tiger.

A hollow menacing roar warned him off; the savage creature showed its formidable range of long and powerful teeth, and had lost all signs of her old tameness.

"She is thirsty for more blood, the Princess Royal is," said the Frenchman. "That is nature, you know. She can't help it, I suppose; and as I should be grieved to kill her, we must wait till she comes round again."

We had to wait long. After three days, the old man himself beginning to doubt whether she ever would come round again, was forced to kill her after all.

When we were thus enabled to examine at leisure that horrible battle-field, he drew my attention to some remnants of a coat in which the gray color was still to be distinguished.

"He has had his reward" said the old man, "though it costs me dear. Better than all those majors was my poor old Princess Royal."

THE HERO OF LAKE ERIE.

[From Vol. VII of Benton's Abridgment of the Debates of Congress.]

A BRIEF OF THE LATE WILLIAM LOWNDES.—Of all the distinguished men who have passed periods of their lives in either House of Congress, there is certainly no one, of anything like equal ability, who has left fewer traces on the page of history, or on the records of Congress. This will surprise those, the eminent Representative for several years of the State of South Carolina. Not that he was less honored and respected, as well for his elevated patriotism and his fine intellect, as for his high personal qualities and his amiable temper, by many of his contemporaries in public life. But that so few of his eloquent speeches are to be found on record is attributable, in part, to his unfeigned diffidence, which placed less than their true value upon his efforts; and, in part, to the great modesty which he had, on principle, to the practice, then general, of *writing* out speeches for publication, either before or after the delivery.

A sketch, however, of the briefest of his speeches of this eminent statesman, who but for his retiring modesty might, to our knowledge, have worn the highest honors in the gift of his Government, we are now enabled to present to our readers, through the kindness of a friend, into whose possession it came by dint of a relative. Besides the rarity of this production, as an exception to Mr. L.'s rule to decline writing out his speeches, the subject to which it relates cannot fail to interest every reader who rightly appreciates the memory of Perry, the renowned naval commander, whose victory on Lake Erie, during the war of 1812, gave safety to the exposed frontier of the country, and greatly contributed, with the subsequent events, to bring about an honorable and happy peace.—*From the National Intelligencer, October 16, 1858.*

Endorsed, in Mr. Senator SILSBEE'S *handwriting,* "SPEECH *of Hon.* W. LOWNDES, *for the relief of the family of Commodore* PERRY, *written off by Mr. L. at my request." Session of 1820–'21.—Jan 23–'24.*

* * * * * * *

The gentleman from Kentucky says that Commodore Perry did not die of a wound. It was his last regret that he had not fallen on the quarter-deck of his own ship. But the disease which carried him off was one to which he could not have been exposed but in obedience to the orders of his Government. He died not by only while he was in service, but because he was in service. Shall we aggravate the irreparable loss of his family by leaving it in hopeless poverty? Gentlemen are unwilling to grant pensions. They are granted now. They flow from the munificence of future nations, that we shall become profuse in our generosity. No Government has been lavish to the dead. Postpone the remuneration for the highest military services until the man who rendered them is no more, and the most suspicious economy may hug itself in confidence that the hour of dangerous extravagance has passed.

You will not say that our gratitude should end with the services of Commodore Perry—with his life? But his services have ended. We have still the inland seas which were recovered by his arms. His example lives; and if, at some period of future depression and dismay, we shall be told that single-ships may annoy the commerce of our enemy, but that an assault on first-rate is a prize to a power which it is wiser to elude than to resist, his example shall rebuke our weakness and enlighten our feeling. You will rally the despending spirits of the country by his name. I am not willing to speak of the battle of Lake Erie. It is a theme for pride and emulation, and that temper is subdued in me now by the condition of that man's family, who gained the victory. But, though I cannot describe, never shall I forget the circumstances of that battle. Courage might have saved your fleet from capture, not from destruction. The highest praise of the commander would have been to take refuge in captivity in honorable death. *The battle was already lost;* and it was at a moment when the rarest union of skill and courage could not have effected a retreat, that the genius of Perry gave you a victory. Sir, you all remember the letter which preceded that victory, the confidence which followed it. It gave a new, and, I trust, a permanent direction to the naval policy of this country. I know of no action of modern times where success has resulted more undeniably from the personal conduct of the commander. Two of the greatest actions of our day have been decided by the arrival of an unexpected reinforcement. [Alexander and Waterloo.]

But who will tell me of another commander, who, in the most desperate peril of his fleet, hit the command which he could not otherwise save, and brought back with him the reinforcement which saved his victory? The naval glory of this country is without spot. I make no invidious distinction. I apply no prism to the ray to separate the different colors whose general character *is light.* But the navy which has done so much for the nation feels how much has been done by the battle of Lake Erie for its character and its prospects. There is not a seaman whose honiedly meat would not be embittered by the reflection that the family of his old commander had been excluded from the bounty of his Government. If, Mr. Chairman, that commander had longer lived, if another war, if an Atlantic navy—But I must not pursue this course of observation. My mind is sufficiently filled with the recollection of what he was, without reflecting upon what he would have been.

A Swedish Journalist Sentenced to Death and Pardoned on the Scaffold.

Mr. Lindahl, the editor of the *Raadefplandet*, a Swedish journal, was recently sentenced to death for having published an outrageous libel on the character of Henrietta Mendelssohn, a prominent Stockholm belle. A Stockholm correspondent states in relation to the young lady:

"Every one knows young Henriette. She is eighteen years old, fair hair, of elegant person, and has eyes of deep blue and of poetical expression. She excels as a writer in prose as well as of verse, and nothing can exceed the grace and beauty of her appearance. Before the slander to which we refer poisoned her existence, she was noted for her fascination and cheerfulness, and was passionately fond of amusement, and especially dancing. Her dancing was admirable, her manner bewitching, and the Swedish dialect that she spoke gave an additional charm to her conversation. In one word, she was a flower of the land, and when the news of the slander upon her spread about, she became the object of universal sympathy, the whole column of it falling upon the detractor."

When the day of his execution arrived (July 2, 1858) this gentleman seemed composed, and said: "I am going to suffer the penalty of death, which I deserve; however, it shall soon be made evident that, at all events, I was not a coward."

He then gave some of the papers which were upon his table to the jailer, giving him some private instructions about their disposal, and, in a few minutes, change the miseries you suffer to joys of peace.

"Farewell, gentlemen. Take care to report my death and my repentance to those who were familiar with my life."

Ascending the fatal platform, he had already put his foot on the second flight of steps when he felt a pressure, and in a moment his eyes and hands were set free. Henriette Mendelssohn stood before him. "Mr. Lindahl," she said to him, "I pardon you." Mr. Lindahl, at once falling upon her knees before her, and taking the letter which he had concealed in his breast, said:

"Madame, I accept your pardon. My last thought was to implore it of your magnanimity, and I felt sure that you would not refuse it, at least to my grave."

This romantic affair has created the greatest sensation all over Sweden.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

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The subscriber would invite the special attention of Architect Builders and the public to his NEW CULVER PATENT SELF-CLEANSING AND VENTILATING WARM AIR FURNACE, Which has been so successfully introduced during the last winter and gave such general satisfaction. It is so arranged as to consume the gases from the Coal, making it one of the most economical, safe, durable Heaters now in use.

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