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## [From the New York Ledger.] BORDER HEROISM.

BY EMERSON BENNETT. It was in the spring of 1785, and on a clear and beautiful day, that a party, consisting of two men, a woman, and a child, were passing down the Ohio in a conveniently sized boat, for the purpose of joining some friends at a settlement below. This party bore the surname of Marston, and the relationship of husband, brother, wife and daughter. They had come from the interior of Pennsylvania, transporting their goods by horses to the Alleghany, and thence descending that river and the Ohio in the boat they now occupied.

The eldest of the four was a large, tall, fine looking man, some thirty years of age, and the husband of the female, and father of the child. The wife appeared to be some six or eight years the junior of her partner, was small, slender and graceful, and possessed a countenance of more than ordinary intelligence and beauty. The brother was younger than the husband, and the inferior in size and strength, but comely in feature, and evidently a man of considerable muscular power. The youngest of the party was a sweet, chatting, blue-eyed, golden-haired little girl of four summers, the favorite of all, and especially the idol and joy of its fond and almost girlish mother, both of whom seemed much out of place in journeying through that wild, unsettled, and perilous region.

Thus far our adventurers had met with no material accident or misfortune, nor had they seen any of those fierce enemies of their race, who were then known to be prowling through the great forests which stretch away on either hand for hundreds of miles; but now they were more directly entering the country inhabited by their warlike foes, and which had been more distinctly marked by the aggressions of the latter upon their white invaders; and as they turned their eyes toward the green and flowery banks of the delightful stream, upon whose placid bosom they were floating, it was less to admire the solemn beauties of nature, than in dread of what those mighty forests might conceal. Yet the men, as was natural, they should, relying upon their strength, and their skill in the use of weapons, seemed less uneasy than the girlish mother, at every unusual sound, would elasp her offspring to her heart, and glance around her in fearful apprehension.

"Mary," said her husband, approaching her on one of these occasions of alarm, which became more frequent as she advanced on her journey, "how is that you, who have been so courageous all along, have now of a sudden become so timid?" "I hardly know myself, William," she replied, in a sweet, musical tone, looking up with a smile, "unless it is that we are entering a more dangerous region, and that I am every moment growing more fond of our pretty little Ada, and more fearful of her account; and being so over the child which she now held in her arms, she imprinted a mother's kiss of love upon its ruby lips.

"But I'm not afraid, mamma, when you and papa are with me," prattled the blue-eyed pet; "for I know nobody'll hurt me where you are."

"Ah, God bless your trusting innocence!" cried the father, impulsively catching her up in his arms, and covering her cherub face with kisses. "No one shall hurt you where I am—and may the good God keep us all from harm!"

During their voyage down the river, it had been necessary to lay up at night, especially in foggy weather; but they had generally managed their boat near, rather than at the shore, by making a line fast to some overhanging branch, and dropping a sort of rude anchor. At these stopping places our voyagers had been the most apprehensive; yet it was not at these that they were really most in danger, but while floating along in the bright light of day, as the sequel of our narrative will show.

On the very day that we introduce them to the reader, but some two or three hours subsequent to the conversation re-

corded, the little girl, in looking toward the Ohio shore, became much attracted to a long line of beautifully-flowered shrubbery, which so overhung the stream that a branch might easily be broken in passing; and with infantile glee she clapped her hands, and exclaimed— "Oh, papa, do get little Ada some pretty flowers!"

The boat was not far from the land, and the current set in close to the bank, so that it was an easy matter to comply with her wish; and the fond father, giving directions to this effect, and himself taking an oar, was about to push in towards the thicket, when the mother, with what seemed to be a premonition of danger, quickly interposed, saying, eagerly and earnestly—

"Nay, William, do not think of such a thing, but keep further out in the stream. From some cause I am frightened—I feel that danger lurks in every thicket, and I know we cannot be too cautious." "Pooh, Mary, you are too easily alarmed," replied her husband; "no one would be more cautious than I, if I thought there was danger; but there is none here, surely; and little Ada might as well have a bunch of flowers to please her."

"So saying, and without heeding the remonstrances of his more timid companion, he, assisted by his brother, turned the boat up alongside the shrubbery, and both were in the act of plucking a flowering branch—the little girl, meanwhile, in her mother's trembling arms, clapping her tiny hands with delight—when suddenly two sharp reports, almost blended into one, rung out upon the still air, and the brothers fell back together, the one shot through the heart and the other through the brain.

At the same instant there was a series of terrific yells, a rustling among the bushes, and two hideously-painted savages came leaping into the boat. First making sure of their victims, by plunging their knives several times into their bodies, they next tore off their scalps, and tauntingly shook the gory trophies, in the very face of the now petrified and horror-stricken wife and mother, who stood like a statue of marble, as motionless and seemingly as cold, her eyes glaring wildly, and the little girl clinging to her in a terror she could not comprehend. Then attaching each his scalp to his girdle, they made a flourish of their tomahawks over the head of the mother, rather as it seemed with the intention of terrifying than of striking her. But finding her unmoved—for she was still paralyzed with horror—one of them rudely snatched the child from her arms, and made as if to dash out its brains on the gunwale of the boat. This he might indeed have done—for his tasklike eyes were gleaming with fiendish malice—but the other interposed, and said something in their native tongue; and when, turning to the still immovable mother, he struck her a blow with his fist, knocking her down, and threw the shrieking child upon her.

The two Indians now proceeded to secure the boat, by working it up under the overhanging bushes, and so disposing of them as to completely conceal it from the view of any party passing up or down the river, or looking out from the opposite shore.

By the time this was completed, poor Mrs. Marston had in some degree recovered the use of her faculties, and had begun to tremor her hard fate in low, choking sobs, while the straining her trembling child as tightly to her anguished bosom, as if she thought that her maternal arm could shield it from the merciless foes.

One of the Indians now advanced to her side, and rudely pushing her with his foot, made signs that she must get up and follow him ashore. She understood and complied with his desire—for she had now some little hope that her child would be spared to her—and with a mother's undying love, she felt that she would willingly struggle through anything, endure everything, for its sweet sake.

We may not dwell upon her feelings, for none but a mother so suddenly and terribly afflicted, and so hopelessly placed, could comprehend the bitter anguish of her heart.

At a little distance back from the river, the Indian bound his prisoner to a sapling, leaving the child free beside her, and then returned to his companion, and assisted him in securing their captured spoil.

They now seemed disposed to be merry—those grim, inhuman monsters—as they gloated over their not-invaluable prize—stripping the dead of their garments, securing their weapons and ammunition, and reveling, like hungry beasts, in the palatable edibles which their explorations exposed—chatting glibly in their native tongue, and now and then laughing merrily, but cautiously, as here and there they fell upon what they considered a prize of more than usual value—the last of these being no other than a mysterious-looking keg, which they were not long in discovering to be firewater, and over which they not only laughed, but around which they fairly danced in fiendish glee.

At length, placing the keg in the middle of the boat, they knooked in the head with their hatchets, and began to indulge in the exhilarating poison, gradually increasing their at first light potations to a kind of drunken carousal, which lasted

for several hours, and finally ended in a state of complete intoxication.

Meantime the poor mother had remained bound to her tree, listening to the fierce ravelry of her captors, and all the time in trembling apprehension lest something might direct their thoughts to her, and she and her darling Ada become fresh victims of their now liquor-madened passions. But as time wore on, and their potations grew deeper, and their carousal more drunken, if not less boisterous, a wild hope sprung up in her breast, that through their final inebriation she might providentially effect her escape; and from that moment she became more intensely excited than ever, and listened with a still more wildly palpitating heart, hushing the very murmurs of her poor child by looks and whispers of terror that it seemed instinctively to comprehend.

At last, just as the bright sun was setting, the long-wished-for moment seemed to arrive, the drunken sounds having gradually died away to silence; and she reasoned that her foes were no longer in a condition to prevent her escape, which peradventure she might effect, provided she could immediately get free of her bonds.

But how was this to be done? Her hands were corded behind her back, and her body made fast to the tree. She tried to work herself loose, but her efforts only served to tighten the cords and give her pain; and she was on the very point of uttering a shriek of despair, when she remembered in time that the sound of her voice might fall upon the obtuse senses of her drunken foes, and mechanically arouse them to action.

But stay! another strange wild hope enters her heart! Can she make use of Adal? Can she venture the poor child to the fearful risk of returning alone to the boat, and procuring a knife? It is a thought as trying as death itself, though less fearful than a long and hopeless captivity, and it seems to be their only salvation. Time is passing, her captors have become still, and something must be done! Shall she risk the only alternative in her power? Something seems to urge her to do so; and finally, wrought up to a pitch of desperation and madness, she explains to the trembling little orature what she needs of her, and gives her directions how to proceed.

And that innocent little thing comprehended her, and finally sat out on her fearful mission. Oh! what a trial was that to the tender nerves of that poor mother! and from the moment of her departure, till that of her return, the brief suspense was to her an age of horror. But the child went, and returned in safety, and brought back a knife, which she had very stealthily taken from the very side of the murderers of her father and uncle, and which was even yet red with their blood.

The poor captive shuddered as she looked upon the fearful weapon, and yet she experienced a faint gleam of joy, at the thought that it would be the means of setting her free, and thus, under God, the saving of herself and child.

Little Ada, by her mother's direction, soon cut the binding cords; and the moment Mrs. Marston found herself at liberty, she caught the heroic little girl in her arms, covered her sweet face with kisses, and then, with almost bursting heart, knelt upon the ground, and poured forth a fervent prayer of thanksgiving to the Great Unseen.

Strengthened by this, she arose and prepared to act; but the thought of what was before her, and the still slender thread upon which her own life and that of her child depended, brought back a sinking of the heart, and a trembling of every nerve. What was to be done now? She was alone in the great wilderness—a weak feeble woman—far from home and friends, and surrounded by dangers of every imaginable description. Could she escape on foot with her child? Impossible! they would either starve or fall a prey to wild beasts or Indians. What course then? For they must escape. There was the boat—but then there lay the murderers of her husband and his brother, and what could she do with them? Should she in turn murder them, while they slept their drunken sleep? A cold icy shudder crept through her veins at the bare thought—But then her child must be saved! and to save that, by any means, was imperative to her duty.

We will not follow her thoughts. Enough that she at last, carrying the child in her arms, resolutely but cautiously, returned to the fearful scene, where still lay the dead bodies of her friends, and, almost beside them, but upon some balms and boxes, nearly on a level with the gunwale, their now drunken murderers.

With the knife firmly clasped in her hand, that widowed mother reached the boat; she entered it; she stood over her foes; they were in her power; she raised the knife; she struck! She hesitated—trembled—grew faint of heart—her hand fell. She thought of her child, and the arm was again nerved, and again raised, but again fell powerless.

Had another thought! She hurried forward, placed the child near the bow, and warned it not to speak or stir; and then, seizing an oar, pushed the boat from the shore, and set it drifting down the stream. Then darting forward and securing the weapons of her enemies, she nerved herself for the great trial, and, using all her strength, suddenly rolled them both into the river.

On striking the water, one of the two Indians sunk almost immediately; but the other, who perhaps had drunk less deeply, and was not so much intoxicated, began to struggle for life, and soon appeared to recover sufficient consciousness to comprehend what had happened, and struck out fiercely for the boat. But that girlish mother, nerved by the thro' of her child, her own wrongs, and the instinct of self-preservation, prepared to defend herself even at the cost of life. She had pushed the Indian over, because it was not in her heart to slay them in cold blood, if she could escape by other means; but she was firmly resolved not to be taken again; and bringing a rifle to bear upon the struggling savage, she waited till she saw him about to make a lodgment astern, and then pulled trigger. A flash, a report, a groan followed, and the bubbling waters grew red above the grave of her foe.

All that long, terrible night that heroic mother watched by her living child and his dead and gory father, and labored hard to keep the boat from drifting to either shore; but what pen can portray her mingled emotions of grief for the dead and joy for the living, her hopes and fears, her horror and despair! She lived through her trials, however, and the next day was discovered by a party of hunters, who, at her cries of distress, came to her relief, and thus she was saved.

We will simply add, that that heroic little child, Adal Marston, in after years became the wife of one of Kentucky's most distinguished and chivalric sons.

## Who was Waiting.

An amusing incident took place in one of the large dry goods stores of an eastern city a short time since. A good looking, honest faced country girl came to town with her "feller" to do a trifle of shopping.

The magnitude of the store, the piles on piles of goods, the dazzling array of articles, the rows of busy clerks, the fitting cash boys, quite overpowered our good friend, who scarcely knew what to do. Her "feller" obstinately refused to go in, but iterated about the door.

The clerks being all busy at the moment the young lady was obliged to remain standing a few moments. At length a dapper fellow, with a gold watch chain flourishing moustache, came bowing and smiling up to the blushing customer with—

"Anybody waiting on you, madam?" The color deepening in her cheeks, she hesitated and drew a long breath, till finally, with a nod of her head towards the door, she faltered out: "Yes, sir, he is."

## Land Warrants in Virginia.

The system of granting warrants to locate vacant and unappropriated lands in Virginia has been carried to such excess that Gov. Wise has felt it his duty to protest against the gross frauds practiced under for years. The warrant is granted to any body who will pay two cents an acre, and the warrantee may find the land where he can in a region already "shingled" over with the conflicting titles. Ignorant persons in the North and elsewhere have bought these warrants at from eighty to one hundred cents an acre, under an impression that there would be no difficulty in making a location, whereas in truth there is no land left. The Governor is against any further issues of this sort.

## Reasons for not Marrying.

Under this caption a correspondent sends us the following "bit for tat," winding up with a moral. We cannot vouch for its originality but it will be admitted on all hands to be an impressive picture. It is asserted that a man marrying now-a-days, marries a great deal more than he bargained for. "He not only weds himself to a woman, but a laboratory of prepared chalk, a quintal of whalebone, eight coffee bags, four baskets of novels, one poodle-dog, and a system of weak nerves, that will keep four servants and three doctors around your house most of the time.

This frightful report is enough to make bachelors. But there is another side to this question. A young lady refuses to accept some suitors, and very properly, too; because she would marry more than a reputed man. She would wed a dozen pair of rejected pants, a box of buttonless shirts, six bottles of hair-oil, a little chest of patent medicines, with the labels in the French language, a mass of unpaid tailor's bills, a broken constitution, with a brain which considers business a ridiculous as well as vulgar way of spending life.

Both sexes have much to consider before entering upon the married state.

**MATRIMONIAL EXPERIENCE.**—An old Dutch tavern keeper in the Borough of Chester, had his third wife, and being asked his views of matrimony, replied, "Vel den, you see, de first times I marries for love—dat vash goot; den I marries for beauty—dat vash goot; but, you see, de first time I marries for money—and dis is petter as both!"—Old Cooney took a practical view of things; he used and tried 'em, and he got to be a good one.

A man in Shenectady advertises a clock for sale, which keeps time like a tack gatherer.

## A Convenient Ballot-Box.

We have heard of a Bank President, who discounted notes on his travels, and carried his funds in his hat. But John Calhoun, the inventor of the Lecompton fraud, has improved upon this idea. He is a sort of peripatetic ballot-box. He has converted himself into a travelling election. Disdaining the old mode of suffrage, he first secures the votes of certain deluded men in Kansas; and then proceeds to count and change these votes, with a facile rapidity that would amaze Herr Alexander, Signor Blitz, or even the celebrated Honton, who astonishes European Kings and Commons. Calhoun has removed his apparatus to Washington city, and has been performing all sorts of achievements of legerdemain since his arrival there with his rare contrivance. When he got to St. Louis, he caused it to be announced that the pro-slavery men had won the prize; but since he has felt the public pulse, on his way to Washington, and while in that city, he has given strong signs of allowing the votes of the majority to control. At this indication all the Northern advocates of the Lecompton Constitution gave a great shout of joy. They were full of exultation at the bare idea of Calhoun doing the fair thing. Now it must not be understood that this concession was to be a complete one. The hope thus held out was only as to the Legislature. The Governor and other State officers were elected, as such, by the free State vote, but it would not do to give all to the majority; so it was intimated that the latter should be given to the pro-slavery minority, in order that the Legislature should be able to pass no law over the Governor's veto!

But the joy of the Northern advocates of Lecompton was short-lived. Calhoun has given his magic ballot-box another examination. He has pronounced a new incantation. He has consulted the oracles for another declaration. The pro-slavery men in Congress are discontented at these Northern threats. They are determined, therefore, to keep all the cards in their own hand; and so the arch-magician changes front again, and causes it to be finally and emphatically announced that he will not decide who has got the Legislature of Kansas until the Lecompton Constitution is accepted, and Kansas compelled to take it. This places, also, two United States Senators at his disposal.

All our late advices are to this effect. We have already given several, but the following from the Washington letter in yesterday's Ledger is conclusive:

"The final decision of Mr. Calhoun in regard to the result of the State elections of the 4th of January, is to be withheld until Kansas shall be admitted as a State. This is no doubt a wise decision, for were he to give certificates of election to either party at present, it would necessarily embarrass the action of Congress. If the certificates, overlooking the returns, were given to the free-State candidates, the South would be dissatisfied; even if they were given to the pro-slavery party Congress would not, without a severe struggle bring in Kansas as a State under the Lecompton Constitution."

There is a complacency in this absolutely refreshing. The oaths of the two Speakers of the two Houses of Kansas Legislature—given after a complete canvass—the testimony of Gov. Denver himself, and all the later investigations, prove conclusively that the free State men carried everything, Legislature, Governor, and all at the election on the 4th of January last. Even Calhoun is asserted to have admitted as such on several occasions. And yet, to refuse to give these people their rights, is sagely pronounced "a wise decision!" And the man who assumes this dangerous power—the author of this fatal wrong—is held up as worthy of confidence and belief, and those who resist and protest against his monstrous usurpation are excommunicated in the official organ as "rebels."

What would be the fate of any official in this State who would thus withhold the returns of an election, fairly conducted, until another was decided? The Buck Shot War grew out of a piece of conduct which bore a moderate similarity to this. But an outrage upon popular rights like that of Calhoun, would produce an instant resort to revolution. There can now be no doubt that he designs giving the whole machinery to the pro-slavery party in Kansas the moment Lecompton is fastened upon the people.

Such an act would be in exact keeping with all his late proceedings.

We challenge the records of crime for a case parallel to this prostitution and tampering with the ballot-box. It stands out alone, and is in harmony only with the infamy and injustice which have marked the whole shameful episode upon the will of the majority in the distracted Territory of Kansas.—The Press, February 16.

**NAME CHANGED.**—The Pennsylvania Senate has passed a bill changing the name of the Pittsburgh and Connellsville Railroad Company to that of the "Pittsburgh, Connellsville and Baltimore Railroad Company."

Since the first of January 1856, over three thousand school houses have been built in the State of Illinois.

In courtship there hard squeezes are better than fifty soft words.

## THE POSITION OF GOV. WALKER.

The following letter from the Hon. Robert J. Walker to the Anti-Lecompton Democratic Convention, held in Indianapolis on the 22d ult., did not appear in the regular report of the proceedings, but has since been published. It will put to rest all doubts concerning Gov. Walker's position.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20, 1858.

AUSTIN H. BROWN, esq., Chairman, &c. Sir: Your letter in behalf of the Committee, inviting me to address the mass meeting of the Democracy of Indiana on the 23d of this month at Indianapolis, has been received. It would have given me sincere pleasure to have complied with your request, but on the 21th of this month one of my most important cases, now pending in the Supreme Court of the United States, is set down for argument, and I cannot be absent on that occasion. The power of Congress to admit new States into the Union has heretofore, at various periods, been fully discussed by me. This power of admission most clearly implies the previous consent of the people of the inchoate State, not only by the very terms, but as required by the fundamental principles of our Government. Indeed, I presume it will be hardly contended that Congress possesses any power to force the people of a State into the Union against their will. The Union is composed of a confederacy of equal sovereignties, and each must have freely entered into the Federal compact. By the people of a State, under our Federal Constitution, is always intended the majority of that people. The people of a State, in entering into the Union, always indicate their previous assent by the adoption of a State Constitution.

My own opinion, as heretofore often expressed, distinctly repeated in my letter of acceptance of the Governorship of Kansas, and reiterated in my inaugural address, was that the assent of the people to their Constitution can only properly be ascertained by a direct popular vote for or against its adoption. Indeed, in what other way can it ever be known that the people would have assented to the Constitution unless they are permitted to vote for or against its adoption? The President, in his message of December last, admitted this must be done as regards the question of Slavery as regulated by a State Constitution, although he concedes that his instructions to me as regards the submission of the Constitution were "general and unqualified." It is most unfortunate that such an opinion had remained so long dormant in the breast of the President; for if the slightest suggestion to that effect had been made to me, it is quite evident, from my life-long opinions on this very point so often and distinctly expressed, repeated in my letter of acceptance of the Governorship of Kansas, and reiterated in my inaugural address, that on such conditions I never would have gone to Kansas.

It is true that the President, in his Message, most frankly concedes, not only that his instructions to me as regards the submission of the Constitution were "general and unqualified," but also that he then supposed that the Constitution itself would have been submitted to the vote of the people, and that in his judgment this ought to have been done. But, nevertheless, his Message of December last, to my surprise and astonishment, first developed the astounding fact that the President considered that nothing but the Slavery question was required to be submitted to the vote of the people. I do not mean to charge the Chief Magistrate of our country with willful deception on this question, but this I do say, as indicated by my life-long opinions, published again and again, repeated in my letter of acceptance, reiterated in my inaugural address and various dispatches, that the President and all his Cabinet well knew my opinions on this subject, and that I never would have gone to Kansas except upon the condition of advocating the submission of the Constitution for ratification or rejection to a vote of the people. This, with me, was a vital question, embodying the only fair, just, peaceful and constitutional method of settling the difficulties in Kansas.

It was with extreme reluctance, and accompanied by great sacrifices, and after repeated refusals, that I at length did consent to go to Kansas; but upon no other terms would I have gone than upon those above indicated; and if the President had stated to me that the Slavery question only was required to be submitted to the vote of the people, he very well knows, and all his Cabinet well know, and all my friends who conferred with me at that date know, that on such conditions I never would have gone to Kansas.

In my administration of the affairs of Kansas, always communicated from first to last to the President, I faithfully carried out these views as regards the submission of the Constitution to the vote of the people, and by these means, as the President frankly admits in his late Kansas Message, prevented a sanguinary revolution there in June last. This revolution would have covered Kansas with blood and desolation; it would have been marked by all those horrors which ever accompany civil war, which must have extended to bordering States and Territories, and involved, but too probably, the ruin of our beloved country. How was this dreadful catastrophe averted?—By my addresses and dispatches, quoted by the President, advocating the submis-