

THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man.—Thomas Jefferson

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LETTERS addressed on business, must be post paid.

POETRY.

"THE LATE REMORSE OF LOVE."

BY MRS. CASE.

Come back, my own departed one,—
Would I could lay my cheek
Once more upon thy hand and weep
The love I cannot speak?
Alas! I knew not half thy worth
Till death was on thy brow—
Come back, and tell my breaking heart
It is forgiven now.

I deemed that thou wert harsh and cold
And many a warmer smile,
Shone round my path—but thine alone
Was true that mournful while,
I made thee sad with look and word—
Oh! how these memories roll
With lava track along the depths
Of my poor, wretched soul.

Have love with fonder zeal;
But what they are and what they were,
Time sternly bids me feel.
Through all the dark, bewildering dream
Thy love was still the same,
A gentle, and unnoticed light,
Yet still a quenchless flame.

Oh, bitter is the grief that wakes
My passing midnight's gloom?
Oh, misery, but to know that love
When hidden by the tomb!
I pine to meet it when the day
'To other eyes is bright,
And watch, and weep, and pray, till wanes
The lone and dreary night.

Forgive! forgive! thy blessed world
Holds not a thought of care,
And all my vain remorse can fling
No shadow on its air;
But by the love that first was thine
Come from thy realm of rest,
And with thy soft, low accents breathe
Tease to my tortured breast.

Come once—but only once again
Let thy dear voice be heard,
And speak, amid my soul's despair,
One little soothing word.
I know thy love, I know thy worth,
And I would be thy slave
Could I but open once again
The portals of thy grave?

MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Democratic Review.

HARRY BLAKE.

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE, FOUNDED ON FACT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LUCY CRAWFORD."

CHAPTER. V

On the high proceeding execution, in the bar-room of the Blue Horse, were assembled half a dozen men; most of whom had been there at Blake's quarrel with Wickliffe. A dull and melancholy group they were. It might have been the absence of the jolly face and merry voice of old Garret Quackenboss, who was gone to Albany, to lay in a stock of substantials, to keep up the well known gastronomic character of the Blue Horse; or it might have been the great size of the bar-room, with its murky corners, whose darkness was scarcely relieved by the dim light which flickered up from a dying fire, aided only by the sickly flame of a single candle; or it might have been the approaching end of one who had so lately been among them, that had this chilling effect on their spirits. But certain it is, that rarely had the bar-room of the Blue Horse contained so dull a party.

Somehow or other, they had gradually drawn close to the fire, and as the night had closed in, and the wind railed about the old house, their conversation had assumed a sombre character, and they whispered in each other's ears, strange stories of robberies, murders, midnight assassinations, and even of Ghosts, and on this subject one of them was positive, having had a private ghost in his own family for years—an aunt in the fourth degree, by the mother's side, who haunted a hen-house on his father's place; and what was remarkably, after her late visitation, ten eggs, an old game-cock, the patriarch of the barn, were missing; showing that ghosts were partial to eggs, and not particular as to the age of poultry. Another of them mentioned in a confidential way to the whole company, that his grandfather had walked a mile in a dark wood, one very stormy night, in company with a ghost, which behaved in a very civil and gentlemanlike manner; so much so, that the old gentleman up to the day of his death asserted, that ghosts were a very ill used class of beings, and that, for his part, he wished that many people who pretended to be their betters only were as good as they were. From this topic the conversation gradually wandered off to Harry Blake and his trial, and his approaching death.

"Don't you think they might pardon him?" inquired Caleb Grayson, who was one of the party, and who had been sitting among them, without taking any part or showing any interest in their conversation until it touched upon the subject of Blake's execution, but then he seemed keenly alive to it, and with his features working with intense anxiety, he repeated his question: "Don't you think they might? I wish they would. Tell me some one, What do you think?"

"I heard that Mary Lincoln's father did his best for him, but it was of no use," replied one of those addressed. "But you must not grieve about it so. You couldn't help being a witness against him. Even Harry said so himself."

The old man's face brightened, and something like a smile passed over it, as he said, "Did Harry say so? Well, I'm glad of that; I'm glad of that, for it makes me very sad when I think that it was I and Walton who put him where he is—indeed it does."

"It was no fault of yours," said the man, and you mustn't let it trouble you. I'm sure I should have done as you did. Ah! here comes some one."

The last words were called forth by the sound of a horse clattering up to the house. Then the loud voice of a man was heard bawling out for some one to take his horse, and in a few minutes a tall man, unknown to them all, entered the room, with a short

whip in his hand. There was little in his features, or the appearance of his person, to encourage familiarity, for his complexion was swarthy and sallow, and his expression anything but prepossessing; and his dress was coarse and soiled, as if from hard travel.

He passed a moment, and looked about him, as he entered the room; and then striding across it, drew a chair directly in front of the fire, in the midst of the astonished group, and held his feet to the blaze.

"A threatening night, friends," said he at length, addressing them.

There was something in the stern sinister eye of the man, and his haggard, repulsive face, which gave a momentary check to the conversation, and no one answered him, but he went on.

"Go on, don't let me stop talk. On with you. I want to break in no man's humor, I've an odd humor of my own, for I've heard that there is a man to be hanged to-morrow, and I've come fifty miles to see it. I was at the trial, and now I'm come to see if he will wear the same bold face when he dies that he did then."

"So you were at the trial?" said Caleb Grayson, who was leaning with his elbow on the table, and cheek resting on the palm of his hand, and looking gloomily in the fire.

"Ay, I was, my man," said the stranger bluntly; "and I saw you there. You were the witness who swore that you saw him stab Wickliffe. It was at your elbow at the time. Your testimony did for him."

The old man half started from his seat, and turned exceedingly pale, at the same time pressing his hand across his eyes. At last he said, in a low agitated voice:

"What could a man do?"

"Go, and my answer was on oath. I did see him stab him—I'm sure I did."

"Then, of course, it was all right. For my part, I'm glad he's to hang. I shall be glad when he is out of the way. Had I been on the jury, and known only what you stated, I would have brought in the same verdict."

The old man looked at him sharply, as he asked, "What do you mean? What else do you know?"

"Know!" repeated the stranger, looking carelessly up, and drumming with his whip upon his boot. "Nothing. What could I know? You saw him murder the man, didn't you? You swore to that. I should think there was little more to be discovered."

"True, true" replied the other. "Yet this is a strange story of Harry's, and even now he persists in it, and in asserting his innocence. Poor fellow! I always loved that boy as my own child—I, who have brought him to this end. Poor little Mary Lincoln, too! it has killed her. Thank God, she is in her grave. 'It's better for her."

"Of course he'll insist to the last that he is not guilty," said the stranger. "There's always two ways of dying. Some confess and throw themselves on the mercy of the law. Others keep their mouths tight, and accuse it of injustice to the last. The first hope for pardon, through its clemency. The last hope is, through the fear which every man has of shedding his blood."

"Harry Blake is no coward," replied Grayson. "He says he's ready to die; but that he is innocent. The love of life must be strong in him, for until now I never thought that he would lie, even to save his life. But he is not innocent—no—no, he is not; for I saw him do it—I saw him. The love of life is very strong. It must be, or Harry Blake would not lie."

A slight, sneering smile flitted across the face of the stranger, as he turned from the speaker, and looked among the dull members of the fire, without speaking. It was a dim, dreary room, and its distant corners were lost in darkness, and the frame of the stranger, as he sat between the androns, threw a gigantic, spectral shadow on the wall, that seemed to have something ominous about it, and taken in connection with

the gloomy nature of the conversation and the cold indifference of the stranger, and his wild forbidding air, seemed to have thrown a chill on all about him. For as he sat there, buried in deep thought, with his eye-brows knit and his lips working, as with suppressed emotions, those who had hitherto hugged the fire began slowly to widen the distance between themselves and their ill omened visitor: to scan his person, as if there were more in it than had met the eye, and to watch his tall shadow on the wall as if there were something about it more than appertained to shadows in general. Still they spoke not, until the object of their solicitude, as if concluding a long mental discussion, drew a heavy breath, and rising said,

"Well, let him die; it's as well. Others have died in the same way."

Turning to a sort of under-barkeeper, who officiated in the absence of Garret he said, "See to my horse, will you? And now show me to my room, and wake me at sunrise. I shall not breakfast here."

Those collected about the fire watched him as he followed the attendant out of the room, and shut the door after them.

"What do you think of that man, Mr. Tompkins?" said one of them to a small man in an ample vest and contracted small clothes.

"Come, come, none of that," said the small man, with an air of suspicious stubbornness. "Don't be trying to make me commit myself by asking questions." As he spoke he fixed his eyes obstinately on his own finger nails—not that they were particularly clean or ornamental.

"Can't you speak your own mind, man said the other pettishly.

"Well then," said his companion, "I'll tell you what I think. I think, said he, sinking his voice, and placing the back of his hand to the corner of his mouth, by way of indicating the extreme of confidence, "I think he won't be drowned."

"Ah!" said the small man, "if that's all, I think so myself."

And having settled this matter to their mutual satisfaction, they rose to go, a motion in which they were followed by all except Caleb Grayson, who, long after they were gone, and the room was silent and deserted, sat there, with a heavy heart, at the part which the law had forced him to take in the legal murder which was to take place on the morrow. At last he started up as if a sudden thought had struck him, and finding his way to the stable, saddled his horse and rode off.

It was a dark night. Black clouds were drifting across the sky, obscuring it, and together with the tall trees and forests which in places overhung the road, rendering it pitchy dark. In defiance of the threatening look of the sky and the obscurity of the road, the old man kept steadily on for several hours; neither pausing to rest his beast nor to refresh himself, until it was broad daylight, when he arrived at a large wooden building. Stopping for the first time, he fastened his horse to the gate, and crossing a small yard, ascended a flight of steps and entered the hall.

A guard was pacing up and down there; and under him, on a wooden bench sat an old man reading a worn out Bible.

"Can I see Blake?" demanded Grayson of the old man.

"Yes, yes, I suppose you can," replied he, putting aside his book; "I've orders to admit his friends—a sad business—a sad business—and he the flower of the country round. Ah, neighbor Grayson, who would have thought it!"

Caleb Grayson made no reply to the remarks in which the old man indulged, until he opened the door of the room or cell, and pointed to Blake, seated at a small wooden table within.

Blake rose as the old man entered, and extended his hand to him.

"This is kind, Caleb," said he, "I was afraid that you alone among all my friends, would not call to see me; for I know what you think of me."

"Ah! that's the reason, Harry, that I could not come," replied the other sadly. "I knew that I had brought you to this, and I could not bear to come and look at my work."

"Well, well, it's all past, and God knows I've little to live for now—poor Mary—she's gone—no matter, no matter; the worst is over—and you mustn't lay it to heart, Caleb—you acted for the best, and we'll not talk of it."

"But we must talk of it, we must," exclaimed the old man. "In spite of all that I felt, it's what I came for. If I would die easy, I must know the truth; and I have come here, Harry, to beg, to conjure you to tell it."

"You have heard it already," said Harry, sadly.

"No, no, Harry, I have not; I know I have not," said he, "but you will tell it to me now."

Harry Blake turned his head away, and was silent.

"Harry, my dear boy," said the old man, crouching at his feet, and pressing his forehead against his knees, "my own dear boy, do confess to me. It will render more happy a life that is nearly spent to have my statement confirmed from your own lips. Don't be afraid of me. Harry; for here I swear, in the presence of the God who made us both, that I will not reveal what you tell me. Indeed I will not. Come, Harry come."

"Caleb," said Blake, passing his hand kindly over the old man's head, "from my soul I pity you; but I cannot lie."

"You pity me!" said the old man, rising. "Am I the one to be pitied? No, no, quite the other way. I'll not believe it, say what you will. With my own eyes, Harry, I saw you commit that murder. Indeed I did—indeed I did!"

Blake shook his head; "You think so, I know you think so; I'll do you that justice. But your eyes deceived you. It's useless to dwell on this now. You have done what the law made your duty in telling what you believed to be truth. I should have had to do the same myself; and I freely forgive you."

"No no, Harry," said Grayson with childish querulousness, "this will not do. Why will you not tell the truth? You cannot be saved now. All hope is past. Come there's a good fellow. You met—you quarrelled—words grew high—he attacked you—and finally you—you—stabbed him. Ha! ha! that was the way of it, wasn't it? A man will do many things when his blood's up, which he wouldn't at another time. Your hot blood couldn't bear all that he said. It was natural and I think pardonable; indeed I do." He placed his hands on Blake's shoulders, and looking imploringly in his face whilst his voice changed from its assumed tone of vivacity to one of the deepest sadness. "Harry, wasn't it so? Tell me my own dear boy, wasn't it so? You know you quarrelled with him at the tavern."

"I did, indeed," said Harry, gloomily, "God forgive me for it."

"And you swore that you would have revenge if it cost you your life."

"It was an impious speech!" replied Blake in a grave tone, "and fearfully has it been visited upon me."

"You left the tavern," continued Grayson eagerly, "took the same road which he had taken; came up with him—"

"And found him dead!" said Blake.

"I'll not believe it! It's not true," exclaimed the old man striding up and down the room with his hands clasped together.

"It's not true. Oh! Harry, it's horrible to go to the grave persisting in a lie."

"Hark!" said Blake, as the voices of persons approaching the door, were heard; "It's the hour, and they are coming for me. Good bye!"

"One word Harry!" exclaimed the old man; "are you guilty?"

"No!" replied Blake, with an earnest emphasis.

The next moment the door was opened, and Blake was summoned to go forth.

Conclusion next week.