

THE STAR AND BANNER.

D. A. BUEHLER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

"FEARLESS AND FREE."

TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM.

VOL. XVIII—14.

GETTYSBURG, PA. FRIDAY EVENING, JUNE 18, 1847.

NEW SERIES—NO. 4.

WASHINGTON CROSSING THE DELAWARE.

Dark and gloomy was the hour,
And Freedom's fires burnt low;
For twenty days had Washington
Retreated from the foe;
And his weary soldiers' feet were bare
As he fled across the Delaware.
Hearts were fainting through the land,
And patriot blood ran cold;
The stricken army scarce retained
Two thousand men all told;
While the British arms gleamed every where
From the Hudson to the Delaware.
Cold and stormy came the night,
The great chief roused his men;
"Now up, brave comrades, up and strike
"For Freedom once again!
"For the lion sleepeth in his lair
"On the left bank of the Delaware."
By the darkling river's side,
Behold a wintry sky,
From that weak hand, forlorn and few,
Went up the patriot cry,
"O, land of Freedom, never despair!
"We'll die or cross the Delaware."
How the strong oars dash the ice
Amid the tempest's roar!
And how the trumpet voice of Knox
Still cheers them to the shore!
Thus, in the freezing midnight air,
These brave hearts crossed the Delaware.
In the morning, gray and dim,
The shout of battle rose,
The chief led back his valiant men
With a thousand captive foes;
While Trenton shook with the cannon's roar
That told the news on the Delaware.

The Man that Killed his Neighbors.

BY L. MARIA CHILDS.

It is curious to observe how a man's spiritual state reflects itself in the people and animals around him—nay, in the very garments, trees, and stones.
Reuben Black was an infestation in the neighborhood where he resided. The very sight of him produced effects similar to a Hindoo Magical tree, called Rang, which is said to bring on clouds, storms, and earthquakes. His wife seemed lean, sharp and uncomfortable. The heads of his boys had a bristling aspect, as if each hair stood on end with perpetual fear. The cows poked out their horns horizontally, as soon as he opened the barn-yard gates. The dog dropped his tail between his legs and eyed him askance, to see what humor he was in. The cat looked wild and scraggy, and had been known to rush straight up the chimney when he moved towards her. Fanny Kambler's expressive description of the Pennsylvania stage-horse was exactly suited to Reuben's poor old nag. "His hide resembled an old hair trunk." Continual whipping and kicking had made him such a steed, that no amount of blows could quicken his pace; no chirruping could change the dejected drooping of his head. All his natural language said, as plain as a horse could say it, that he was a most unhappy beast. Even the trees on Reuben's premises had a gnarled and knotted appearance. The bark wept little sickly tears of gum, and the branches grew awry, as if they felt the continual discord, and made sorry faces at each other behind the owner's back. His fields were red with sorrow or run over with mullen. Every thing seemed sad and arid as his own visage. Every day he cursed the town and the neighborhood, because they poisoned his dogs, and stoned his hens, and shot his cats. Continual law suits involved him in so much expense, that he had neither time nor money to spend in the improvement of his farm.
Against Joe Smith, a poor laborer in the neighborhood, he had brought three suits in succession. Joe said he had returned a spade he had borrowed, and Reuben swore he had not. He sued Joe, and recovered damages, for which he ordered the Sheriff to seize his pig. Joe, in his wrath, called him an old swindler, and a curse to the neighborhood. These remarks were soon repeated to Reuben. He brought an action for libel, and recovered twenty-five cents. Provoked at the laugh this occasioned, he watched for Joe to pass by, and let his dog upon him, screaming furiously. "Kill me an old swindler again, will you?" An evil spirit is more contagious than the plague. Joe went home and told his wife, and she told little Joe's ears, and kicked the cat, and all one of them knew what it was all for. A fortnight after Reuben's dog was found dead by poison. When the dog was brought to the door, Reuben was so angry, that he took his own action, and brought an action against Joe Smith, and not being able to prove the guilt of the charge of a dog murder, he took his revenge by poisoning a pig, belonging to Mrs. Smith. Thus the bad game went on, with mutual resentment and loss. Joe's temper grew more and more vindictive, and the love of talking over his troubles at the group shop increased upon him. Poor Mrs. Smith cried, and said it was all owing to Reuben Black; for a better-heard man married her than her Joe, when she married him.
Such was the state of things when Simon Green purchased the farm adjoining Reuben's. The estate had been much neglected, and had caught thistles and

and mullen from the neighboring fields. But Simon was a diligent man, blessed by nature with a healthy organization and a genial temperament; and a wise and kind education had aided nature in the perfection of her goodly work.
His steady perseverance and industry soon changed the aspect of things on the farm. River mud, autumnal leaves, old shoes, and old bones, were all put in requisition to assist in the production of use and beauty. The trees with branches pruned, and bark scraped free from moss and insects, soon looked clean and vigorous. Fields of grain waved where weeds had rioted. Persian lilacs bowed gracefully over the simple gateway. Michigan roses covered half the house with their abundant clusters. Even the rough rock, which formed the doorstep, was edged with golden moss. The sleek horse, feeding in clover, tossed his mane and neighed when his master came near; as much as to say, "The world is all the pleasanter for having you in it, Simon Green!" The old cow, fondling her calf under the great Walnut tree, walked up to him with a serene, friendly face, asking for the slices of sugar beets he was wont to give her. Chaucer, strutting about with his troop of plump hens and downy little chickens, topped with trouble to keep out of his way, but flapped his glossy wings and crowed a welcome in his very face. When Simon turned his steps homeward, the boys threw their caps and ran, shouting, "Father's coming!" and little Mary went toddling up to him, with a dandelion blossom to place in his button hole. His wife was a woman of few words, but she sometimes said to her neighbors, with a quiet kind of satisfaction, "Everybody loves my husband that knows him. They can't help it."
Simon Green's acquaintances knew that he was never engaged in a law suit in his life—but they predicted that he would find it impossible to avoid it now. They told him his next neighbor was disposed to quarrel with people whether they would or not; that he was like John Lilburne, or whom Judge Jenkins said, "If the world was emptied of every person but himself, Lilburne would still quarrel with John, and John with Lilburne."
"Is that his character?" said Simon.
"If he exercises it upon me, I will soon kill him."
In every neighborhood there are individuals who like to foment disputes, not from any definite intention of malice or mischief, but merely because it makes a little ripple of excitement in the dull stream of life, like a contest between dogs or game-cocks. Such people were not slow in repeating Simon Green's remark about his wrangling neighbor. "Kill me, will he?" exclaimed Reuben. He said no more; but his tightly compressed mouth had such a significant expression that his dog dodged him, as he would the track of a tiger. That very night Reuben tracked his horse into the high-way, in hopes he would commit some depredations on neighbor Green's premises. But Joe Smith, seeing the animal at large, let down the poor beast walked in, and feasted as he had not done for many a year. It would have been a great satisfaction to Reuben, if he could have brought a law suit against his horse; but as it was, he was obliged to content himself with beating him. His next exploit was to shoot Mary Green's handsome champion, because he stood on the stone wall and crowed, in the ignorant joy of his heart, two inches beyond the frontier line that bounded the contiguous farms. Simon said he was sorry for the poor bird and sorry because his wife and children liked the pretty creature; but otherwise, it was no great matter. He had been intending to build a poultry yard, with a good high fence, that his hens might not annoy his neighbors; and now he was admonished to make haste and do it. He would build them a snug warm house to roost in; they should have plenty of gravel and oats, and room to promenade back and forth, and crow and cackle to their heart's content; there they could enjoy themselves, and be out of harm's way.
But Reuben Black had a degree of ingenuity and perseverance which might have produced great results for mankind, had those qualities been devoted to some more noble purpose than provoking quarrels. A pear tree in his garden very properly stretched over a friendly arm into Simon Green's premises. Whether the sunny state of things there had a cheering effect on the tree, I know not; but it happened that the overhanging bough bore more abundant fruit, and glowed with a richer hue, than the other boughs. One day, little George Green, as he went whistling along, picked up a pear that had fallen into his father's garden. The instant he touched it, he felt something on the back of his neck like the sting of a wasp. It was Reuben Black's whip, followed by such a storm of angry words that the poor child rushed into the house in an agony of terror. But this experiment failed also. The boy was soothed by his mother, and told not to go near the pear tree again; and there the matter ended.

This imperishable good nature vexed Reuben more than all the tricks and taunts he met from others. Evil efforts he could understand, and repay with compound interest; but he did not know what to make of this perpetual forbearance. It seemed to him there must be something contemptuous in it. He disliked Simon more than all the rest of the town put together, because he made him feel so uncomfortably in the wrong, and did not afford him the slightest pretext for complaint. It was annoying to see everything in his neighbor's domains looking so happy, and presenting such a bright contrast to the forlornness of his own. When their wagons passed each other on the road, it seemed as if Simon's horse tossed his head higher, and flung out his mane, as if he knew he was going by Reuben Black's old nag. He often said he supposed Green covered his house with roses and honeysuckles, on purpose to shame his bare walls. But he didn't care—not he! He wasn't going to be fool enough to rot his boards with such stuff. But no one resented his disparaging remarks, or sought to provoke him in any way. The roses smiled, the horse neighed, and the calf capered; but none of them had the least idea that they were insulting Reuben Black. Even the dog had no malice in his heart, though he did one night chase home his geese, and bark at them through the bars. Reuben told his major the next day; he swore he would bring an action against him if he didn't keep that dog at home; and Simon answered very quietly, that he would try and take better care of him. For several days a strict watch was kept, in hopes Towzer would worry the geese again, but they paced home undisturbed, and not a solitary bow-wow furnished excuse for a lawsuit.
The new neighbors not only declined quarreling, but they occasionally made positive advances toward a friendly relation. Simon's wife sent Mrs. Black a large basket full of very fine cherries. Pleased with the unexpected attention, she cordially replied, "Tell your mother it is very kind of her, and I am very much obliged to her." Reuben, who sat smoking in the chimney corner, listened to this message once without any impatience, except whiffing through his pipe a little fast. The boy was going out the door, and the friendly words were repeated, he exclaimed, "Don't make a fool of yourself, Peg. They want to give you a hint to send a basket of our pears; that's the upshot of the business. You may send 'em a basket, when they are ripe; for I scorn to be under obligation, especially to your smooth-tongued folks." Poor Peggy, whose arid life had been of the moment refreshed with a little dew of kindness, admitted distrust into her bosom, and the halo that radiated around the ripe glowing cherries departed.
Not long after this advanced good neighborhood, some laborers employed by Simon Green, passing over a bit of marshy ground, with a heavy team, stuck fast in a bog, occasioned by a long continued rain. The poor oxen were entirely unable to extricate themselves, and Simon ventured to ask assistance from his waspish neighbor who was working at a short distance. Reuben replied gruffly, "I've got enough to do to attend to my own business." The civil request that he might be allowed to use his oxen and chains for a few moments being answered in the same early tone, Simon silently walked off, in search of a more obliging neighbor.
The men, who were left waiting with the patient, suffering oxen, scolded about Reuben's ill nature, and said they hoped he would get stuck in the same bog himself. Their employer rejoined, "If he does, we will do our duty, and help him out." "There's such a thing as being too good natured," said they. "If Reuben Black takes the notion that people are afraid of him, it makes him trample on them worse than ever."
"Oh, wait a while," said Mr. Green, smiling. "I shall kill him before long—wait and see if I don't kill him."
It happened soon after that Reuben's team did stick fast in the same bog, as the workmen had wished. Simon, noticing from a neighboring field, and gave directions that the oxen and chains should be immediately conveyed to his assistance. The men laughed, shook their heads, and said it was good enough for the old brute. They, however, cheerfully proceeded to do as their employer requested. "You are in a bad situation, neighbor," said Simon, as he came alongside of the foundered team. "But my men are coming with two yoke of oxen, and I think we shall soon manage to help you out." "You may try your oxen back again," replied Reuben quickly. "I don't want any of your help." In a very friendly tone, Simon answered, "I cannot consent to do that, for evening is coming on, and you have very little time to lose. It is a bad job at any time, but it will be still worse in the dark." "Light or dark, I don't ask your help," replied Reuben, emphatically. "I would not help you out of the bog the other day when you asked me." "The trouble I

had in relieving my poor oxen teaches me to sympathize with others in the same situation. Don't let us waste words about it, neighbor. It is impossible for me to go home and leave you here in the bog, and night coming on."
The team was soon drawn out, and Simon and his men went away, without waiting for thanks. When Reuben went home that night, he was unusually thoughtful. After smoking a while in deep contemplation, he gently knocked the ashes from his pipe, and said, with a sigh, "Peg, Simon Green has killed me!" "What do you mean?" said his wife dropping her knitting with a look of surprise. "You know when he first came into this neighborhood, he said he would kill me," replied Reuben; "and he has done it. The other day he asked me to help his team out of the bog, and I told him I had enough to attend to my own business. To-day, my team stuck fast in the same bog, and he came with two yoke of oxen to draw it out. I felt sort of ashamed to have him lend me a hand, so I told him I did not want any of his help; but he answered just as pleasant as if nothing contrary had ever happened, that night was coming on, and he was not willing to leave me in the mud." "He is a pleasant-spoken man, and always has a pretty word to say to the boys. His wife seems to be a nice neighborly body, too." Reuben made no answer, but after meditating a while, he remarked, "Peg, you know that big rime pelon down at the bottom of the garden? you may as well carry it over there in the morning." His wife said she would, without asking him to explain where "over there" was.
But when the morning came, Reuben walked back and forth, and round and round, with that sort of aimless activity often manifested by hens and by fashionable fiddlers, who feel restless, and don't know what to run after. At length the cause of his uncertain movements was explained. "I guess I may as well carry the melon myself, and thank him for his oxen. In my flurry down there in the marsh, I didn't think to say that I was obliged to him."
He marched off towards the garden, and his wife stood at the door, with one hand on her hip and the other shading the sun from her eyes. It was the most remarkable incident that had ever happened since her marriage. She could hardly believe her own eyes. He walked quick, as if afraid he should not be able to carry the unusual impulse into action if he stopped to reconsider the question. When he found himself in Mr. Green's house, he felt extremely awkward, and hastened to say, "Mrs. Green, here is a melon my wife sent you, and we reckon it's a ripe one." Without manifesting any surprise at such unexpected courtesy, the friendly matron thanked him and invited him to sit down. But he stood playing with the latch of the door, and without raising his eyes said, "May be Mr. Green ain't in this morning."
"He is at the pump, and will be in directly," she replied; and before her words were spoken, the honest man walked in, with a face as fresh and bright as a June morning. He stepped right up to Reuben, shook his hand cordially, and said, "I am glad to see you, neighbor. Take a chair; take a chair."
"Thank you, I can't stop," replied Reuben. He pushed his hat on one side, rubbed his head, looked out of the window, and then said, suddenly, as if by a desperate effort, "The fact is, Mr. Green, I don't behave right about the oxen."
"Never mind, never mind," replied Mr. Green. "Perhaps I shall get into the bog again some of these rainy days. If I do, I shall know whom to call upon."
"Why you see," said Reuben still much confused, avoiding Simon's mild, clear eye, "you see the neighbors here are very ugly. If I had always lived by such neighbors as you are, I shouldn't be just as I am."
"Ah, well, we must try to be to others what we want them to be to us," rejoined Simon. "You know the good book says we speak kind words when kind ourselves. If we try to make others happy, it fills them with a wish to make us happy. Perhaps you and I can bring the neighborhood round to us. Who knows? I let us say, Mr. Black, let us try; and come and look at my orchard; I want to show you a tree which I have grafted with very choice apples. If you like, I will procure you some scions from the same stock."
They went into the orchard together, and friendly chat soon lulled Reuben in his case. When he returned home, he made no remarks about his visit; for he could not, as yet, summon sufficient greatness of soul to tell his wife that he had confessed himself in the wrong. A gun stood behind the kitchen door, in readiness to shoot Mr. Green's dog for havingarked at his horse. He now fired the contents into the air, and put the gun away into the barn. From that day henceforth he never sought for any pretext to quarrel with the dog or his master. A short time after, Joe Smith, to

his utter astonishment, saw him pat Towzer on the head, and heard him say "Good fellow."
Simon Green was far too magnanimous to repeat to any one that his quarrelsome neighbor had confessed himself to blame. He merely smiled as he said to his wife, "I thought we should kill him after while."
Joe Smith did not believe in such doctrines. When he heard of the adventures in the marsh, he said, "Simon Green's a fool." When he first came here, he talked very big about killing folks "if they didn't mind their P's and Q's." But he don't appear to have as much spirit as a worm; for a worm will turn when it's trod upon.
Poor Joe had grown more judicious and more quiescent, till, at last, nobody would employ him. About a year after the memorable incident of the watermelon, some one stole several valuable hides from Mr. Green. He did not mention the circumstance to any one; but his wife and they both had reason for suspecting that Joe was the thief. The next week, the following anonymous advertisement appeared in the newspaper of the county:
"Whoever stole a lot of hides on Friday night, the 5th of the present month, is hereby informed that the owner has a sincere wish to be his friend. If poverty tempted him to this false step, the owner will keep the whole transaction a secret, and will gladly put him in the way of obtaining money by means more likely to bring him peace of mind."
This singular advertisement of course excited a good deal of remark. There was much debate whether or not the thief would avail himself of the friendly offer. Some said he would be a green-horn if he did; for it was manifestly a trap to catch him. But he who had committed the dishonest deed alone knew whence that benevolent offer came; and he knew that Simon Green was hot as man to set traps for his fellow-creeper.
A few nights afterwards, a timid knave was heard at Simon's door, just as the family were retiring to rest. When the door opened, Joe Smith was seen on the steps, with a load of hides on his shoulder. Without raising his eyes, he said, in a low stammering tone, "I have brought these back, Mr. Green; where shall I put them?"
"Wait a moment, till I can light a lamp for you," said Simon, and he went to the door to see what he could do for him.
Mr. Green knew that Joe often went hungry, and had become accustomed to the stimulus of rum. She therefore hastened to make hot coffee, and brought from the closet some cold meat and a pie.
When they returned from the barn, she said, "I thought you might feel better for a little warm supper, neighbor Smith."
Joe turned his back toward her, and did not speak. He leaned his head against the chimney, and after a moment's silence he said, in a choked voice,
"It was the first time I ever stole anything, and I have felt very bad about it. I don't know how to do it. I didn't think I should ever come to be what I am. But I look to quarreling, and then I'm drinking. Since I began to go down hill, every body gives me a kick. You are the first man that has offered me a helping hand. My wife is feeble, and my children starve. You have sent them many a meal. God bless you, and yet I stole the hides from you, meaning to sell them for the first change I could get. But I tell you the truth, Mr. Green, it is the first time I ever deserved the name of thief."
"Let it be the last, my friend," said Simon, pressing his hand kindly. "The secret shall remain between ourselves. You are young, and can make up lost time—Come, now, give me a promise that you will not drink one drop of intoxicating liquor, for a year, and I will employ you to-morrow, at good wages. Mary will see to your family early in the morning; and perhaps you may find some employment for them also. The little boy can at least pick up stones. But, set a bit now, and drink some hot coffee. It will keep you from wanting to drink anything stronger to-night. You will find it hard to abstain at first, Joseph; but keep up a brave heart for the sake of your wife and children, and it will soon become easy. When you feel the need of coffee, tell my Mary, and she will always give it to you."
Joe tried to eat and drink, but the food seemed to choke him. He was nervous and excited. After an ineffectual effort to compose himself, he laid his head on the table, and wept like a child.
After a while, Simon persuaded him to bathe his head in cold water; and he ate and drank with a good appetite. When he went away, the kind-hearted host said to him,
"Try to do well, Joseph, and you shall always find a friend in me."
"The poor fellow pressed his hand, and replied, 'I understand now how it is you kill bad neighbors.'"
He entered into Mr. Green's service the next day, and remained in it many years, an honest and faithful man.
Flour is selling in California at \$40 per barrel!

FIFTY YEARS AGO.

BY W. S. WILKINSON.

A song of the early times out West,
And our growth, old, forest home,
Whose pleasant memories freshly yet
Across the bosoms come!
A song for the free and gladstone life
In those early days we led;
With a teeming soil beneath our feet,
And a smiling heaven overhead!
Oh, the waves of life danced merrily,
And had a joyous flow,
In the days when we were pioneers,
Fifty years ago!

The hunt, the shout, the glorious chase,
The captured elk or deer;
The camp, the big bright fire, and then
The rich and wholesome cheer;
The sweet sound deep at dead of night,
By our camp-fire blazing high—
Unbroken by the wolf's long howl,
And the panther springing by;
Oh, merrily passed the time, despite
Our wily Indian foe,
In the days when we were Pioneers,
Fifty years ago.

We should not labor when 'twas day,
We wrought with right good will;
And for the homes we won for them,
Our children bless us still.
We lived not hermit lives, but oft
In social converse met;
And fires of love were kindled then,
That burn on warmly yet.
Oh, pleasantly the stream of life
Pursued its constant flow,
In the days when we were Pioneers,
Fifty years ago.

We felt that we were fellow-men;
We felt we were a band;
Sustained here in the wilderness
By Heaven's upholding hand.
And when the solemn Sabbath came,
We gathered in the wood,
And lifted up our hearts in prayer,
To God the only good.
Our temples then were earth and sky;
None other did we know,
In the days when we were Pioneers,
Fifty years ago.

Our forest life was rough and rude,
And dangers closed us round;
Blizzards, amid the green old trees,
We Freedom sought and found.
Oh, through our dwellings wintry blasts
Would rush with shriek and moan;
We cared not though they were but frail,
We felt they were our own!
Oh, fire and many lives we lost
Mid winter or mid snow,
In the days when we were Pioneers,
Fifty years ago.

But now our course of life is short;
And as from thry to day
We're walking on with halting step,
And fainting by the way,
Another land more bright than this
To our dim sight appears;
And so our way to it will soon
Again be Pioneers!

Yet, while we linger, we may all
A backward glance still throw
To the days when we were Pioneers,
Fifty years ago.

[From the Cincinnati Chronicle.
LETTERS FROM PALESTINE.

Pilgrimage of the Greek Christians to the Waters of the Jordan.

ABANDONING MR. LEBANON, AUG. 1846.

During the night the camp of the pilgrims was a theatre of licentious revelry, and more resembled the ancient celebrations of the Grecian Mysteries than an assembly of Christians. The present race of Greeks retain almost all the manners and customs of their Pagan ancestors, or rather the vicious part of them, though baptized with Christian appellations.
At 2 o'clock, a. m., the soldiers roused the crowd, and in half an hour afterwards they were all on their march for the river. We permitted them to precede us nearly an hour, and then followed them leisurely on our horses, observing the scene. The full moon was shedding its mellow radiance over plain and mountain, affording just light enough to bring into view the whole surrounding landscape, yet leaving every thing in that kind of gloomy indistinctness that rendered still more dreary the savage desert waste around us—the blaze of large torches of burning pine, carried by perhaps hundreds of soldiers at intervals amongst the multitudes, extending some miles in advance, and the glare and flames arising from piles of dry thorny shrubs, set on fire along the road, threw a melancholy light over the fearful solitude—the shouts of the pilgrims—the noise of their animals—the frightful screams of hyenas, jackals and other beasts of prey, roused from their lairs by our untimely intrusion—the hour, the place, and historical associations, all awakened sublime emotions, and left an impression on my memory that no time can efface.
The plain of the Jordan, on the west side of the river, is here, I think, about ten miles wide; and, with the exception of some small spots of verdure around the fountains, is a perfect desert, producing only a few leafless thorny shrubs, and here and there a thistle, seeming as if the earth could bring forth these two elements of the primal curse where nothing else can grow.
Directly across the river here is the plain of Moab, on which the Israelites pitched their tents previous to their invasion of the promised land; and from some mountain eminence above Balaam exclaimed, "From the top of the rock I see

him, and from the hills I behold him. How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, oh Israel." The plain is perhaps three miles in width, and looked a little more verdant than that on the west side of the river. I looked anxiously along the mountain ridge back of this plain for some eminence higher than the rest, that I could fix upon as the ancient Pisgah, but in vain. The whole summit presents a uniform outline, with scarcely an indentation. The summit where the false prophet built his seven altars and repaired to curse Jacob, and to which Moses subsequently ascended to view the heritage of his people, was probably some peak below the general ridge.
The pilgrims reached the river just at the dawn of day, and all plunged into it with as much frantic fanaticism as the pagan Hindoos do into the Ganges. With some difficulty I made my way, on my horse, up to the bank of the river, where I could obtain a full view of the bathery.—There were, perhaps, more than a thousand in the water at once, men, women, and children, a part with a little clothing on them, and the rest entirely naked, thrusting themselves under the muddy flood.—Mothers would plunge their young infants under the water, perhaps half a dozen times in quick succession, until life was extinct. And men and women, whose feeble and tottering limbs had to be supported in going down the steep bank, rushed into the river with the suppleness and impetuosity of youthful swimmers; and the blind and lame seemed to forget their infirmities in the delirium of fanaticism. I had not sat in my place three minutes when I saw one of the thoughtless multitudes borne down the stream by the impetuous current, to return no more.
The frantic crowd cast a momentary glance towards the drowning man, and then resumed their orgies as before. A little time another, and another, shared his fate, and a fourth, a woman, was instantly killed, near the river, by falling from a camel. No efforts were or could be made by the friends of the drowned man to recover their bodies; they must return to camp in another hour, and thence to Jerusalem on the following morning, and leave them to be devoured by wild beasts when their bodies have floated to the sea.
Leaving this scene of fanaticism and death, we made our way down through the dust to the mouth of the river. The Jordan at the place of bathing, is I think, about fifty-five yards wide, the banks are at least ten feet high, and it runs with an almost irresistible current. It is skirted on both sides with trees and small shrubs, principally willow, deep green and luxuriant, presenting a delightful contrast with the frightful desert bordering it. As it approaches the sea it becomes somewhat wider; and at the mouth a small delta has been formed, and it disengorges itself through two channels, each perhaps eighty feet broad. Some three or four miles above the mouth of the river, and from thence down to the sea, we saw large quantities of drift wood, thrown out a quarter of a mile or more from the stream, showing that the Jordan still overflows its banks, as it did in ancient times—a fact that travellers have questioned. The plain, over which we rode between the ford and the sea, was covered with a fine dust, into which our horses sank at every step half way to their knees. A thin crust had been left on the surface by the late rains, and the whole district resembled a bed of loose ashes which had been wetted by a slight shower and quickly dried in the sun. Not the least trace of vegetable existence appeared over the wide expanse of many miles.
ONE OF THE BLESSINGS OF WAR.
We find the following heart-touching story in the Pittsburg Commercial Journal:
It was a few days after the news of the battle of Buena Vista—the very day that the mail brought the official list of killed and wounded—we were seated in the office, reading over the names with a sad curiosity, seeking out those with which we were of old familiar. McKee we remembered well—he was in the Third when we knew him. But he married, left the service, engaged in business, and at the opening of the war resumed the epaulettes as Colonel of a Kentucky Volunteer Regiment. Brave fellow!—none braver fell on that bloody field.
We were sorrowfully enough engaged by these thoughts when a young woman entered the office. When we saw young, we mean under thirty. She had a small girl by the hand—a beautiful little creature about three years old. Both mother and child, for such no one could doubt to be their relationship, who observed their features, were dressed with extreme neatness, though all the little elegancies of decoration were bestowed upon the child.
We just looked over the top of the paper to note these particulars, when, having been directed by the Clerk, she advanced forward to our desk.
We handed her a chair, and while we endeavored as well as we could to soothe her very apparent agitation, we were surprised at a loss to account for its existence.