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CLARA LELAND,

OR

THE TORY'S DEFEAT.

BY "CROWQUILL."

"Your excellency, Dave Watson and his Tory gang have burned Mr. Leland's dwelling, and carried himself and family away as captives!"

Such were the startling words of a rough uncouth countryman, as he rushed past the sentinel stationed at the entrance, into the private apartment of General Putnum, who at the time was in command of a portion of the American army.

The person who had made so unceremonious an entrance, had evidently come in the greatest of haste, as the perspiration was streaming profusely from him, and his breathing seemed short and difficult. Drawing a soiled and well worn cotton handkerchief from his pocket, he proceeded to wipe off the enormous quantity of sweat that had collected upon his face, and this done he seated himself in a chair standing near. At his words, the person whom he addressed leaped to his feet, and in a voice that attested the interest he took in what was being related, exclaimed:

"Dave Watson, *again!* when did this take place?"

"Last night, sir."

"And you offered no resistance?"

"We did, but the villains were too numerous for us; Williams, Parker, myself, and a number of others arrived just as they were securing their captives, but they had ten men to our one, and resistance proved unavailing."

"Confusion to them! can we never rid the country of this nest of tories? Where is Lieutenant Milton; methinks he has the right to protect the fair Clara, for if report speaks the truth, he is the favored one."

"Sentinel!"

"Your pleasure sir"

"Go call Lieutenant Milton. Tell him my business is urgent."

Bowing respectfully, the guard withdrew upon his errand; and while he is gone, we will describe a little more minutely the person he is in quest of.

Ralph Milton was a youug Lieutenant in the American army; he had entered as a private soldier; but his well timed bravery during battle, had raised him in the estimation of his superiors, and at the time of which we write, he was enjoying the fullest confidence of his commander. Gen. Putnum was correct in his supposition of the young Lieutenant being the favored one, for Clara Leland had promised to bestow her hand on the young soldier, as soon as the great contest should terminate, and both were waiting patiently for the time to come that would render them both happy for life. But everything looked discouraging, for since the defeat of the American forces at Brandywine, a settled gloom pervaded the hearts of the American people. And this could not be wondered at, for besides reinforcements arriving to succour their enemies, their own country people were turning against them and seeking the royal protection by hundreds. This was the state of affairs at the time of our sketch.

Ere long the sentinel re-entered the room followed by a young man of about twenty-five years of age. His features were regular in their outline, and would convey to the stranger's mind an idea of the nobleness of nature which their owner possessed. He was dressed in the uniform of the American officer, and as he entered, he bowed respectfully to his superior in command, and removing his hat, stood awaiting the pleasure of his General.

"Lieutenant Milton, I have a mission for you to execute, and if report is to be credited, you will not find it an unpleasant one. I have just learned from our friend here, that the notorious tory leader, Dave Watson, has been executing some of his cowardly work upon the person and property of a man whom, if I mistake not, you would be anxious to shield from harm. According to the statement, Watson with about fifty of his gang, proceeded to the dwelling of Mr. Leland, fired the house and carried the old gentleman with his wife and daughter away to some of their secret hidings. Now, what I wish of you, is to rescue our old friend, even if you follow this fiend in human shape to the end of the earth. Now I do not doubt your skill in this matter, but be cautious, for one false step might ruin all. Choose any number of men you may need, and proceed upon your work as soon as you please."

The young Lieutenant's features paled quickly as the startling words fell upon his ear, and turning to the messenger, who was looking on with a puzzled air, he exclaimed:

"Did you notice the direction the party took?"

"Yes sir, to the northward, towards the river.

"They should have been followed."

"That was impossible, as they were mounted on the best of steeds, while we were on foot."

It did not take long for our hero to arrange his plans, and with a speed that showed him to be no novice in the matter he had undertaken, he had about thirty picked men well armed and mounted ready for the pursuit.

"How many did you say there were of them?" questioned Ralph Milton of his stranger guide.

"Oh! never mind the small difference in number?" broke in an old trooper.—"One good whig is a match for six tories, make the best of them."

And with a light laugh at the old soldier's jest, the party moved towards the spot designated by the messenger. And while the little band of patriots are on their mission of kindness, we will speak of a matter, which the reader has as yet had but an occasional allusion.

Richard Leland was a gentleman rather past the prime of life; but by years of toil, he had secured a home for himself and family, and was hoping to pass the remainder of his life in comparative ease, since he had laid by property sufficient to live without being obliged to labor for his maintainance. In the beginning of the trouble between the mother country and the colonies, he had readily espoused the cause of the patriots, and although his advanced age would deter him from doing as efficient service for his country as others of his co-laborers, he was at heart friendly with the colonists—and many a time had a patriot fugitive, fleeing from the King's soldiers, sough: a refuge beneath the friendly roof of the Leland's and thus succeeded in eluding their pursuers, for never in one instance were they tracked to their retreat.

Mr. Leland's household consisted of his wife, and an only daughter. A lovely creature was Clara Leland!—just eighteen—it would be hard to find a more fitting subject for the artist's pencil. Jet black curls falling gracefully over a neck of snowy whiteness, rosy cheeks, and an eye that looked roguishly from beneath their silken lashes, added to the finely proportioned form, made her beauty of the most perfect order. She had been the pet of an indulgent mother, and was perfectly adored by a doting father, and although always had her own way, her affection for her parents was as strong as that of any daughter in the land.

She had become acquainted with a couple of young men, one named Ralph Milton, and the other David Watson. Both were good looking, and belonged to the first families in the neighborhood; but here all similarity in the two ceased.—Ralph Milton was a picture of nobleness itself—generous-hearted, frank and manly in disposition—he was beloved by his friends, and could not but be respected by an enemy, while David Watson was exactly the opposite; of naturally a cowardly disposition, he possessed not one of those ennobling qualities that belongs to the true-hearted man. He was frequently a visitor to the house of Mr. Leland, and although his company could easily have been dispensed with by Clara, she did not wish to make him an enemy by making a decided show of her dislike, for as yet the vindictiveness of his disposition had not had the opportunity of showing itself.—But when the difficulties between his own people and Great Britain arose, it gave free scope for his cowardly nature.

He collected together a number of lawless characters, for the avowed purpose of helping to quell the rebellion which was showing itself in different parts of the colonies, but this was only a pretext to cloak his real objects, for soon the name of the tory leader, "David Watson," became fearfully notorious, and he was known to be one of the most cruel desperadoes that ever disgraced a country, or made the least pretensions to humanity. He had hoped to keep his proceedings from the Leland family, since he did not wish to be disgraced in the eyes of Clara; but fearful that time might not add anything to be desired to his character, he determined to bring matters to an end, by making an offer of his hand to Miss Leland; and with this purpose in view, he directed his steps toward the sturdy old whig's home."

His call for admittance was answered by Clara herself, and he was invited to come in, an invitation that he was not loth to accept.

Everything was arranged as he would have desired; Mr. Leland was engaged in out-of-doors work, and Mrs. Leland was busily employed in another room. After quite a number of bows, and other like demonstrations of "great pleasure in seeing Miss Leland in the enjoyment of good health," he took the proffered chair and commenced—

"Miss Leland, I came here for the purpose of honoring you with an offer of my heart, hand and fortune, without the least reserve."

When Watson commenced speaking, Clara was intending to give him a mild but decided refusal; when he came to the last clause, the comicality of the thing caused a smile to appear upon her features which she could not conceal from the eyes of the other.

"Miss Leland is pleased to be merry at my expense!" exclaimed he, endeavoring to suppress the chagrin he felt. "And as my company does not seem to be agreeable, I will take my leave, but not without assuring you that I shall make another call soon.

"Do so, by all means!" returned Clara who thought he had intended exactly the reverse from what he said, and only expressed his anger in some harmless manner. "Of course we shall always be pleased to see you!"

With a curse of disappointment upon his lips, Watson seized his hat and rushed from the house, vowing within himself to repay the cruel insult he had received. And he fulfilled his vow to the letter, for as has always been told, he, with a number of his associates surrounded the house of Mr. Leland after the family had retired, put fire to it, and as fast as their victims came from out of the doomed dwelling, they prevented them from leaving the spot until they should become aware that their once happy home was past being saved. After their work was finished the incendiaries mounted their horses and guided them northward, and ere long, the last one of the cavalcade was hidden from view by the dense forest.

We left Ralph Milton and his party moving rapidly in the direction to which the tory gang had been seen to go. Not a word or sound passed the lips of the little band of whigs, and their horses needed no extra urging, for they hardly seemed to touch the ground, and skimmed over the smooth surface, at a speed which testified their knowledge of the fact that everything depended upon their own strong limbs.

"Should you think that we are coming near them?" questioned our hero of the honest countryman, who was riding by his side.

"It would be hard saying," returned the other. "If they had any suspicion of being followed, they have probably traveled at a pretty good speed; if not they cannot be far from us."

"List?" spoke the young leader in a low deep voice; "Heard you not the distant tramp of horsemen?"

Each man bent his ear, and remained silent for some time; when the low rumbling sound of horses hoofs reached the ears of the listening patriot band.

"It's them!" exclaimed Milton in a low hurried tone. Let each man secrete himself; it will not do to meet them on equal grounds with the disparity of our numbers—we must let them pass by, and then overpower them by means of a surprise during their night's camp."

At length the party of horsemen came up to where the detachment of Americans had been a few minutes before. It was evident that they either did not fear, or considered themselves entirely free from any pursuing party; for they immediately selected a good convenient place and commenced making preparations for encamping through the night.

"I say Dave, what in the duce do you intend to do with the old gentleman and the two petticoats we took?" exclaimed one of the party to their leader, after the camp-fire had been lighted, and the whole group had gathered around.

"I can attend to my own affairs without any of your assistance!" retorted the other in an angry tone. But he had hardly finished his not very courteously reply, when the group were startled by a vivid sheet of blue, flames, appearing from every side, which instantly followed by the report of a score of well-aimed rifles.

Hurra for the Continental Congress! Give them fits!" burst from a dozen brave hearts and before the bewildered Tories could recover from the first shock of the attack, they found themselves roughly grappled by a determined body of men, which the death dealing rifles had rendered nearly their equals in number.

But such a contest could not last long, for it was almost an impossibility for the attacked party, taken as they were entirely off their guard, to make anything like a successful stand against the furious charge of their assailants and soon, more than half their numbers were fleeing through the forest seeking protection of the overhanging boughs of the trees.

But the tory leader had seen and recognized Ralph Milton, and knowing him to be his successful rival, determined to have a sweet revenge for the fancied insult upon his honor, and with his weapon raised high above his head, he made a pass for the other's heart. But he had reconed without his host, for he had not stood before his adversary many moments, ere the young patriot leader's steel was buried to the hilt in his already disgraced heart.

The contest was now decided; for the few tories who had until now remained to assist their leader, seeing him fall, quickly followed the example of their fellows and soon put a safe distance between themselves and their victorious enemies. The attack ending thus favorably to the victors, search was commenced for the Tory Captain's prisoners. It did not take long to find them, and ere long, Ralph Milton, Mr. and Mrs. Leland and their daughter, followed by the uninjured party of Americans, were moving away from the scene of the recent conflict; leaving the remnant of the defeated band to come back and care for their friends.

* * * *

Clara Leland was sitting by a window, in her father's house, a new one having been erected upon nearly the same site of the one before, when the door opened, and a young man dressed in the costume of an American officer, entered. He advanced rather timidly towards her, and seating himself by her side, and taking her hand within his, said:

Dear Clara, now that the war has ended, when shall the happy day be that is to unite us?"

The maiden blushed deeply, but her answer was not sufficiently distinct to reach our ears. Suffice it to say, though that within a few months from the time the above conversation occurred, there were quite a number of guests assembled at the house of Mr. Leland, and Clara Leland was wedded to the man of her choice.

Self Control.

It seems to me that all times are alike adapted for happiness, and that if we grow old, as one should grow old, the last days of life must be the happiest of all. Every stage of life is but the preparation for the next one. It is the treasure-house in which are collected all the pleasures that are to make the future time happy. The child has indeed but few troubles, but they are as great to him as larger ones prove to his parents. I asked a friend once, speaking of the happy, cloudless days of his childhood, if he would like to be always a child. He stopped for a moment, and then said, No.—I think he was right. There is progress in every thing—in our means of happiness, and in our capacity for enjoyment. Then let us not look back upon the time-wrinkled face of the past only with feelings of regret. Give me the present flowing and full of life and the future glorious with bright vissions. I would rather look forward than look back; rather spend the golden hours in working out present happiness, than in vain regrets for the past. It is but the helm to steer our onward course. The future lies before. It is the steep and rugged mountain, up which lies our way. It is not genius, nor fortune that paves the way of eminence, but earnestness, self-control and wisdom. These are in our hands; let us use them, and when at the sunset of life we turn to look back on our path and see it stretching far down before us peacefully, happily we may lay ourselves down to rest.

"*You* owe me five dollars, for that opinion you had of me," said Squire B. to a client.—"No I don't," replied the man, "for I never had any opinion of you."

A Beautiful and Sublime Prayer.

REV. ALFRED COOKMAN, Pastor of the M. E. Church of Harrisburg, on the occasion of *the Inauguration* of Governor POLLOCK, upon the 16th ult., addressed the Throne of Grace, in the following earnest, impressive and eloquent prayer appropriate to that interesting occasion:—

"Who is like unto Thee, oh Lord among the Gods? Who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. Thou art the Author of the world, the Creator of men, the Ruler of Nations, and the Establisher of Governments. Sensible of our entire dependence upon Thee, we would come into Thy august presence with all that reverence and humility which are due to to thy greatness, and with all that hope and love which thy goodness should inspire. Look complacently upon us, and let the words of our lips, and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in Thy sight, oh Lord! our strength and our Redeemer!

Reminded by surrounding circumstances of our national blessings, we would render Thee heart-felt praise for this good land which the Lord our God has given us—a land distinguished by knowledge, dignified as the abode of civil and religious liberty, and endeared to out hearts by the patriot's zeal and the ashes of our fore fathers. God of Nations, sanctify and perpetuate our sacred privileges.—Let the future of our country's history be more prosperous and glorious than its past. Upon this Freedom's fair heritage, let the bright cloud of the Divine glory continually rest, and upon all this glory be Thou an unfailing and abiding defence. Bless the President of the United States, his advisers in Cabinet council, our Representatives now in National Congress assembled, the Judges of our Supreme and subordinate Courts, the Governors, and Legislatures of our various States, and all who are in positions of authority, and responsibility, and honor. Give unto them that wisdom which is profitable to direct, and may their conduct, both public and private, be marked by the strictest justice and the most unswerving integrity. Graciously remember, oh Lord Thy servant our Governor, who this day retires from a station which he has occupied with credit to himself and with profit to the people. We praise Thee for the peace and prosperity which have prevailed during the entire term of his official service. Accompany him into other spheres, and may his conduct in the future be characterized by the same purity of intention and uprightness of action which have ever dignified and adorned his life in the past.

And now we earnestly and unitedly invoke the richest blessings of Thy grace upon the Governor elect, who, with all the solemnities of an oath, will this day be inducted into his new and responsible office. Visit him as Thou didst Moses in the bush, Joshua in the battle, Gideon in the field, and Samuel in the temple. Give him the blessing of David and of Solomon. Let this day, so bright and beautiful, be emblematic of his prosperous Admistration and happy life. Kindly regard those who shall be associated with him in the various departments of the State Gonernment. May they be men of clean hands and pure hearts, always acting with a reference to the public good—may they eventually be rewarded with the delightful plaudit of "well done, good and faithful servants."—Hear our prayers—forgive our sins—accept our praises—and at last may we form a part of that mightier multitude, who encompassing the Eternal Throne, find their highest joy in ascribing undivided praises to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, forever.—Amen."

Virtue in Man.

We love to believe there is more moral goodness than depravity in human nature.—When we see one tear of pity drop from the eye, it gives us more pleasure than it would the finding of a diamond. There is goodness—real and unselfish—in the heart, and we have often seen it manifest itself to the making of a scene of sorrow the vestibule of heaven. For him who is always picking out flaws in his neighbor's character, we have no sympathy. He reminds us of those birds which resort to dead and decayed limbs of trees to feast on the worms. In the characters of most men we shall find more good than evil, more kindness than hate—and why should we pick out the flaws and pass over the sterling traits of character?—We hold this to be the true doctrine; to portray real goodness and hold it up to the gaze and admiration of all, while we suffer the evil to remain in the shade and die. If every picture of human nature were only pure and beautiful, we are inclined to believe that we should have thousands of such characters living and loving around us.

That man who is afraid to make an enemy, or is afraid of his enemies when they come ready made, as some they will, is not made of quite the metal to cut his way through this world.

When We are Dead.

1. There will be some honest sorrow. A few will be really sad, as we are robed for the grave—fewer, probably, than we now suppose. Out of a small circle, how soon we shall be forgotten! A single leaf from a boundless forest has fallen! That is all.

The gay will laugh when thou art gone,
The solemn brood of care plod on,
And each one as before will chase
His favortre phantom.

2. But the world goes clattering on as if nothing had happened. If we filled important stations in society—yet how soon others will fill our stations! The world will be a blustering world without us. It was so before we entered it—will be so when we are gone.

3. When we are dead, affection may erect a monument. But the hand that sets it up will be as powerless as ours, and for the same cause. How soon they that weep over us will follow us! If the marble or the granite long endures, yet the eyes of effection will not endure to read the graven letters. Men will give a glance at the name of one they never knew, and pass on with not a thought of the slumberer below.

4. When we are dead, our influence will not be dead. We leave epitaphs upon indestructible materials. Our manner of life has been writing them. We have stirred up thought, and awakened emotion. The wonderful of mind has felt our presence. We have pressed the stamp of our character on the warm wax of other sensibilities around us.

Our place of business, our social resorts, may know us no more; but living accountable beings feel the influence that survives our personal departure.

When we are dead, the kingdom of God will not die. It did not depend upon us for existence. And onward will it go when we have ceased to live. Happy, indeed, if it has been the honor and joy of our laborers to have prompted it. Blessed is it to be remembered as having loved Zion, as taking pleasure in her stones, and favoring the dust thereof.

Sacred, consoling thought! The kingdom of Christ moves on, when we drop our relationship with it.

WOMEN.—As the dove will clap its wings to its side, and cover and conceal the arrow that is praying on its vitals, so it is the nature of woman to hide from the world the pangs of wounded affection. With her the desire of the heart has failed. The great charms of existence is at an end. She neglects all the cheerful exercises that gladdens the spirits, quickens the pulses, and sends the tide of life in healthful currents through the veins. Her rest is broken, the sweet refreshment of sleep is poisoned by melancholy dreams, "dry sorrows drink her blood," until her enfeebled frame sinks under the last external assailant. Look for her after a while, and you find friendship weeping over an untimely grave and wondering that one, who but lately glowed with the radiance of health and beauty, should now be brought down to "darkness and the worm." You will be told of some wintry chill, some slight indisposition that laid her low, but no one knows the mental malady that previously sapped her strength, and made her so easy a prey to the spoiler.

A Shy Youth.

"Everything is arranged for your wedding with Susan Thompkins," said a father to his oldest son; I hope you will behave yourself like a man, Thomas."

The individual addressed was a young man, seated on a chair, despatching a piece of bread and molasses. His only answer was a sigh, accompanied with a flood of tears.

The parent started and in angry voice exclaimed:

"What objections can you have? Susan is handsome and wealthy, and married you must be some time or other. Your mother and I were married, and it is my command that you prepare yourself for your nuptials."

"Yes," finally sobbed thomas, "That's a diffeaent thing. You married mother, but I'm sent to marry a strange gal?"

A GREAT STEAM GUN.—Mr. Perkins, the son of Jacob, the eminent American inventor, who invented and exhibited in London, has, through a contemporary, made the following offer. He says "I am prepared to undertake to supply the government with a steam gun capable of throwing a ball of a ton weight a distance of five miles. If such a gun were fixed in Brunel's large ship of 10,000 tons, I venture to say that Sebastopol would be destroyed without losing a man."

A NEW CURE.—A young lady up town was cured of palpitation of the heart, the other evening, by a young M. D., in the simplest and most natural way imaginable. He merely held one of her hands in his, put his arm round her waist and whispered something in her left ear.