

# Mountain Sentinel.

"WE GO WHERE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES POINT THE WAY;—WHEN THEY CEASE TO LEAD, WE CEASE TO FOLLOW."

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

### SELF SACRIFICE.

#### —OR— THE YOUNG LIEUTENANT.

The "days of chivalry," in the steel-armor and horse-prancing sense of the phrase, have doubtless passed away in the limbo reserved for all social extravagances; but the spirit which, in the eyes of thoughtful men, redeemed its else vain shows and tinsel accessories from unmitigated contempt, interlarded with the prosaic drama of conventional modern life, survives in more than all its ancient vigor, and from time to time gleams forth, and illumines the sombre hues of our neutral tinted civilization with the brilliant prismatic colors of the day. In other words, there are indeed constantly enacted in this matter-of-fact world of ours which, for real heroism, have no parallel in the glittering annals of plumed and painted chivalry. A romantic episode in the life of a gallant and well-known sea officer—for the exact verity of which I, and indeed many others still living, can vouch—affords I think, a vivid illustration of this brief text.

Francis Travers, as I shall call him, was the only son of a worthy and somewhat eccentric gentleman of Devonshire, who had passed the greater part of an active and successful life in the naval service of the East India Company. He retired from active pursuits at the—this bustling go-ahead country—early age of fifty-five; and having securely invested the savings of his life—amounting to about twenty thousand pounds—in the funds, retired to an old fashioned rustic residence called Marlands, to enjoy in leisurely solitude the remainder of his allotted days. His house, in common with those of most retired seamen, was speedily decorated with a wind-vane and a flag-staff on which was frequently exhibited bunting of every hue and device known and recognized beneath the sun; but even with the help of these interesting time killers, the hours passed slowly and heavily with the old mariner, and it was soon abundantly evident that to be thus everlastingly anchored, stranded in one spot, was ruinous to his health as well as temper. He grew daily more and more restless, fidgety, and irritable, and drank a great deal more than he had been accustomed to. Finally, on the very morning after the news arrived that his son had creditably passed for a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, Mr. Travers was found dead and cold in his bed. The coroner's inquest recorded that he died by the "visitation of God."

Lieutenant Travers, the sole heir of his father's wealth, was at this time a fine specimen of a well educated, intelligent naval officer; and rich, well looking, and of robust health, might be fairly looked upon as an extremely fortunate person, whom in all probability a brilliant, cloudless future awaited. In the young officer's own opinion however, all these aids and appliances were nothing if they failed to obtain for him the one sole object, after professional fame, of his ambition—the hand of the beautiful girl by whom, since his first visit to his father at Marlands, his whole being—heart, soul, sense—had been engrossed. His admiration of Mary Wharton was perhaps all the more enthusiastic and intense from having remained as yet strictly confined to his own breast. His heart alone knew and brooded over its own secret, and was likely, it seemed, to do so for an indefinite time to come, inasmuch as the daring sailor, who had already been twice wounded in desperate boat expeditions upon which he had volunteered, doubted much whether he should ever muster sufficient audacity to disclose his passion even to the fair lady herself.

It is the faith or imagination of the worshipper which invests the idol or the shrine with its transcendent attributes; and often as Francis Travers had counted upon his own advantages—*videlicet*, a person which ever his modesty would not but admit was not one to frighten the gender sex; a professional reputation for skill and daring; and now, since the death of his father, a handsome fortune—he pronounced them all mere dross and rags when weighed against the divine perfections of the lady. It is very doubtful whether any other human being would have arrived at the same conclusion. Mary Wharton was indeed an amiable, graceful girl; and her beauty, if not of the brilliant kind which at first view dazzles the beholder, was scarcely less ultimately dangerous in its pensive thoughtfulness, and in the beseeching gentleness which, gleaming from out the transparent depths of her deep blue eyes, tinted the pale, finely turned cheek with varying charms. But exceeding this beauty of expression more than of form, and an unquestionably amiable temper and disposition she had really nothing to boast. Of worldly fortune she would not

possess one shilling, and was neither fashionable or wealthily connected. Her father, Sir Richard Wharton—a spendthrift, gambler, baronet, of old creation, it is true, but bankrupt alike in health and fortune, known, in fact to be overwhelmed with debt—was scarcely very desirable as a father-in-law; and yet Francis Travers, as he took leave of Lady Wharton and her daughter, after attending his father's funeral, could not help wondering, as he gazed upon the fair, gentle girl, and felt her calm reservedness of tone and manner sweep coldly across his beating heart, at his presumptuous folly of having loved

— A bright, particular star,  
And thought to wed it.

So strange are the tricks which the blind god sometimes plays with the eyes and understandings of his more enthusiastic votaries.

The frigate to which Lieutenant Travers was first appointed, after knocking about the channel through the winter, picking up a few trifling prizes, was ordered to Portsmouth, to be overhauled, and have her defects made good; but being found thoroughly infected with dry rot, was put out of commission and ultimately broken up. The brush off Trafalgar had crippled Napoleon's marine; and as the breeze with Brother Jonathan had not yet sprung up, lieutenants were in somewhat less request than usual, and Travers took up his abode at Marlands, undisturbed for a considerable time by intimation or command from the Admiralty. Mary Wharton, more beautiful, more interesting than ever, received him, he imagined, with much more cordial frankness than formerly; Lady Wharton seemed pleased with his return; whilst Sir Richard who, he instinctively felt, had long since penetrated his secret, and with whom by the way, he had always been a great favorite, expressed unqualified pleasure at seeing him. What wonder, then, that the illusions dispelled by former coldness should reappear beneath the genial warmth of such a reception? There was no rival in the case; of that he felt assured. Indeed, with the exception of the Rev. Edmund Harford, curate of the Parish church, and Mary's cousin, Lady Wharton and her daughter lived in Archer's Lodge in almost entire seclusion. Sir Richard for three fourths of the year resided in London, and when visiting Devonshire, surrounded himself with associates whose manners and pursuits were anything but congenial with those of his wife and daughter. As to the curate, accomplished scholar and eloquent divine as he was, and much as Miss Wharton seemed to take pleasure in his varied and brilliant conversation—not more however, than did her mother and Travers himself—any notion of marriage with him was, the lieutenant felt, quite out of the question. Edmund Harford's salary as curate was only about ninety pounds a year—he had no influential connexions to push him on in the church—and Travers thought he had ill read human character if Lady Wharton, did any chance exist of Mary's allying herself with poverty and wretchedness, would permit an intercourse likely to have so fatal a result. Thus reasoning, believing, hoping, Travers surrendered himself unresistingly to the influence by which he was enthralled. He walked, fished, played at billiards with the baronet, participated freely in the various modes for killing time, except gaming, and awaited with torturing anxiety a favorable moment for terminating the feverish doubts which, reason as he might, still haunted him incessantly. A circumstance, sudden, unexpected, and terrible, cut short his hesitation, and pushed him to a decision he might have else delayed for months—perhaps years.

A dispute arose late one night between Sir Richard Wharton and one of his companions respecting alleged unfair play at cards. Injurious epithets were freely interchanged; and, after a fruitless attempt by the persons present to adjust the quarrel amicably, an appeal to the arbitration of the pistol, was arranged for an early hour the next morning. The meeting took place, and both combatants were wounded at the first fire—Sir Richard as it proved mortally.

The baronet was hastily conveyed to the nearest public house, and such medical aid as the locality afforded was instantly procured. On examining the wound, which was in the chest, and bled internally, the surgeon at once informed the sufferer that nothing could be done to prolong, much less to save his life.

"I thought so—felt so!" murmured the unfortunate gentleman, with white lips, "Accursed chance!" A few moments afterwards he added, "How long, think you, my life—this agony—may last?"

"Not long; an hour perhaps—no more."

"So soon! I must be quick then. Let the room be cleared at once of all except my servant. James," he added, as soon as his orders were obeyed, "hasten to Marlands to Mr. Travers; tell him I must

see him instantly. Be swift, for more than life depends upon your speed!"

For the next half hour the groans wrenched from the dying man, in his fast closing struggle with the terrible foe that held him in his iron grasp, were alone heard in the apartment; and then hurrying feet sounded along the passage, and Lieutenant Travers greatly excited, rushed in.

"Can this terrible intelligence be true?" he breathlessly exclaimed, "that you are—"

"Dying? Yes; a few more pulsations, my young friend, and that which men call life will be past, and I shall be nothing!"

"May not something be still attempted? Where is the surgeon?"

"Gone, by my orders. You, Francis Travers, can alone aid me in this extremity."

"! What can you mean?"

"Not, indeed, to save my life—that is past hoping for; but to rescue an ancient name, which I have already tarnished, from indelible disgrace and infamy. You love Mary Wharton?"

"As my own soul!" replied Travers, flushing scarlet.

"I have long known it. You are aware that the estates go to my nephew, and that she is portionless?"

"Perfectly; but that is a circumstance—"

"How much per annum of clear available income do you possess?" interrupted Sir Richard quickly.

"So strange a question at such a moment startled Travers; but, after a moment's pause, he replied, "Including my professional income, about a thousand a year."

"Enough! Hand me a glass of water. Now, come nearer, Travers, for my eyes grow dim, and my speech, beneath the choking grasp of this fell death is faint and difficult. You know that Lady Wharton and myself, though occasionally residing under one roof, have been for many years thoroughly estranged from each other. For this I know the world blames me, and I admit, quite justly. Well, the world, wise and praying as it is, yet neither knows or guesses a thousandth part of the wrong I have done my wife and child!"

"Sir Richard!"

"When I married Ellen Harford, her fortune secured to her by settlement, was invested in the funds in her maiden name; the annual interest amounted to about eight hundred pounds."

"Perhaps not. This revenue Lady Wharton has constantly drawn, half yearly through Child's banking house. It was devoted by her to the maintenance of our establishment. A few months since, I—bend lower, that I may hiss the accursed confession in your ear! I, pressed by enormous gaming debts, and infatuated by a belief that I might, had I the means of playing for large stakes, retrieve my losses forged—do you hear?—forged my wife's name to a warrant of attorney, drew out the entire capital, played with and lost all! And now—now," cried the miserable man with spasmodic violence, "you know all—know that by my act my wife, my child are paupers, beggars—homeless—friendless and but for you without resource or hope!"

"Merciful powers! can this be true?"

"As death!" rejoined the baronet, his husky accents again sinking to a feeble whisper. "And you on whom I counted, hesitate, I see, to save my name from infamy, even though the reward be Mary Wharton?"

"Say not so!" passionately exclaimed Travers. "But how—by what means can I conceal—can I?"

"Easily. Continue to pay the dividend as usual through Child's till you are—where are you?—till you are married.—Lady Wharton will live with you and Mary, till—till—You understand?"

"I think I do," stammered Travers.—

"But—"

"That's well!" A silence of several minutes succeeded, followed by incoherent murmurs, indicating that the senses of the dying man were wandering. "Cold, cold—and dark! Looked! and upon three trumps! Light! the candles; we cannot see the cards! Ah! what shapes are these? Ellen, Mary! so stern, too, now that Travers has promised—has promised—"

The death rattle choked his utterance, and in a few minutes Sir Richard Wharton had ceased to live.—About three weeks after the funeral of the deceased baronet, Lieut. Travers received a letter on service, from the Admiralty, announcing his appointment to a crack frigate fitting for sea at Portsmouth, and directing him to report himself on board immediately. This summons rendered further delay or hesitation impossible: He could not leave Marlands without coming to a frank explanation with Lady and Miss Wharton, and he resolved it should take place that very morning. Not a syllable had yet passed his lips relative to the extraordinary disclosures made by Sir Richard Wharton in his last moments, or to the wishes he had expressed regarding

his daughter. In the event, Travers mentally argued, or the acceptance of his suit by Miss Wharton and her mother, there could be no reason for concealment from them; they would not betray the late baronet's disgraceful secret. At all events he would not, by first revealing to Mary Wharton that she was penniless, and afterwards proffering her his hand and fortune, seem to wish to purchase her consent to a union with him. Full of these cogitations and resolves, he arrived at Archer's Lodge, where to his extreme astonishment, he found the servants packing up the furniture as for immediate removal. He hurried to the breakfast room, where he found Lady Wharton and her daughter both busily engaged arranging books, music, and papers.

"What is the meaning of this?" he demanded with intense agitation. "Surely you are not leaving Archer's Lodge?"

"Indeed we are, Mr. Travers," replied Lady Wharton. "We received a letter yesterday, accepting an offer we had made for the lease of a house in Wales, close to Edmund's new curacy, which he says will suit us admirably."

"Us—Edmund!" gasped Travers.

"Mary, love, place these papers," said Lady Wharton, "in the writing desk in my dressing room. Mr. Travers, she added, as the door closed, "you are ill. The walk has perhaps fatigued you. Let me give you a glass of wine."

"No—no—no! What is it you say? Mary—Edmund! Speak, and quickly; my brain turns."

"I feared this," said Lady Wharton soothingly, as she approached and gently took his hand; "and perhaps I have been to blame in delaying the explanation which must now be made."

"What explanation, relative to whom?"

"To Mary and her cousin, Edmund Harford."

"Ha!"

"They are betrothed lovers, and have been so, with my consent for many months. Listen to me calmly, Mr. Travers," continued Lady Wharton terrified by the wild expression of the young man's eyes. "Mary some time since wished me to give you my confidence. I hesitated; for, alas! bitter experience has taught me to place but little reliance on the faith of men. I was wrong I see; but pray try to calm yourself."

"Go on—go on. Let me at least know all—the worst, the worst!"

"I will be frank with you. The failing health of Sir Richard Wharton has for some time warned me that but a brief space remained to him on earth. The frightful catastrophe of the other day but hastened his end, in all probability, by only a few months. Mary's sole dependence was, in that event, I knew, the marriage portion secured to me, the interest of which amounts to something over eight hundred pounds per annum."

"I know—I have heard."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; but no matter. Proceed, I beg of you."

"The possession of an income in my own right, amply sufficient for the needs of an unambitious household, warranted me, I conceived, in consenting to Mary's engagement with her cousin, whom she has known from childhood, and of whose worth no one can speak too highly. My silence and reserve have, I perceive, Mr. Travers, misled you; but forgive me; I did not know—I could not perceive."

"Let me pass madam," exclaimed Travers, disengaging his hand, and staggering towards the door. "I will return presently."

A whirlwind of emotion was sweeping through his brain as he hurried from the house into the adjoining shrubbery.—Wounded affection, despair and compassion tugged at his heart, and ruled it by turns. The open air helped to cool and revive him; and after about an hour's bitter conflict with himself, he returned to where he had left Lady Wharton. She was still there.

"May I have your ladyship's permission to see Miss Wharton alone for a few minutes?"

Lady Wharton appeared surprised at the request, but at once acceded to it, "I will send her to you immediately," she replied and left the room.

A considerable period elapsed, before Miss Wharton, tremblingly, blushing, painfully agitated, almost, indeed, to tears entered the apartment.

"Pardon my freedom—my impertinence Miss Wharton," said Travers, in as calm a tone as he could command, as he led her to a seat, and placed himself beside her. "I have a question to ask you of the last importance to you as to myself, and I entreat you to answer it frankly as to a brother."

The lady bowed, and the lieutenant proceeded with somewhat more firmness.

"You are, I am informed, dependent as to fortune upon Lady Wharton. Is it then

I would ask, of your own free choice and will that you are contracted to your cousin—to the Rev. Mr. Harford? Nay, Lady, be not offended at my boldness. It is in virtual compliance with the injunctions of Sir Richard Wharton, expressed in his last moments, that I ask this question."

The momentary glance of indignant surprise passed from Mary Wharton's face at the mention of her father's name. Her suffused eyes were again bent on the ground whilst the rich color came and went on her cheek, as she replied in a low agitated voice—"Edmund and I have known, have been attached almost betrothed, to each other from childhood."

"Enough, Miss Wharton," said Travers hastily rising; "I will not trespass further on your indulgence. May all good angels guard and bless you!" he added, seizing her hand and passionately kissing it; "and for your sake, him—Farewell!" He hurried from the house, and the same evening took coach for London, made the necessary arrangement for continuing the payment of Lady Wharton's dividend through Childs, as before; then proceeded to Portsmouth, and joined his ship, which a few days afterwards sailed for the South American station.

Lady Wharton and her daughter removed, as they had intimated, to Wales, where Edmund Harford had obtained a curacy, scarcely of so much money-value as that which he had left in Devonshire.

After the lapse of a twelvemonth he was married to Mary Wharton; still, however, retaining his curacy as a means of usefulness. The union was a happy one. In the enjoyment of an amply sufficient income, and soon begirt with joyous infancy, their days fled past in tranquil happiness; and each succeeding year, as it rolled over them in their beautiful retreat, augmented with some new blessing their sum of worldly felicity. If a thought of the noble-hearted man to whom they were unconsciously so deeply indebted crossed their minds, it was chiefly when a present for one of the children, of some rich or curious produce of distant climes arrived, or a gazette of that stirring period one of the bold deeds which rapidly advanced Lieutenant Travers to post captain's rank.

Peace, for which the harassed, trampled world had so long sighed, was at last proclaimed, and Edmund Harford, who corresponded with Captain Travers, thought it possible he might pay them a visit—perhaps take up his abode in the neighborhood, for Marlands, they knew, had long since been disposed of. He, however, came not; and the next letter received announced that he had joined the expedition against Algiers, under Lord Exmouth.

Tidings of the triumph of the British fleet over that celebrated nest of pirates reached them in due season, accompanied by victory's ever present crimson shadow—the list of killed and wounded. Harford glanced anxiously at the column, and an exclamation of dismay and sorrow broke from him—Captain Travers was returned "mortally wounded!" Greatly pained and shocked as they all were by this intelligence, they were some days before they knew how deep cause they had for grief.

About a fortnight, it might have been, afterwards, Mr. Harford by Lady Wharton's directions wrote to Messrs Child to inquire the reason the last half year's dividend had not been forwarded as usual. The answer revealing the crime of Sir Richard Wharton, the heroic sacrifice of Travers, and their own utter worldly ruin—stunned, overwhelmed them! "The reported death of Captain Travers," the bankers wrote, after fully explaining the source from which, since the death of Richard Wharton, the remittances had been derived, "and a consequent claim to his property by a distant relative, as heir at law, necessarily precluded them from continuing the half-yearly payments."

All emotions of admiration, wonder, gratitude, excited by the discovery, were soon absorbed by consternation at the prospect before them—suddenly deprived as they were, by the stroke of an enchanter's wand, of their imaginary wealth. "Our children!" exclaimed Mrs. Harford, with tearful vehemence, "what will become of them, nursed as they have been in ease and luxury?"

"God will provide both for them and us, Mary," replied her husband. "If we excise our faith and patience, but I have no fear; but my heart swells to think that that noble minded man should have passed away unassured, unconscious of our deep gratitude and esteem."

"Do not deem me selfish, Edmund," rejoined Mrs. Harford. "I feel his generous kindness as deeply as yourself. It is for our children I am anxious—not for myself; not even for you."

"Be assured," said Lady Wharton, recovering from her panic, "that Captain Travers has not neglected to provide for such a probable contingency in his profession as sudden death. His unselfish evidences to you, Mary, will shield you and

years from beyond the grave: of that be satisfied."

Lady Wharton was not mistaken in her judgment of the character of Captain Travers. By the very next post a letter arrived, under cover of Messrs Child, from a solicitor, informing them that by a will executed by Captain Travers on the same day that he had directed the banks to remit the usual amount of Lady Wharton, the whole amount of the property of which he might die possessed was bequeathed to Mary Harford, for her sole use and benefit, and not passing by marriage to the husband. "The instant official news of the death of Captain Travers arrived," it was added, "probate would be at once obtained on his will, and the proper steps taken to put Mrs. Harford in possession of the legacy." All doubts were speedily set at rest. A carriage drove slowly up the avenue one evening, just as it was growing dusk, and Mr. Harford was informed that a gentleman wished to speak with him. He hastened out, and a pale, mutilated figure extended its hand to him, exclaiming, in a feeble voice, "Edmund! Do you know me?"

"Captain Travers' almost shouted Harford. "Can it indeed be you?" "A piece of me, Edmund," replied the wounded officer, with an effort to smile. "I am come to ask permission," he added in a graver tone, "to die here; I shall not, I think, be refused?"

He survived for several months, ministered to with tenderest solicitude by Mrs. Harford and her husband. The last tones that sounded in his ear were those of Edmund Harford, reading with choking voice the prayers of the church for the dying; the last object his darkening eyes distinguished was the tearful countenance of the beloved of his youth and manhood; the last word his lips uttered was her name—MARY!

Family Quarrels.

Rat or Mouse.—We once heard the famous Lorenzo Dow, in a summer which we shall never forget, relate a story in illustration of the folly of family disagreements, and the fact that family quarrels are frequently the effect of passionate and unyielding tempers, excited by the most trivial incidents.

I know said he, an exceedingly happy and affectionate young couple, who had but recently commenced housekeeping in all the luxury of newly wedded love, and elegant plenty.

As they sat together in their parlor exchanging the little tender nothings of reciprocal love, a sleek little mouse ran across the apartment.

"My love," cried the lady, "did you see that mouse?"

"I saw it my dear," replied the husband "but it was a rat."

"Oh no, love," said the wife, "it certainly was a mouse."

"Madam, I tell you it was a rat," thundered the husband.

"It was a mouse," asserted the lady, "I saw it very distinctly."

"I saw it also madam, and my eyes are as good as yours."

"Your eyes may be as good as mine, but if they are, your judgment is not," rejoined the lady. "And so, said Dow, the quarrel progressed, until the couple so incensed each other, that they separated.

The mutual friends succeeded in effecting a reconciliation, and the harmony of affection seemed restored, but one evening as they sat chatting, toying and saying how much they loved, the wife remarked,

"How foolish it was for us to have such a quarrel about that silly mouse."

"Mouse!" cried the husband, "I say it was a rat!"

So the quarrel was renewed, and the loving pair separated the second time.

Now, reader, if you are quarrelsome, here is an example for you. You see that although the creature's being rat or mouse, was not of the least consequence to the parties, or any body else, her or hereafter, it was yet sufficient to stubborn, unyielding spirits so much as to distort young love, and sever the holy bonds of conjugal affection.

"Mind how Talk you it" Boys.—On Saturday last a "breach of promise to marry" case was tried in the Court of Common Pleas at present in session in this city. The defendant had promised to take a young lady to be his lawful wife; but afterwards repented his choice, and married a gal more to his liking. This we believe to be a full statement of the case. Damages for the plaintiff, \$1,600.—*Sturdeville Messenger.*

What literary men would a man name, on looking at a house on fire? Dickens, Howitt, Burns.

He who thinks too much of himself will be in danger of being forgotten by the rest of the world.