

The Middleburgh Post.

T. H. HARTER.

He that will not reason is a bigot; he that cannot is a fool; he that dare not is a slave.

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

VOL. XXIII

MIDDLEBURGH, SNYDER CO., PENN'A, JUNE 9, 1887.

NO. 26

POETRY.

THE POOR MAN'S SHEAF.

He saw the wheat fields waiting
All golden in the sun,
And strong and stalwart reapers
Went by him one by one.
"O, could I reap in harvest!"
His heart made bitter cry,
"I can do nothing, nothing,
So weak, alas, am I."

At eve a fainting traveler
Sank down beside his door,
A cup of cool sweet water
To quench his thirst he bore.
And, when refreshed and strength-
ened,
The traveler went his way,
Upon the poor man's threshold
A golden wheat sheaf lay.

When came the Lord of harvest,
He cried: "Oh, Master, kind,
One sheaf I have to offer,
But that I did not bind;
I gave a cup of water,
To one athirst, and he
Left at my door in going,
This sheaf I offer Thee."

Then said the Master softly:
"Well pleased with this am I:
One of my angles left it
With thee as he passed by.
Thou mayst not join the reapers
Upon the harvest plain,
But he who helps a brother
Bind sheaves of richest grain."

AN ADVENTURE ON THE WESTERN PLAINS.

The wife of a sub-chief known as Dog Killer was suddenly taken ill one night, and I was hastily sent for: that is, after two medicine men had held a powwow over her and made use of all their trickery and chicanery without avail, I was summoned to the lodge and warned that if I failed to cure her my life must pay the forfeit.

I was now entirely out of medicines, except about forty drops of pain killer. Partly by signs and by words the squaw gave me to understand that she had been poisoned by eating some strange berries found upon the banks of the stream. I knew of only one thing to do, and it might be late to do that with any hope of benefit. There was a plant called by the hunters "Thro-w-up" growing around the camp. It somewhat resembles lobelia in looks, though it is smaller. I hastily gathered a handful, made a strong tea, and gave the squaw such an emetic as she never before experi-enced. She was deathly sick all night, but when daylight came she had passed the crisis and was mending.

Dog Killer and a dozen of his braves were in and about the lodge to the last, and I fully realized that should the squaw die on my hands, my doom was sealed. No excuses would be taken and no mercy shown. When I felt that the woman was fairly out of danger, I turned to the chief for a nod of commendation, but received a scowl as black as midnight, instead. None of the warriors dared smile his approval, even if he so desired. I realized that there were those in the camp who hungered for my life, and Dog Killer would much rather have seen his wife a corpse than on the road to strength. When the squaw, now free from pain and resting easily, indulged in signs to evince her gratitude, the chief seemed very angry, and upbraided her in vigorous lan- guage.

Naturally I had thought of escape every day since my capture. The most serious difficulty in the way was the lateness of the season. I knew that winter set in early in re- gion and to be caught on the plains or in the mountains without plenty of blankets and food meant certain death. While I had a fair general knowledge of my geographical posi- tion, I was uncertain how high up the Canadian river we were. That stream has its rise in New Mexico, and empties into the Arkansas in the eastern part of the Indian Terri- tory. I did not as a matter of fact know for sure that we were on the Canadian, but I knew that it must be either that or the Cimmaron.

My pocket map had been destroy- ed by the Cherokees, but I could remember the general courses of the two streams and the lay of the coun- try. If I was fifty or one hundred miles south of Fort Dodge, as I tried to figure out, I stood a pretty good chance of escape if I could get clear

set out from Fort Dodge with his expedition. This would put me southwest of the fort, with a plain to travel and two rivers to cross.

If I was out in my calculations as to Fort Dodge, then the nearest haven of security, providing I did not run across troops in the field, was Fort Lyon, one hundred and fifty miles northwest in Colorado. I shut myself up in my lodge and schemed and planned till mid-after- noon, and the result was that I de- termined to chance it on the Fort Dodge route:

I walked to the outskirts of the camp, ostensibly to gather herbs, but really to see where the horses were herded at night and to deter- mine what chance there would be of getting clear of the village when night came. I was presently joined by a limping warrior, whose foot I had found in a shocking state and almost cured. He gathered a few handfuls of herbs and then motioned for me to sit down and examine his foot. When we were both down and I had his foot in my lap, he caution- ously remarked:

"Dog Killer want to burn you?" It was the first word of English I had heard any of them use, and for a moment I was too astonished to do more than gaze at him with open mouth.

"Hi! Injins looking!" he whis- pered. "White man watch foot all the time!"

"So Dog Killer is my enemy?" I asked.

"Heap mad. Want to kill you."

"Will the big chief let him?"

I bent over his foot, putting on a fresh poultice, and, after a bit, he continued:

"White medicine man must go away to-night. Loss scalp to-mor- row."

"How can I go?"

"See tree over there?"

It was on my left, and a quarter of a mile from camp, a young tree growing alone a few yards from the river bank.

"Yes."

"When the Injinn sleep you come. Find there."

"Yes."

"White man heap medicine? Care foot. Foot must well. Go back now."

I had finished dressing the wound, and he got up and returned to his lodge and I soon banded up my herbs and sauntered in a careless way to mine, stopping here and there to examine the healing wounds of some of my patients.

So far as the number went all were my friends, but none of them were veterans warriors or chiefs. They could speak in my favor, but they had no influence.

I was arranging some herbs over a slow fire when Dog Killer entered my lodge: I made him a respect- ful salute, and arranged the blankets for a seat; but he stood stiffly on the other side of the fire and glared down at me: His jaw was set, his eyes burning with hate, and there was such a devilish expression on his whole countenance that I could not keep my eyes on his face five seconds. I saluted him again and pointed to the blankets, but he made no sign. I felt that his eyes never left me, and I was soon in a tremble. Such a visit boded me no good, and though I tried to appear respectfully indifferent, he must have seen that I was badly broken up.

For too long minutes Dog Killer maintained the position I have de- scribed. Then I could stand it no longer. Rising to my feet I was about to offer him a freshly-filled pipe, when he leaned over, spat full in my face, and hissed as he left the lodge.

"Body! Dog!"

He had come to insult and de- grade me, if not to get an excuse for killing me on the spot and after he had departed I fully realized that with such an enemy in camp I could not feel certain of living another hour.

I did not leave my lodge again until night, at which time I went to a ledge a few rods away to secure supper. The occupant was an aged squaw who had not only been order- ed to feed me, but I had not gained her gratitude by healing a rank sore on her neck, first caused by a splin- ter from a load of faggots she was carrying. She had an unusually

made signs for me to eat all I could. When my look expressed wonder she resorted to the sign language to demonstrate a man alone on the plains striving to escape from some- thing or somebody.

Had the Indian friend taken her into his confidence? I had already asked myself this question when she answered it by pointing to the meat in the kettle and then pointing to the tree under which I had agreed to meet him. When she saw that I comprehended she smiled and nodded her head. The grateful old squaw wished me God speed.

In an Indian village when there is nothing of important going on, most of the people have turned in by 9 o'clock in evening, and at 10 only the dogs are astir. Had I been strange to the braves I could not have stirred outside the lodge with- out creating a rumpus and without being attacked. I had moved among them so long, however, that although for every canine in the village, from the oldest veteran down to the smallest pup, hated me, they let me pass un- challenged to and fro.

It was after 10 o'clock and the village had been quiet for some time before I moved. I reasoned that the boldest way was the best: and when once outside the lodge I start- ed off like one having the perfect right to go and come. My footsteps must have been heard in some lodge, but no one rushed out to halt me or make inquiries. I maintained an even pace to the outskirts of the vil- lage, and then halted for five min- utes to listen. Everything was quiet even the dogs, and when satisfied of this I made straight for the tree.

The Indian was there holding a horse. The animal was bridled and saddled, and I soon discovered that he was one captured from the sol- dier. A blanket and a quantity of provisions were strapped behind the saddle. As I came up the In- dian extended his hand to grasp mine and whispered:

"Hurry! Ride two day! Come to fort! Keep straight this way!"

"God! Bless you!" I said, as I wrung his hand.

"Take rifle. Take powder! Take bullets!" he said, as I mounted the horse; and the articles were handed up one after another.

"Hurry! Ride fast! May be Dog Killer come after you!"

He hurried away in the direction of the village, and I headed to the northeast, walking the horse for half a mile and then urging him to canter and holding him to it for two hours.

I had made a successful start and was highly elated therewith. The on- ly drawback was the fear that I might not preserve the proper direc- tion. It was a dark, starless night, and it would have tested the powers of an Indian to keep dead to the northeast.

My horse did not get a breathing spell until about 2 o'clock in the morning. I was a least thirty miles from the village and heard nothing to alarm me. I dismounted on the plain, removed the saddle, and had rested with the horse for perhaps half an hour, when he suddenly threw up his head and looked keenly into the darkness toward the south- west. I put my ear to the ground, and the thud of a horse's feet on the plain was distinct. It was some one coming up on my trail, and it must be an enemy.

I saw my steed draw a long breath and throw up his head, as if to utter a neigh of welcome, and I had him by the jaw in a second. I could not make him lie down, and I dared not let go my grip. Thud! thud! came the hoof beats, and after two or three seconds a horse and rider passed within fifty feet of us, headed to the northeast. It was simply a black spot on the black night, and my heart was in my mouth as it came opposite. I felt certain that it was Dog Killer on my trail.

When I could no longer bear the hoof-beats I released my horse and sat down to plan my future course. The chief could not be following my trail in the darkness, but he was pursuing my direction. My escape had been discovered, and he, in all probability reasoned that I would make for the nearest post. He may have depended on accident to over- haul me during the night. If this did not occur he could pick up the trail when daylight came, and per-

haps he would find me before I could determine to ride to the east for a full hour and then back toward my true course. In this way, if he were waiting for me, I would flank him. I rode a distance of about eight miles and then turned square to the north and kept moving until I saw the first signs of daylight. Then I dismount- ed and unsaddled again, and was fortunate enough to find water for the horse in a small natural basin. Day was so long coming that the animal was fairly rested by the time I could distinguish objects a mile away. When I had the saddle ad- justed, the sun was rising.

All around was an open plain. Away to the east I saw two or three black objects on the line of the hor- izon, but all other points of the compass were clear.

Mounting, I took up what I be- lieved to be a true course for Fort Dodge, and I had ridden for about an hour when Dog Killer suddenly left the cover of a dry ravine half a mile to the left and rode straight at me. My first impulse was to fly, but then came the thought that his horse could travel two test while mine was going one, and I halted, leaped to the ground and got my rifle ready. The wily savage halted at this moment. He had the idea that I left the camp unarmed, while he could not see that I had a rifle. He was armed with a much better weapon than mine, but did not care to face me on anything like equal terms.

Probably suspecting that I had a single-barreled rifle, Dog Killer maneuvered to draw my fire. He began circling around me, uttering yells and taunts and firing an occa- sional bullet, but I realized his ob- ject and refused to waste my bullet until the right moment. By and by, when he was within fair range, I fired at his horse. If I could kill the pony the chief could no longer pur- sue me.

At the crack of the rifle his horse rolled over, and fortunately fell up- on its rider in such a way as to hold him to the earth for a moment. This gave me time to reload. As Dog Killer struggled up he drew up his rifle and fired, and my own animal went down in a heap, struck in the head. This left a face to face, each with a rifle in his hands. He fired twice at me before I raised my gun, but the bullets whistled over my head, while mine struck him in the chest and laid him on the grass.

After reloading I went over to him and found him, as dead I believed, stone dead. I took away his rifle, knife, and tomahawk and ammunition, and likewise appropriated a govern- ment medal he was wearing around his neck. I didn't want two guns, and so slung mine away, together with the ammunition. I destroyed both saddles as well as I could make a knapsack of blankets and provisions, and within an hour after first sighting the Dog Killer I was heading for the fort on foot.

For the first fifty rods I looked back at brief intervals. I saw that I was awed and frightened at the knowledge that I had killed a human being, although in fair defence of my life. Then, too, his fierce face, his half open eyes, the bloody froth on his lips, made up a picture to haunt me. I had gone perhaps half-a-mile and had halted on a little knoll to survey the plain, when a bullet scream- ed past my ear and a rifle cracked spitefully. I wheeled around and there was Dog Killer resting on his knees within twenty rods of me. The malignity which inspires the red man had shaken off the clutch of death and forced him to follow me in the hope of accomplishing my de- struction. He picked up the aban- doned rifle and his bullet out close to my head.

I drew up my rifle to shoot him, but he did not flinch. He waved his hand and tried to shout defiance. I could not pull the trigger on a dy- ing man, even if an enemy. I shoul- dered the weapon and walked brisk- ly on, and I was only well out of range when he fired again. Five miles away I ascended a swell which gave me a good view of my trail, and I beheld Dog Killer creeping along over the path like the incarnate fiend he was. No wounded Bengal tiger was ever more determined on re- venge.

Two hours before sundown I had the good fortune to fall in with a

ler and dispatched him and secure his weapon. The devil was only eight miles away, being only two hours behind me in all the day's walk.

Death had come at last, however, although he still clutched the rifle and his glazing eyes seemed to be scanning my trail.

At daylight next morning I was safe in Fort Dodge, and I had the scalp of Dog Killer to prove the truth of my story.

COWBOY HOSPITALITY.

One hot afternoon, as we were approaching Big Dry creek, a cow- boy suddenly rode in, sight on the crest of a ridge, and came down the slope toward us at a swinging gal- lop. He sat as erect as a bronze statue, and had been lashed to his horse like another Mazepa he could have sat more perfectly motionless in his saddle. Instinctively we straightened up our tired shoul- ders, and sat erect also. Evidently he wanted to speak to us. So we rode forward to meet him, wonder- ing the while whether his manner would be agreeable or irritating.

After we had civilly exchanged how-do-you-dos, he inquired if we had seen any horses since morning. He had lost some, and up to that time, two o'clock, had ridden twenty- five miles in search of them. No, we had not seen any horses. So we fell to asking questions about trails, creeks and water holes. We were getting a deal of information, when he suddenly exclaimed:

"Looky here, fellers! The best thing you can do is to pull up at our ranch and put up for a while. It's only twelve miles from here. Take the trail that turns to the left, about three miles ahead. You won't find anybody at home—the boys are all off on the round-up, you know—but just go right in and make your- selves at home."

"Isn't the door locked?"

"Thunder, no! We never lock doors in the country. Somebody might come along hungry, and want to get in to get some grub, or stay all night. If a cowboy wanted to get in, and found the door locked, he'd simply break it down."

"Aren't you afraid of thieves?"

"Oh, no; nothing is ever stolen. A man's upon his honor, you know, and besides, if a fellow ever really staid anything out of a shack the country'd soon be too hot to hold him. Anybody that comes to a shack hungry is expected to go in and get a square meal, and stay all night if he wants to."

"Isn't that privilege often abused?"

"No, hardly ever. Say, you'd find a cow up at the ranch and you can milk her if you want. There are plenty of eggs about the stable; if you want 'em go for 'em. Just make yourself at home, and stay as long as you like. I'll be glad to have yer company."

A few more remarks were exchang- ed, and then our cowboy gathered up his reins and said:

"Well, I've got to finish my circuit, twenty miles more, I reckon; so I must be moving. So long. I'll see you at the ranch about sundown."

And flinging the last remark over his shoulder at us his pony galloped rapidly away, a moment later he rode over the ridge and disappeared.

"Boy," he said, as he halted beside a bootblack who was eating a big turnip. "I'm afraid that's bad for you." "Yes—yum—but you'd better put all your sympathy on the turnip," was the reply, as he bit off another quarter section.

"I've just found out why lightning never strikes twice the same place," said a farmer to Mr. Fry, the light- ning rod man, as they talked one day. "Why is it?" asked Mr. Fry. "Because the same place is never there after the lightning once hits it," replied the farmer.

Woman (to tramp)—"You might saw a little wood for that nice din- ner."

Tramp (reproachfully)—"Madam, you ought not to throw temptation in the way of a poor man."

Woman—"Temptation?"

Tramp—"Yes, Madam. If I were to saw some wood the chances are I would carry off the saw. I'm an hon- est man now and I want to stay so."

Daughter—"Father, did you really kick George, as you threatened to do?"

"Old Man—"I did."

Daughter—"Oh, father, how could

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