

The North Branch Democrat.

HARVEY SICKLER, Proprietor.

"TO SPEAK HIS THOUGHTS IS EVERY FREEMAN'S RIGHT."—Thomas Jefferson.

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Select Story.

THE HUSBAND'S REVENGE.

Somewhere about the year 1835, Wm. Bradway, a young man of five and twenty, then living in the interior of the State of New York left his family, consisting of a wife and two small children, and went south on a tour of speculation. He was absent nearly a year, and stated on his return, that he had been very successful, and had purchased a place on the Red River, whither he proposed to move his family, and there settle, perhaps for life. His wife, pleased with the novelty of the change, readily assented to the new arrangement; and, as soon as their Northern affairs were properly settled, they set off for their new home, which, in due course of time, they reached in safety.

But Mrs. Bradway was sadly disappointed in finding the place so different from what she had pictured in her fancy. The settlement was new, and everything was rough.—The houses, many of them, were built of logs and even the best of them lacked the finish of her Northern home, while the furniture was generally of the plainest and coarsest description, and scanty at that. But worse than all the rest were the inhabitants;—composed principally of rough speculators, negro traders, gamblers, and outlaws from different quarters, with such females and children as looked to them for support. Mrs. Bradway who had been well educated and brought up in refined society, sought in vain among them for suitable associates and companions, and, being a stranger in a strange land, soon became depressed and homesick.

Under the peculiar circumstances, she unguardedly made some remarks not complimentary to the place and its inhabitants;—and these remarks being reported, with such additions and exaggerations as scandal-mongers generally use for embellishments, she soon found herself surrounded by open enemies, and subjected to such petty annoyances and persecutions as little, malicious minds delight to inflict upon those they secretly believe to be their superiors, and both envy and hate for that cause.

Six months had not passed away ere William Bradway felt the necessity of removing his family from that unpleasant and lawless locality, and this he was preparing to do, when an awful tragedy occurred which changed the peaceful man into a bloody avenger. Some business at a neighboring settlement called him from home for a couple of days, and on his return he found his house in ashes, and learned that his wife and children had all been murdered under the most atrocious and aggravating circumstances—his poor wife, previous to her throat being cut, having been subjected to treatment worse than death by the three ruffians concerned in the horrible affair.

To a fond husband and father this was a terrible blow; and for a day and a night William Bradway remained beside the still smoking ruins of his dwelling, some of the time standing and gazing at them with his eyes bent up on the ground, and some of the time standing and gazing at them with an abstracted air, as if he were recalling the past, or looking into the future. He had shown no violent sorrow even at the first, but had received the awful intelligence as one mentally stupefied—as one who could not clearly believe the facts and comprehend the whole extent of his loss. It was observed that his features suddenly became deadly white, even to his lips, and then gradually changed to a livid hue, which remained without alteration, and without being afterwards tinged by even the slightest flush.

"Who did it?" he inquired in a tone of unnatural calmness.

These men were named—George Harbaugh, James Fawcett, and John Ellery.—These men were known as gamblers and desperadoes, and had been suspected of being robbers and murderers. They did not live in the village, but had visited it occasionally; and one of them had, some time previously, had a quarrel with Bradway, and threatened revenge, though the latter little dreamed at the time that anything so terrible was meant as had been accomplished.

It is but justice to say that, though the Bradways, as previously mentioned, had made themselves very unpopular in the place, there were very few of the residents who openly sanctioned the horrid crimes that had been committed, and there were some who boldly expressed a hope that the vile perpetrators would yet meet with a just punishment; but though the ruffians had made no secret of their fiendish deeds, and had even boasted of them before they left the place, no one had made any attempt to arrest or detain them, and they had gone, no one knew whither.

It was about ten o'clock in the morning that William Bradway first saw the ruins of his home, and heard the awful news of his irreparable loss; and all through the remainder of that day and the night which followed it he conducted himself in the manner we have described, seemingly taking notice of the curious groups that gathered around him, and replying to none of the idle ques-

tions put to him.

The next morning he went into a neighbor's house and asked for something to eat which was given him. He offered to pay for this, but the man of the house declined to receive any money, and invited him to make his home there for a few days.

"No," returned Bradway, "I intend to leave to-day."

"You don't look as if you'd got strength to go far," said the man in a kindly tone.

"I have that within which will sustain me," replied Bradway.

He then inquired into the particulars of the awful tragedy and the direction taken by the murderers—speaking calmly himself, and listened calmly to all the replies—his features the while retaining their unnatural, livid hue, and then displaying no signs of emotion, save now and then a perceptible quiver of the bloodless lips. As he passed through the village, after taking leave of this family; he was several times stopped by different parties, who wanted to enter into conversation with him, and find out what he intended to do, but he gave them only evasive answers and slipped off as quietly as possible.

It was about two months after this that George Harbaugh, late one night was picking his way through the dark streets of Nacogdoches from a gambling house in his lodgings, when a man came up to him and quietly said: "Good evening, sir?"

"Who're you? and what dy'e want?" demanded the ruffian in a gruff, surly tone, at the same time thrusting his right hand into his bosom as if to draw a pistol.

"Do not be alarmed, sir?" returned the stranger; "but permit me to ask you one or two questions. In the first place, is your name George Harbaugh?"

"Well, what of it, whether it is or isn't?" was the uncivil demand.

"If it is, I owe you something which I wish to pay," returned the stranger; "and if it is not, perhaps you can put me in the way to find the person I seek."

"What do you owe me for, and how much?" inquired the gambler, taking his hand from his bosom.

"I am right, then, in supposing I address George Harbaugh himself?"

"Yes, that's my name. What's yours, and where'd we ever meet before?"

"If I am not mistaken," pursued the stranger, "you with two companions, were at the village of—on the Red river, on the night of the sixth of September last?"

"Ha! what's this?" cried the ruffian, springing back, and again thrusting his hand into his bosom.

He had not time for more, ere, with a dash and a crack, a ball passed through his breast. As he staggered and fell, shouting murder, a sharp knife was drawn across his throat, and the name of William Bradway hissed into his dying ear. It was the last earthly sound he ever heard. He was found murdered, but his assassin was not discovered.

During the winter following, James Fawcett went among the Choctaws to purchase horses. While trading with the Indians he fell in with a small dealer, who, for a trifling consideration, offered to assist him in taking his horses to the settlement some two hundred miles distant, where he expected to dispose of them at a heavy profit. The bargain was struck, and, with fifteen horses, James Fawcett set off with his assistant through a long stretch of wilderness. On the second night as the gambler and murderer sat smoking before the camp fire he was suddenly startled by finding a noose dropped over his head and shoulders and drawn around his body, so as to pinion his arms.—In less than a minute, notwithstanding a vigorous resistance on his part, he was literally bound hand and foot, and lay stretched on the earth as helpless as an infant.

"What's the meaning of this? Do you intend to murder me?" he demanded, in a voice made tremulous by fear.

"I suppose you do not recollect ever having seen me before you met me in the Indian village?" said the man who had been acting as his assistant, as he now stood over his prostrate form.

"No, of course not! Where had I ever seen you before?" replied Fawcett.

The other removed a wig of long hair, and a patch from one eye, and then quickly said "Do you know me now?"

"Well, it does seem as if I had seen you before, but I can't tell where," said the ruffian.

"Do you remember the woman and children you helped to murder on the 6th of last September?"

"Ha! you're Bradway!" cried the villain, in a tone of despair.

"William Bradway, at your service—the same in name as when you knew me, but not the same in nature. Then I would not have harmed you; but now I would execute the vengeance of a wronged husband and father."

"Mercy!" gasped Fawcett.

"Did you show any?"

"You will not murder me?"

"You must die, I have sworn it. I have followed you to the earth of a monster.—Harbaugh fell by my hand; I shall not spare you, and then to down John Ellery! Say your prayers, if you have any to say, for

your minutes are numbered?"

"Mercy, Mercy!" gasped the terrified ruffian.

The avenger made no further reply, but deliberated proceeded to fasten a rope, around the neck of Fawcett. This done, he dragged him to a sapling, bent it over, secured the other end of the rope near its top, and let it go.

With a wild, unearthly yell, the second murderer was jerked up from the earth, and hung dangling, swinging, and struggling a few feet from the ground. Bradway looked calmly on, till the body became still in death; and then, mounting his own horse, he rode swiftly away, leaving the other horses, and the money on the person of the dead man, to whoever might find them.

It might have been six months after the terrible death of the ruffian just recorded that two men sat in a private room of a gambling den in Natchez, playing cards for money. Piles of gold and silver and rolls of bank notes were on the table between the men, and each was staking his money freely, and apparently considering nothing but how to beggar the other by his superior skill or knavery.

"You know," said one of the two men, "that we are to play till one of us wins all?"

"Suppose we take another drink on it?"

"Agreed!"

A bottle and tumblers stood on the table just behind the first speaker, who got up and turned around and poured out two glasses—his companion, who had the deal, improving the opportunity as well as he could to arrange the cards so as to give himself a winning hand. The man who poured out the liquor now handed one to the gambler at the table and held the other himself, ready for drinking.

"To the cholera!" he said quietly nodding to the other—for the malady had at that time begun its work of destruction.

"To the cholera be it then, and let it do its work!" cried the gambler, with forced bravado, turning somewhat pale, and tossing off his glass at one gulp.

The other drank quietly, replaced the two tumblers, and resumed his seat at the gambling board. For a few minutes there was no remark made, except what concerned the game; and then the one who had partially packed the cards, as he raked down a large sum he had just won, said, looking up with an expression of alarm, "By Heavens! I feel very strange!"

"You look very pale," returned the other. "I think you are going to die."

"Well, you're a pretty comforter, I must say!"

"I think you will find me so presently."

"Ah?" groaned the gambler, dropping the cards and clasping his stomach with both hands, "I am on fire inside."

"Of course you are!"

"How, of course? What do you know about it? Have I got the cholera?" demanded the gambler somewhat fiercely.

"Listen to me a few moments, and you will know and understand all. There were once three companions named Geo. Harbaugh, James Fawcett, and John Ellery. A little more than a year ago, they murdered an innocent woman and two children in the village of—, while the husband and father, William Bradway, was away. When he returned he learned all the horrid particulars; he swore a solemn oath that he would rest in peace till he should have hunted them all down, and put an end to their guilty lives.—George Harbaugh was assassinated in the streets of Nacogdoches, James Fawcett was hung in the west, and John Ellery was poisoned in Natchez."

"But I am John Ellery!" cried the gambler, the very picture of horror.

"No need to tell me that, who have hunted you to your death!" said the other, "I am William Bradway!"

"Good Heaven! I am I then poisoned?" shrieked the wicked man, as new pangs seized him.

"Yes, beyond hope! In five minutes you will be a corpse!"

"Murder!—help!" the dying man began to cry.

"None of that!" said Bradway, springing upon him like a tiger, and forcing a handkerchief in to his mouth, which held there until the man fell down in spasms, when he turned to the table and quickly selected his own money from the gambler's and put it in his pocket.

The poison was quick and sure and in less than half an hour from his last drink of spirits the murderer was a corpse.

Waiting only to be certain of his death, Bradway went down stairs and told some of the people of the house that his companion either had the cholera or had fallen down in a fit and they had better go up and see to him. He then hastened down to the river, got on board the first passing steamer, and before night was many miles away from the scene of his last act of vengeance.

William Bradway subsequently went to Texas, joined a band of rangers, and was finally killed in a fight with a party of guerrillas on the western frontier. His companions all spoke of him as a quiet, determined man, who was never known to smile.

EIGHTEEN.

At eighteen the true narrative of life is yet to be commenced. Before that time we sit listening to a tale, a marvelous fiction; almost always unreal. Before that time, the world is heroic; its inhabitants half divine or semi-divine; its scenes are dream scenes; darker woods, and stranger hills; brighter skies, more dangerous waters; sweeter flowers, more tempting fruits; wider plains, drearier deserts, sunnier fields than are found in nature, overspread our enchanted globe.—What a moon we gaze on before that time; How the trembling of our hearts at her aspect bears witness to its unutterable beauty! As to our sun, it is a burning heaven—the world of gods.

At that time—eighteen, drawing near the confines of illusive, void dreams, all-hand lies behind us, the shores of reality rise in front. These shores are yet distant; they look so blue, soft gentle, we long to reach them.—In sunshine we see a greenness beneath the azure, as of spring meadows; we catch glimpses of silver lines, and imagine the roll of living waters. Could we but reach this land, we think to hunger and thirst no more, whereas many a wilderness, and often the flood of Death, or some stream of sorrow as cold and almost as black as Death, is to be crossed ere true bliss can be tasted. Every joy that life gives must be earned ere it is secured; and how hardly earned, those only know who have rested for great prizes. The heart's blood must gem with red beads the brow of the combatant, before the wreath of victory rustles over it.

At eighteen we are not aware of this. Hope, when she smiles on us, and promises happiness to-morrow, is implicitly deceived; Love, when he comes wandering like a lost angel to our poor, is at once admitted, welcomed, embraced; his quiver is not seen; his arrows penetrate, they wound like a thrill of new life; there are no fears of poison none of the barb which no leeches' hand can extract; that perilous passion—an agony ever in some of its phases; with many, an agony throughout—is believed to be an unqualified good; in short, at eighteen, the school of Experience is to be entered, and her humbling, crushing, grinding, but yet purifying and invigorating lessons, are yet to be learnt.—Charlotte Bronte.

ANDREW JOHNSON, Vice President of the United States—who now by the provisions of the Constitution becomes President—was born in Raleigh, N. C., December 29, 1808.—At the age of four he lost his father; at ten he was apprenticed to a tailor, whom he served seven years. While learning his trade he also learned to read, and is emphatically, as was his lamented predecessor, a self-taught man, and of plebeian origin. In 1824 he went to Laurens Court House, S. C., where he worked nearly two years. In May, 1826 he returned to Raleigh; where he remained until September, when he removed to Greenville, Tenn. The first office he ever held was that of Alderman of the village. He was re-elected twice, and in 1830 was chosen Mayor. In 1835 he was elected to the Legislature, in 1837 was defeated, and in 1839 was re-elected. In 1840 he served as Presidential elector and canvassed the State for the Democratic ticket. In 1841 he was elected to the State Senate, and in 1843 was sent to Congress, where he served until 1852. In that year he was elected Governor of Tennessee, and again in 1855. He was in 1857 chosen United States Senator for the full term ending March 4, 1863. When Nashville was captured by our forces in the spring of 1862, he was made military Governor of the State by the President. November 8, 1864, he was elected Vice President, and succeeded to the Presidency by the death