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WEST BRANCH FARMER.

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H. C. HICKOK, EDITOR.

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From Sartain's Union Magazine.

The Celestial Army.

BY THOMAS BUCHANAN READ.
I stood by the open casement
And looked upon the night,
And saw the western going stage
Pass slowly out of sight.
I saw the bright procession
Went down the gleaming arch,
And my soul discerned the music
Of their long, triumphal march;
Till the great celestial army,
Stretching far beyond the poles,
Became the eternal hymn
Of the mighty march of souls.
Onward, for ever onward,
Red Mars led down his clan,
And the Moon, like a veiled maiden,
Was riding in the van.
And some were bright in beauty,
And some were faint and small,
But these might be in their great height
The noblest of them all.
Downward, for ever downward,
Behind Earth's dusky shore
They passed into the unknown night,
They passed and were no more.
No more! Oh, say not so—
And downward is not just;
For the light is weak and the sense is dim
That looks through heated dust.
The Stars and the mailed Moon,
Though they seem to fall and die,
Still sweep with their exalted lines
An endless reach of sky.
And though the hills of Death
May hide the twilight array,
The marshaled brotherhood of souls
Still keeps its upward way.
I see their march sublime,
And hear the glorious music
Of the conquerors of Time.
And long let me remember,
That the pale, fainting one
May to divine vision be
A bright and blazing sun.
"A Hero Act of Humanity."

BY GRACE GREENWOOD.

Health to the art, when glory is to give,
The crossing boat that makes its life to live.
Start not, my fastidious reader, when I
Announce that the young gentleman, in
whose favor and fortunes I would culst
your friendly sympathies, as the hero of
this sketch, is, or rather was, a medical
student. Now I am very well aware that
medical students are proverbially "hard
cases"—wild, sneering, careless, skeptical
inclined young gentlemen, whose hand-
kerchiefs smell of ether, and whose gloves
are strongly suggestive of rubber; whose
talk runs large, with bold jests on grave
subjects, sly anatomical allusions, and
startling hints at something
"Mair horrible and awf,"
Which 'un to name wad be unlawf,"
and whose very laughter has a sort of
bony-rattle about it.
But our friend, Will Ashley, fortunately
belonged not to the Bob Sawyer and Ben
Allen class of Esculapian disciples. He
was a man of refinement, intellect, educa-
tion, and principle—pleasing address, fine
person, and good family. Republican as
I am, I can but think much of good blood
—pure and honorable blood, I mean. He
had no bravado, no pretension, no reck-
lessness, no skepticism about him. He
chose his profession at the first, from a
real, natural leaning that way, and pur-
sued it with true enthusiasm and a true
constancy; and this partiality and devotion
have been rewarded with the happiest suc-
cess. Dr. Ashley is now regarded by his
many patients, with a remarkable confi-
dence and affection. To them, there seems
"healing in the very creak of his shoes on
the stairs," his cheerful smile lights up
the sick room like sunshine; his gentle words
and sympathetic tones are as balm and
"freshening oil" to hearts and minds,
wounded and distempored with the body,
and his bright laugh and playful wit are a
positive tonic to the weak and nervous
and fearful. But I am anticipating; my story
has perhaps most to do with the student-
life of Ashley.
When William was quite young—a
mere boy indeed, he became much attached
to a pretty cousin of his own—a gentle,
dark-eyed, Southern girl, who made her

home for some years with his mother and
sister, in the quiet New England city of
H—, where she was attending school.
Jessie Archer was, in truth, a lovely
creature—with a heart full of all good and
kindly feelings—with a soft, endearing
manner, but with very little strength of
character, or stability of purpose. She
tenderly loved her Northern relatives, and
parted from them at last, from her cousin
William in particular, with many tears
and passionate expressions of regret. She
was not positively betrothed to this cousin
—such a measure would have been op-
posed by their friends, on account of the
extreme youth of the parties—but she
knew well his love and his dear hope—that
he looked upon her as his future bride, and
she was well content with this understand-

ing.
As a matter of course, and lover-like
necessity, William Ashley corresponded
with his cousin. At first, the letters on
both sides were frequent, long, and con-
fidential; but after the first year of ab-
sence, those of Miss Jessie changed gradually
in their tone, and became "few and far
between." But William, who was faithful
and believing, made a thousand kind ex-
cuses for this, and continued to write out
of his own affectionate and changeless
heart. But at length his Jessie ceased to
write altogether. Two months went by,
and then poor Ashley, in much distress
anxiety, wrote to her, entreating to be told
the cause of her strange silence. There
came a reply at last—a brief reply, writ-
ten in the dear, familiar hand, but bearing
for a signature, a strange name. She had
been a fortnight married to a wealthy Vir-
ginia planter.

This home-thrust at his heart by a be-
loved hand; this sudden annihilation of his
dearest hopes, by her whose sweet source
and centre they had been, almost prostrated
the young student, mind and body.
He was proud, sensitive, and twenty-one;
he had the heart and was at the age to feel
acutely, to suffer and despair. His ambi-
tion died out—his energies flagged—then
his appetite went by the board, his eye
grew dim, his step heavy, and his
cheek pale. "He must give up study,"
said his mother. "He must take a jour-
ney," said his sister, speaking one word
for him and two for herself. This last
proposition, which was strongly pressed,
was finally acceded to; and the young
gentleman set forth, dispirited and ill, under
the care ("protection," she called it,) of
his charming sister, Ellen. They went
directly West, for a visit to the Falls; the
very journey which William had always
looked forward to as his bridal-tour. Now
it seemed but to depress and sadden him
the more; he was restless, moody, and
abstracted—the very worst traveling com-
panion possible to have. Ellen found it
exceedingly difficult to divert him from his
melancholy thoughts and tender recollec-
tions, "pleasant and mournful to the soul."
The fine scenery along their route, con-
stantly reminded him of the double pleas-
ure he had anticipated in first viewing it
with his beautiful bride.

At Buffalo, our travelers took the after-
noon boat for Chippewa. It was a bright,
and breezy day, early in July—water,
earth and sky were lit up gloriously by the
declining sun, as they gazed down that
grand immortal river. As the brother and
sister stood on deck, silently drinking in
the rare beauty of the scene and hour,
they noticed a party near them, distinguish-
ed amid all the crowd, by a certain quiet
elegance of dress and manner, with a bearing
of perhaps unconscious superiority.
This was a family party, and consisted of
an elderly gentleman, Mr. Harley, a wealthy
banker, and an honorable citizen of
New York—his wife, a sweet, motherly
looking woman—and their daughter, Juliet
a fair and delicate girl of eighteen, and
their only son, Master Fred, a lad of nine
or ten.

Ashley was a thorough republican—
proud and poor; and being now more
than usually inclined to coldness and re-
serve, instinctively shrank from all contact
with this party, in whom he at once recog-
nized the air patrician and exclusive. But
towards evening, Mr. Harley made some
courteous advances, and finally succeeded
in getting up quite a free and animated
conversation with his young fellow-traveler,
with whose well-bred air and thought-
ful countenance he had been attracted and
impressed. They discoursed on the mag-
nificent scenery around them, then on the
battles and sieges, bold generalship and
brave fighting which had made classic
ground of the wild Niagara frontier; and
Ashley, who was an admirable talker, soon

became earnest and even eloquent, in spite
of himself. All at once, in looking up, he
met the beautiful blue eyes of Miss Juliet
fixed upon him with evident interest and
admiration. The young lady dropped her
gaze instantly, while a deep blush suffused
her bright, ingenuous face. An involun-
tary thrill of pleasure agitated the heart of
Ashley, and his cold eye kindled with a
new fire; but as that returned—the thro' of
all the fickleness and coquetry, and
heartlessness of woman, his brow clouded,
he bit his lip, and with a few hasty words,
turned abruptly, and drawing his sister's
arms within his own, walked to the side of
of the vessel, and there stood, silently and
moodily, gazing down into the darkening
waters and off into the deepening twilight.

Owing to some detention, the boat was
later than usual, so that it was quite dark
when they landed at Chippewa. On leav-
ing the boat, Mr. Ashley and his sister
found themselves directly behind the party
with whom they had been conversing.
Mr. Harley looked round and seeing them,
began making some inquiries respecting
the hotel of which they had made choice,
when Master Fred, who, in his boyish in-
dependence, was walking along, suddenly
stumbled and fell—fell from the board
plank over which they were passing, into
the river below. There were screams and
rushings to and fro, but no rescue was at-
tempted, until Ashley, breaking from the
clinging hold of his sister, leaped boldly
into the deep, dark water. For a few mo-
ments, which seemed an age to the specta-
tors, he searched in vain along the narrow
space between the vessel and the wharf,
but finally he espied the lad's head appear-
ing from under the boat, caught, and drew
forth the already in-sensible child, and
greatly exhausted himself, swam back to
the plank with his precious burden. They
were drawn on board together with joyful
shouts and earnest thanksgiving.

As Ashley stood in the gangway, stag-
gering and half blind, the crowd cheering
and pressing around him, his sister flung
her arms about his neck, and hung upon
him, laughing and weeping hysterically.
But the poor creature was faint and chilled,
and strove to release himself from his
passionate embrace. But just as he stood
free, he felt his hand clasped, but gently,
tenderly, and looking around, saw Miss
Harley at his side. She hastily raised
that cold, wet hand to her warm, quiver-
ing lips, and kissed it gratefully, while her
tears, her irrefragable tears, fell upon it,
as she murmured—"God bless you! God
in heaven bless you!" and then hurried
away to attend upon her brother, who had
been carried back into the cabin. The
little lad soon recovered sufficiently to be
able to join the party, who together took
their way to the Clifton House.

That night, after supper, which he had
served in a private parlor, Mr. Harley
sought the room of Ashley—his heart
overflowing with gratitude toward the
young hero, and his thoughts busy with
plans of generous recompense. At the
door he met a servant bearing away a wet
travelling-suit, which sight quickened even
more his warm and kindly feelings. He
entered, to find Mr. Ashley wrapt in a
dressing-gown, sitting by a table, his
head bent down on his hands, a plate of
light food, almost unaltered, and a cup of
tea, half drunk, pushed back before him.
He was looking even paler and more
spiritless than usual. In fact, our
friend was completely exhausted by the
excitement and exertion of the evening,
and consequently deepened into moodiness
and reserve. He rose, however, as his
visitor entered, and bowing politely, beg-
ged him to be seated. But Mr. Harley
came forward, took his hand, and pressing
it warmly, looked kindly into that pale,
quiet face, his own countenance all a-glow,
and tears actually glistening in his deep-
set, gray eyes. Ashley cast down his own
eyes in painful embarrassment, which Mr.
Harley perceiving, took the proffered
chair, and strove to converse awhile on in-
different topics. But he soon came round
to the subject nearest his heart—dwelt
long and at large on his paternal joy and
gratitude, not seeming to heed the impa-
tience of his sensitive auditor, and finally
closed with,

"I trust their is some way in which I
can prove my gratitude—in part reward
you for your generous heroism. Tell me,
my dear young friend, can I repay you in
any way?"
To Ashley's jealous ear there was a
tone of patronage—an insulting jingle of
the banker's purse in those words, at
which he involuntarily drew himself up,
and curled his short upper lip; and when

Mr. Harley earnestly repeated his question,
thus:
"Is there no way in which I can serve
you? he replied with a sort of nonchalant
hauteur.
"Yes; by never mentioning this little
circumstance again. I but did for your
son what I would do for any fellow crea-
ture. It was a mere act of humanity, I
assure you."
Mr. Harley, quite taken aback, chilled,
and with a stately bow and a cold "good-night,"
parted from the reaver of his child, the
young hero, with whom five minutes be-
fore he would have divided his fortune.
Tired and indifferent, Ashley flung him-
self upon his bed, and slept soundly till
late in the morning; then rose with a
headache, made a light breakfast, and hur-
ried down to Table-Rock with his sister,
who had been up since daybreak, impa-
tiently awaiting his appearance.
Ashley was long lost in that first con-
templation of the grand scene before him;
his soul seemed born to a new life—a new
world of beauty, and power, and dread,
overwhelming sublimity.
The day was wondrously beautiful, and
floods of sunlight were mingled with the
waters, and pouring over that stupendous
precipice; into the darkest depths fell the
fearless, glad sunbeams, sounding like golden
plumets those terrible abysses. There
hung the rainbow, and Ellen, as she gazed,
remarked a wild-bird, who seemed sporting
in the spray, pass through the illuminated
arch, and become glorified in its midst;
and it seemed to her like an innocent, con-
fiding spirit, coming near to the might and
grandeur of Deity, through the beautiful
gateway of love.

Ashley was at length roused from his
trance of high-wrought rapture, by feeling
a small, timid hand laid on his arm, and
turned to see Master Fred standing at his
side, with a faint glow on his cheek, and
an affectionate pleasure shining in his sun-
ken eye. The lad, to-day something of
an invalid, was accompanied and half-
supported by a servant. Ashley felt an
instinctive attraction towards his child,
who was a fine intelligent boy, by the way,
and strove to release himself from his
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