

THE BORDER HEROINE.

Some years ago, before the state of Arkansas was so densely populated as now, and when the mail from Little Rock to the eastern borders was carried on horseback, there lived a few miles above Horsehead, a stout pioneer named Jacob Burnap. His wife Polly, and one child nine years old, made up his family. His chief business was hunting, and his unerring rifle never failed to supply his board and something over. His nearest neighbor was fifteen miles off, so he was troubled little with prying visitors.

It was in early spring that Jacob started down the river with a boat load of furs and skins. He left Polly in charge of the premises, and he left with her, too, a light rifle and a brace of pistols. She knew how to use the rifle, for never was she happier than when her husband patted her upon the shoulder and said: "Nobly done, Polly, my dear, I could not have made a better shot myself." And he had occasion to say this with truth, too.

Jacob Burnap had been gone four days, when towards evening a horseman rode to the hunter's door. He was a small muscular man, some forty years of age, and seemed inured to all hardships. As he sprang from the saddle, Polly made her appearance.

"Ah, Polly, once more here," the new comer said, as he drew a well-filled pair of saddle-bags from the back of his beast.

"Yes, and I am glad to see you, Morton. Jacob has been gone four days, and time is getting heavy."

"Jacob gone? Where?"

"Down the river with a load of furs."

"Oh—yes. Well, you shall have the company of Lant Morton for one night at least; so for the next twelve hours you'll be safe."

"Oh—I feel safe enough," returned the woman quickly; "only lonesome."

"Well, then, for this evening you shan't be lonesome."

Thus speaking, Morton threw his saddle and saddlebags into the cabin, and then led his horse around to a low shed, where he made the animal fast and fed him. After this, he returned to the dwelling and entered, and was soon discussing the events of the time over an ample supper. His hostess had told him all that had transpired in the neighborhood since his last visit, and the visitor gave her the news of the eastern valley.

Lant Morton had been mail carrier upon that route for several years and not once had he passed to and fro without spending a night at Jacob Burnap's. In fact, he was about the only regular visitor at the hunter's cabin, and although the intervals between his visits were long, yet he seemed almost a fixture to the place. Polly Burnap—still in the bloom of womanhood—knew his gentle, generous, noble character, so she felt perfectly free and at home in his presence.

"Is it known on the route, that your load is so valuable?" asked Polly.

"I think not—though it may be. Still I am well armed, and I fancy it would be a tough job for any one to tackle old Lant."

"A man was robbed on the creek a few days ago."

"And the robbers have fled," added Morton, carelessly, as he drew his mail bags after him.

Morton went to bed at nine o'clock, as he was tired and sleepy from his hard ride. Polly had work to do, having neglected it while talking to her guest, so when she had seen him safe at rest in the bed, she drew her basket to the little table where the candle was, and went to work upon some clothing for her child, who was soundly sleeping in the corner.

The old German clock upon the wall, with its great weights and winding strings all exposed, had struck ten ere Polly arose from her work. She had just pushed the basket beneath the table, and taken up the candle, when the front door opened, and two men entered. They were in their stockings, their shoes having been left outside.

"Hush!" uttered the foremost intruder.

"Speak but one word above a whisper, and you die in a moment."

Polly recovered from her quick terror and looked up. She saw two stout, wicked, ugly-looking men, one of whom held a cocked pistol towards her. With a quickness of perception natural to her, she knew that the pistol would not be fired if she held her peace, as that would make more noise than she could make, and further—she recognized in the foremost a notorious villain who bore the name of Dick Gallus.

She had never seen him before, but the minute description her husband had given of the man, led her to know him—and positively, too, for one big scar on the left cheek was mark enough.

"What do you seek, gentlemen?" asked Polly, without betraying the least fear.

"We have come to seek the mail carrier," one replied, in a hoarse whisper, "where is he? Don't speak too loud."

"He is long since asleep. Would it not do as well to see him in the morning? We can find you a room and lodging."

The fair hostess had said this for the purpose of gaining time. She knew very well that these men had come to rob the carrier, and was equally sure that they would murder him if they could, and would in all probability put her out of the way as well. They had evidently learned the valuable load he carried, and meant to carry it in his stead.

"Never mind his being asleep. Show us where he is at once," roughly replied Gallus in answer to Polly's last remark.

"But I can call him, good sirs," reasoned the woman calmly, though there was alarm in her soul.

"Call him? Call!" growled the villain, with a fierce oath. "You call him, and you'll be called to another world. Quick—show us the way."

The mild eye that could aim an unerring bullet at the forest beast, did not even betray the thoughts of that woman's soul, nor did a look tell her meaning. She was pale, but she did not tremble.

"This way, sirs," she whispered.

And as she spoke she turned towards a door of the little bed-room and the pantry. She did not open it until both men were close behind her.

"Don't you hear him breathe?" she whispered.

"Yes," returned both villains. And they did hear a breathing, but it was of the child close at hand.

As they thus answered her, she threw the door open—it opened inward. The men saw a dark void, but they pressed forward. In an instant Polly Burnap leaped back. Gallus was upon the threshold and his companion close upon his heels. With all her power, the noble woman threw herself against the rear man, and the next moment both the robbers lay sprawling on the cellar bottom.

This had been the door opening to the deep excavation, and the only means of egress was by a perpendicular ladder. Could this have moved, Polly would have pulled it immediately up, but it was spiked to its place, and she must let it remain. To close the door would be useless, for she had no ready means to fasten it. So she did what she had resolved upon from the first; she sprang to the fireplace and caught the trusty rifle from its place, and having cocked it, she moved towards the open door. She heard the curses of the villains as they reached for the ladder, and she soon knew that one of them had found it.

"Back!" she cried, as she saw a head above the threshold. The candle upon the table threw but a dim light upon the spot, but it was sufficient.

She saw the robber raise a pistol. She could not die. She had a husband—a child—and had set herself to save the carrier. With these thoughts dashing through her mind, she pulled the trigger. A sharp report went ringing through the house, and its echo was a deep groan from the cellar bottom.

Ere the second robber could show himself, Morton came rushing into the room with a revolver in each hand.

"What is it?" he cried.

"There! There!" gasped Polly, pointing to the doorway, where a savage-looking face had just presented itself.

Lant Morton had been long enough used to danger not to waste time in conjecture, and immediately shot the villain dead, who fell with a heavy sound upon the cellar bottom.

"Are there any more?" he asked, cocking his pistol.

"* * * * *

"And so you meant to save me?" remarked the carrier, as Polly hesitated.

"Yes, yes—I did. Yes, that was it."

And as soon as the noble woman was sufficiently recovered, she told him the whole story.

Morton expressed his thanks as best he could; but, after all, the moisture of his light grey eye, the changing of his countenance, and the very lack of language, told more than words could have done.

After due deliberation, it was decided that the bodies should remain where they were until morning. So the cellar door was shut, the front door bolted, and then they prepared once more to retire; but for the rest of the night Morton made his bed on the floor of a large room.

In the morning, just as the carrier was dressed, there was a loud rap upon the door, accompanied by a voice which he knew full well. He hastened to open the door, and gave entrance to

Jacob Burnap. The hunter had met a party of traders at Lewisburg, and disposed of all his skins to them, thus finishing his journey six days earlier than he had anticipated.

Polly was soon upon her husband's bosom, and when he had told his own story, Morton gave him an account of last night's adventure. Jacob was at first incredulous, but when he had been down and seen the bodies, he was satisfied.

"Polly, my jewel," he said, placing his arm around her neck, "I am proud of you. I love you more and more, for every day I find more to love." And then turning to Morton, he added: "What do you think of such a wife?"

"Ah," returned the guest, with deep feeling, "if poor Lant Morton had such a wife he wouldn't be a mail carrier."

When Morton left he was directed to stop at the first settlement and state to the officers what had happened, and he promised to do so. He once more blessed the brave woman who had saved his life, and then set out. Late in the afternoon two officers arrived at the cabin, and when they were shown the dead bodies, at once proceeded to remove them. And, ere the week had passed, whole settlements blessed the Border Heroine for the work she had done.

FOR THE VOICE OF THE FAIR.

LITTLE ARY CONTRIBUSHUNS FROM

A. WARD, JR.

ABOUT ILE, POETRY, THE REBELYUN, AND JEFF DAVIS.

WASHINGTON, May 27, '65.

I hev bin in noomeris slippery vocashuns in daze gone an' past, but ov em all the ile trade was the slippeyster.

When I by ile stox fer one doller per shear, an sell at 30 dolls., then I consider it a helthy biz. Then, I air pround tu say, it vastly agrees with the undersined. But when I invest me filthy loocre at 20 eight dollers per stock, and it imejity falls up tu 2 dolls., then I opine the intellegent commoonity will agree with me that it ar a unwholesum specoolation. Rather. But takin it from Alphy to Omeger, I haven't lost Bulky. When I imbartk in the bizness, I was monark ov 21 dollers an 13 sents. Now I hev safely emerg'd from the same, "a greasier an a wiser man," az the Bibel sez, with just the same amount in me pocket—vizly: 13 dollers & 21 sents. It may not 'pear az much, but you will observe the figgers air the same; an' Sir Walter Burns sez: "Figgers won't lie."

But p'raps I hadn't no Perseverents. Perseverents, you know, air the price of Ile an' Liberty. But me frend Moses Stuckins hed Perseverents. He hed it almostly ef not quitey as worse as the measells.

One day Moses was overtaken by the Ile fever, an he at onst dissold hisself into a Company. Moses bored fer 40 daze and 40 nites, without eggspierenin a strike—nary strike. At larst the ends ov his orgurs wus melted orf, an' a strong hffoovia ov brimstun assended from the apptoor.

Moses wept!

Takin I long lingerin look in the well, he faintly dissernd, in a loorid Flame away down, down below, a sportin Cove, sittin at a table maid ov hooman bones, ritin a proclamashun. He wus dresst in hoop skirts, and sported butes and spurs.

It wus Jeff Davis's Daddy!

That's wot aild him.

Moses bein a Suthren sympathizer, abandond the enterprize. He sed he didn't want 2 irritate his Suthrin Brother, fer all he warnted waz to be left alone.

This air offishil.

I composd a short poim ov 80 stanzas on Moses's fature. These air the 1st stanzy:

"For the greasy ore
He comenest to Bore,
But his labor waz in wain;
His cash run out,
An he turnd about,
And jumpt on the cars, an travel'd 40 miles by rale,
An never cum back that way eny more agane."

There! I bet the Poit Loritte coodn't rite anything like that, an woodn't ef he cood. But the hypercricetical reader mite objec 2 the last line on account ov its bein tu full ov meters.

It air now creditid by the most credulousites that the larst backbone ov the Rebelyun air now brokin, and that its neck will be stretch next. There's a differents ov opinyun as tu how our Gov'ment shell dispose ov the Reb leaders. Sum advocate the nooz, and sum don't. Sum pussons cried "Blud! Blud!" "Hemp! Hemp!" ever sence the war waz inorgorated by a ole Cannon at Washington.

(I allood to Jimmy Buck-cannon.)

Now the Rebellion has bin squasht, and the shively bro't down a Peg or 2—in fact completely

subjoogated—these same criers for confiscashun, egsterminashun, emancipashun, thunderton, anso4thation, has becum very rooster-harted all to onst. "Let us forgive & forget," sez they. What ef the Confedrits did feed our prisoners on nuthin till they got fat enuff not to make a shadder? wot ef they did bild pincushions out ov Yankee harts, and bean poles out ov thare spinil columns—Let us forget and forgive! sez they. I don't propose eny severe meshures meself. Not much. I ar not in favor ov fatal hangin. But I think the Suthrin leaders,—an praps some ov the *shasters*—shood be hang'd for a little while—say about 20 minits each! This wood warn 'em not to seecesh eny more in the future. I Bet you.

I hev had a intervoo with J. Davis—Sander's "Christehin President." They had intervooos with him when he didn't appear so muchly in the Dumps as at the present junctoor. He has altogeter discar'ded the female attire. Altho the "christehin President" was *follor'd* a short time in the fashion he adopted, I don't think it will becum poplar to any alarmin' extent.

Jeff was a ambishus cuss, but he didn't take Shakspeir's advice. William sez, "Be sure your rite, then pitch in." J. D. pitched in when he was sure he wasn't rite.

I arskt him why he changed his harness, an he sed he intended to fite it out in that crinoline if it took all summer. "I hev read," sez he, "ov ladies fallin in2 the Briny Deep, an bein' saved by their crinoline keepin 'em in the surface till sucker arrove. I knowd I was nearin the larst Ditch, an when I fell in I expected those skirts would act as a life perserver until I was rescod."

This haz bin corroborrated.

The rest ov our conversation air contraband.

This croel war is over, and the boys air marchin home agin, as the Bard so gushinly warbles.

As a Company ov battle-skarr'd veterans was enterin a town where I was sojournin for a short period, a incident happened to the writer hereof. The streets were crinolined with wimen ov the femal Secks. A fashunabel woman, ar the noblest work ov—a milliner and a millionaire. Sweethearts were embracin lovers, and wives dittoing husbands. I envied the Herose. But I waz not doomed to be slited. As I was innocent walkin along, a bloomin' lass ov sweet 7teen, in Bloo tulle, clasped me in her arms & cried—"My dear Charles Augustus! I'm so glad tu see you safe home from the wars! Come to these Buzzim!"

As Nature had given the maid a fine face and figger, and Art had given her a superb waterfall an round hat, I didn't hesitate, but comed! When she discoverd her error, she 'peard skit-fish like, and sez—"Excuse me, I'm sorry you are not Charles Augustus."

I was sorry I was not C. A. tu, an replied with that affableness for which I air particularly noted—

"No damage to pay, dear miss. Ef Charles Augustus don't return, I'll be your Charles Augustus from the rising ov the sun to the goin down thereof." An with a final adoo I hurried on.

The shades of Nite were fallin fastly—the Son had sot, an I was hurrying to the house where I pay 10 dollers per week for five dollers worth ov Bord. Soonely my hungry career was arrested. I was incirkled in a pare of fat arms, the owner whereof remarks:

"Why, dear Issacher, you've cum at larst, haben't ye?"

"I hav," sez I, "but if you will release me, I will go as quick as I cum."

She unwound me. I look'd up to see if she had a deep Bloo I.

She was as black as the ace ov clubs.

She was mistaken 2.

I wouldn't care about bein her dear Issacher. Hardly.

This news will be confirmed in a day or tu.

Much Sanitarily yeurs.

A. WARD, JR.

— A new sensational *cafe chantant* singer has appeared in Paris—no less a person than a Countess. Her famous song is, "I have thrashed my husband."

— "I have known many trials," as the man said who had been convicted sixteen times for petty larceny.

— "Why cannot two slender persons ever become great friends?—Because they will always be slight acquaintances.

— Generosity does not consist in giving, but in making some sacrifice to enable one to give.