

that stumps and rocks had been partially removed from it, so as to admit of something like regular progress on horseback. The barren afforded an excellent illustration of the superiority of man on foot, over mounted force, in many scenes of warfare. A band of men could easily move over the mazy surface, baffling and separating, and destroying the squadron of war horses and their encumbered riders. But what had the epithets of European slaughter to do with that solitary scene? The Indian and the settler perhaps met there in deadly conflict, but it was far removed from the chivalry of Frank or Hun, and thoughts of their array came inappropriately to the gazer. The dignity and interest of the wild arose from the bold yet harmonious disposition of land, and water, and verdure, and cloudy canopy, according to nature's working,—and not from the history of man's cruel, and often contemptible, struggles.

Rolla, who had been somewhat in the rear, beating about among the fern and heath, now came bounding along the path where the horses moved at a steady pace, and 'passing his master' wheeled round, and stared backward with an expression of solicitude and alarm. Reynall looked hastily over his shoulder, and checking his steed, ejaculated, "They come at last." Lucy changed to almost deadly paleness, while Eben and Julia rode hastily up.

"Lucy, love, ride forward with your attendant, and let me break the first rash of this interview. You need not go much in advance, as your presence may be necessary,—or, it may be, that our flight must be urged,—a few minutes will tell."

Lucy obeyed mechanically, with feelings which forebode speech.

"Well Eben," said Reynall, as the females left their protectors, "we will have this out now. Do not let them pass you, that's all,—do you take the old man under your care,—while I will look after my particular friend; I expect the second is Osburn."

From the time the dog directed attention to the rear, a couple of figures on horseback, could be seen, urging violently, along the narrow path of the barren,—and the tramp of the pursuers on the more rocky parts of the roads, could now be heard distinctly.

Eben, involuntarily, placed his hand to his breast, and felt that his hunting knife was in its proper position, while he swung round the rifle which was suspended across his back, and throwing the barrel over his left arm, held the stock with his right hand.

"Replace the rifle," said Reynall, "and never mind your knife. We must not have any fighting except in self defence,—and I don't think they will drive us to that. Mind now, and do as I do."

By the time the pursuers were thundering down on the party which waited to receive them, and they were described to be Clarkson, and Osburn,—Lucy's former lover and Reynall's rival.

Reynall placed his horse obliquely, at a narrow and rocky bend in the path, and Eben doing the same, they blocked up the passage. Lucy and her attendant lingered about a pistol shot ahead.

"Clear the road, ruffians," said Clarkson, as he bore down with all the impetus which the jaded horse and rugged path would admit of.

"Pull up," said Reynall, as his face and whole form became unusually excited, "or your foundered nags and yourselves will make rough acquaintance with these rocks. I won't leave the road without knowing why, for any man. Ruffians indeed! why do you come tilting down on us in this manner, with your rifles in hand, like a couple of Ishmaelites?"

"Come old man" said Eben, as the horses of the pursuers were almost brought to a stand still by the circumstances, and as the whole moved slowly forward, the pursued still blocking the way, and the others vainly endeavouring to urge past—"Come old man, if you attempt any tricks with your barker, I'll beat the brains out of grey Elk-foot there, and that would not be convenient so far from the Prairie."

With these words the guide attracted the attention of Clarkson, while Reynall exchanged glances of hate and defiance with his advancing rival.

At this crisis, when a personal struggle seemed inevitable, all were stayed by the rapid advance of the females. Lucy rode up, exclaiming with fervor,—“For heaven's sake forbear. Let me not be the cause of more evil. Father, in my mother's name I conjure you, be patient,—Reynall, for my sake, this once, do no violence.”

"I have overtaken you, disgrace to my grey hairs," exclaimed Clarkson, "how dare you, degraded as you are, mention your mother's name? Join me at once, and return to your now blasted home."

"A pleasant invitation," said Reynall, "a word from the first." "Give way, insulting scoundrel!" roared Osburn, as he pressed on anew.

"Back at your peril!" said Reynall, "another time may be to account for these epithets,—this is no place to play the Brave, a few cool words may settle the business more rapidly. Your violence I laugh to scorn, we are two to two, and could flog you in as many minutes, I have no doubt, but surely not in this company, except needs be."

Osburn still pressed on, when Lucy's soft voice was heard above the melee,—

"Again I beg peace, for Heaven's sake,—what right have you James Osburn to thus interfere,—I have chosen this man as my plighted husband, why do you seek evil to him and me? Back, sir, to your farm, and leave us to our path, you can only interfere with us as a ruffian would; I will not return to the Prairie with life."

"Heard you that?" said Reynall,—“did I not say well, that cool words could settle this as well as warin blows,—at present, at least?”

"Yes," muttered the dreadfully excited Osburn, "I heard it,—as for you Lucy Clarkson I resign all right to any influence over your actions, if ever I had any,—your character has been pronounced by your own lips, and earth has no evil I would shun more than that of a false female heart; go, go,—no longer what I once respected, go with the stranger, and think when sorrow comes, as it assuredly will, of this hour. Go, any point of the heavens would furnish me with a partner more acceptable than you now."

Lucy coloured highly, and exclaimed with much emotion, "Presuming fool,—what gave you this right of insult?"

Clarkson seemed confounded, at this turn of affairs; his blood also mounted highly, and again ebbed to his heart, showing the strong emotions which stirred his soul. "This is too much Osburn," said he,—“She is my daughter yet, and your taunts and insults I did not expect, and will not allow. You cast off sir, and give license to go!—and dare to cloud the girl's character,—this is liberty, and malice, which a father must not bear patiently. My daughter has been untainted by a breath of slander, until this hour, and her choice of the hand of one, in preference to that of another, shall not subject her to it now."

Osburn was silent, his feelings passed like a stream of lava over his faculties,—the revulsion of baffled, utterly baffled, love,—and a sense of having acted inadvisably,—choked his utterance, if any fitting words could be found for the occasion.

"Come on, Sir, with us," said Reynall, "and all will end happily."

Clarkson felt, in a moment, that the step proposed, was the only wise one under circumstances, and he appeared to immediately acquiesce. The horses were already put in motion, and the unhappy Osburn, turned to retrace his steps, when Clarkson called after him, and rode rapidly up.

"Osburn," said he, vehemently, "forgive my warmth, I sympathise with you, I lament that we should part other than friends; but your unguarded expressions goaded me to extremity. Forgive me,—give your hand,—you will get refuge by diverging for a few miles, on the first bridge path to the right."

The late warm friends now shook hands as if they were never to meet more on former terms, and yet were unwilling that they should part as enemies.

"I forgive freely," said Osburn, "I acted improperly, and I feel, if I were in your situation I might have done as you have. It matters not, however, great changes have occurred in a short time,—my feelings have all taken another course,—I am no longer what I was an hour since. Farewell, farewell."

The solitary man turned once more to his road, seeking the Prairie with altered feelings indeed,—and the group of travellers, moving in an opposite direction, hastened forward. The setting sun gave warning of approaching shades, and the cheerful roofs of men's dwellings, promising the comforts of society, marked the distant horizon. It was lighted with a streak of lingering beauty, bright and alluring, like the anticipated path of the lovers, who found circumstances thus ameliorate and smooth before them,—and whose hearts rose buoyant to the scenes of existence.

To be continued.

SECESSIONS.—Our congregation, said I, at Slickville, contained most powerful and united body it was. Well, there came a split once on the election of an elder, and a body of the upper crust folks separated and went off in a huff. Like most folks that separate in temper, they laid it all to conscience: found out all at once they had been adrift afore all their lives and joined another church as different from our's in creed as chalk is from cheese; and to show their humility, hooked on to the poorest congregation in the place. Well, the minister was quite lifted up in the stirrups when he saw these folks jine him; and to show his zeal for them the next Sunday, he looked up at the gallery to the niggers, and, said he, I beg you won't spit down any more on the nible seats, for there be gentlemen here now. Gist turn your heads, my sable friends, and lei go over your shoulders. Manners, my brothers, manners before backery. Well, the niggers seceded; they said it was an infringement on their rights, on their privilege of spittin', as freemen, where they liked, how they liked, and when they liked, and they quit in a body.—Sam Slick.

Leigh Hunt was asked by a lady, at dessert, if he would not venture on an orange? "Madam, I should be happy to do so, but I am afraid I should tumble off."

Sir John Cullier, the miser, used to return thanks that he had been born on the twenty-ninth of February, because then he only kept his birthday every fourth year.

A WINTER PICTURE

FROM THE LIFE

By Cornelius Webbe.

In awful state, that tyrant, Winter,
Sat, sternest Sovereign of the World,
Mid ruins wild of ice-bull islands,
By driving winds and waters hurled.
Where'er he rode, th' imprisoned rivers
Broke up and splintered, with a sound
As when the stony rocks are shivered
With the thunderbolt's rebound!

Strong gusts the doors and windows battered,
As they would burst our homesteads in;
And old dwellers, shrinking, trembled
At the powerful tempest's din.
The streets were silent as at midnight,
Save when the wind, with sea-like roar,
Dashed past the rocking walls, and vanished;
Then Silence kept them as before.

Black clouds, with watery burdens laden,
Drove—darkening noonday as they went;
And then the daylight shone a moment
From out the cold, grey firmament.
Never did Winter look more sternly,
Speak more sternly, through his storms!
"Ah, Man," cried I, "in this drear season
Should have a heart that shines and warms!"

I sat me by my fire, bright burning,
And thought, with pity, of the Poor,
Down covering from the cold in corners,
Perishing at the rich man's door.
I heard men beg, and men deny them,
With hearts by selfish prudence churl'd:
"Oh God! there's too much of th' Inhuman
Still working in this human world!"

Like waves of air, the gusts rolled onward,
And fell like sea-waves on the shore;
And then a hushed and solemn silence
The streets and houses slumbered o'er.
No shouts were heard of children playing;
The wandering dogs lay shivering down;
And Winter, like that vengeful Angel,
That strikes unseen, swept through the Town!

I thought upon the wastes of Ocean;
The cry of brave men in despair
Came in the blast, so sadly moaning,
And shuddering crept the chilling air.
"Oh God!" I cried, "let not the quicksands
And rocks that lie round England's door
Wreck them at their loved Country's threshold
But lift them safely on the shore!"

A huge cry, the sole sound human,
A feeble, faltering, fainting cry—
Filled the wild pauses in the mad wind's raving,
How shrilly, sadly, fearfully!
A pauper Man, old, paralytic,
Dragged his dead limb o'er the stones!
"Oh hear him, Heaven! Man will not hear him,—
And answer to his piteous groans!"

"Lift up thy rod, thou God of mercy,
And do thy Patriarch Prophet's part!
Strike out the waters of sweet pity
From that dry Horeb, Man's hard heart!
The poor in this rich land are crying;
No clouds rain manna now, nor quails;
And who should feed them mete their mercies,
Weigh their deep miseries in scales!"

"When wild sea-mews, or wilder ravens,
Long starving on the stony ground,
Or hungering by the ice-bound rivers,
Call up their flock if they have found
Some foul-rotting, carrion morsel,
To their ravening maws a meal,
Shall human natures be inhuman,
Nor for poor human natures feel?"

"Is this a time to meanly measure
Man's mercy to the wretch that calls,
In human tones for human pity,
From naked collars—windy walls,
Where brave men, in misery moping,
Sternly starve and proudly pine,
While the sumptuous Dives wallow,
Sensual as the selfish swine?"

"Melt down, oh God! the frozen currents
That should warm the rich man's heart!
Break up the Winter in his bosom,
Till pity flows through every part!—
Oh disabuse this generous People
Of the stern charities of men
Who make an average of misery,
Light weigh its wants, and sleep agen!"

"Oh Charity, thou Northern Virtue!
Oh love and pity of the Poor!
Benevolence, thou grateful giver,
With ever-open hand and door!
Ye Household Virtues, born of Heaven
And him who taught the Christian plan,
Awake, ye charities of Christians,
And love and cherish all that's Man!"