

## PRAIRIE LIFE.

## A THRILLING TALE OF REVENGE.

Although much has been written on prairie life, many a wild adventure, and yet many a wilder scene has been undescribed. Poor Ruxton, who died in St. Louis, left us a highly entertaining and valuable work, "Scenes in the Far West," which is enriched with many a story and scene that no doubt to the people of the East, seem like tales from the Arabian nights. There is so much originality about the manners and habits of the trapper and frontiersman, that one is struck with their peculiar language or mode of expressing themselves, as well as their singular costume. They are, in fact, as distinct and marked a class as sailors, and have as many odd and quaint sayings. It is generally the commission of crime, some disappointment in life, or a native love of adventure and peril, that makes these men desert the comforts of civilized society for the wilds and haunts of the red man. We can imagine the terrible reaction which takes place when the storm of passion, or the wreck of disappointed hopes, sweep over the sensitive soul, and leave a desolation, a ruin of the former man. It is misfortunes like these which scorch and dry up the finest feelings; some mortal wrong or injustice committed by others toward them, in revenging which they have been compelled to leave their homes and become exiles in the Far West. A story is told of an extraordinary meeting an act of revenge, said to have taken place many long years ago, on the fork of the Pawnee. A party of four, who had been roving in the West, all strangers to each other, were one day accidentally thrown together, when a strange and bloody scene ensued. These men presented a striking contrast in feature. The youngest was delicately made, with long, light hair, and blue eyes; his exposure had given him a rich brown complexion. He was of the medium stature, and made for strength and agility. There was a dark void on his features which told that with him the light of hope had gone out. He was travelling on a mule, with his rifle in his gun leather at the bow of his saddle, when he overtook a man on foot, with a gun on his shoulder and pistol in his belt, who was over six feet, and had a deep, wide scar on his right cheek. As the day was drawing to a close, they proposed to camp, and brought up at the head of the fork of the Pawnee. Shortly after they had camped, a man was seen reconnoitering them, with a rifle in his hand, and having satisfied himself that the sign was friendly, he came moodily into the camp, was asked by Scar Cheek to "come to the ground." He was a stout muscular man, much older than the other two, with a dead, habitual scowl, long black, matted hair, and very unprepossessing features. Some common place remarks were made, but no questions were asked by the other party. It was near twilight when the young man, who had gathered some Buffalo chips to make a fire to cook with, suddenly perceived a man approaching on a mule; he came steadily and fearlessly on to the camp, and casting a look on the three said, "Look ye for Indians?" then glanced at the deer-skin dress of the trio, he observing "Old leathers—some time out, ha?" This man was about fifty years old, and his grey hairs contrasted strangely with his dark bronzed features upon which care and misfortune were strongly stamped. He was only half-clad by the miserable skins he wore; and as he dismounted, Scar Cheek asked "where from?" "From the Kaw," (Kansas), he replied, throwing down a bundle of oter skins. After unsaddling and staking out his mule, he brought himself to the ground, and taking his rifle looked at the priming, and shaking the powder in the pan, he added a few more grains to it; and then placing a thin dry skin over it to keep it from the damp he shot the pan. The group watched the old trapper, who seemed not to notice them, while Scar Cheek became interested and showed a certain uneasiness. He looked towards his own rifle, and once or twice loosened the pistols in his belt as if they incommoded him. The young man, and the stout man with the scowl, exchanged glances, but no word passed. So far no question had been asked as to whom the other was; what little conversation passed was very laconic, but not a smile wreathed the lips of any of them. The little supper was eaten in silence, each man seemed to be wrapped up in his own thoughts. It was agreed that the watch should be divided equally among the four each man standing on guard to hours—the old trapper taking the first watch, the young man next, and Scar Cheek, and he with the scowl following. It was a bright moonlight night, and over that wild waste of prairie not a sound was heard, as the three lay sleeping on their blankets. The old trapper paced up and down before them, and then would stop and mutter to himself. "It cannot be," he said half aloud, "but time and that scar may have disguised him." That boy, too,—it is strange I feel drawn towards him; then that villain with his scowl," and the muscles of the old trapper's face worked convulsively, which, moonbeams falling upon, disclosed traces of bygone refinement.

The trapper noiselessly approached the sleeping men, kneeling down, gazed intently upon the features of each, and scanned them deeply. Walking off, he muttered to himself again saying, "it shall be," and then judging by the stars that his watch was up, he approached the young man and awoke him, pressing his finger upon his lip to command silence at the time, and motioned him to follow. They walked off some distance, when the trapper, taking the young man by the shoulder, turned his face to the moonlight, and after gazing at it wistfully, whispered in his ear, "Are you Perry Ward?" The young man started wildly, but the trapper prevented his replying by saying "enough enough." He then told him that he was his uncle, and that the man with the scowl had convicted him (the trapper) of forgery by his false oath. The blood deserted the lips of the young man, and his eyes glared and dilated almost from their sockets, he squeezed his uncle's hand, and then, with a meaning glance as he looked at his rifle, moved towards the camp. "No, no," said the old trapper, "not in cold blood; give them a chance." They cautiously returned to the camp, and found both the men in a deep sleep. The uncle and nephew stood over them. Scar Cheek was now breathing hard, when he suddenly cried out, "I did not murder Perry Ward!" "Liar!" said the trapper in a voice of thunder, and the two men started and bounded to their feet. "Red skins about?" asked they in a voice. "No, worse than red skins," said the trapper, "Perry Ward is about," and seizing his knife he plunged it into Scar Cheek's heart. "Then take that," said he with the scowl, and raising his rifle, the trapper fell a corpse. With a bound and wild cry the young man jumped at the murderer of his uncle, and with his knife gave him several

fatal wounds. The struggle was a fearful one, however, and the young man also received several bad cuts, when his adversary fell from the loss of blood, and soon after expired. Thus ended this strange meeting, and thus were father and uncle revenged.

## Humorous.

A little nonsense now and then,  
Is relished by the wisest men.

## BACHELOR'S HALL.

Bachelor's Hall! what a queer looking place it is,  
Keep me from such all the days of my life;  
Sure, but I think what a burnin' disgrace it is,  
Never at all to be getting a wife.

See the old Bachelor, gloomy and sad enough,  
Placing his taykettle over the fire,  
Soon it tips over—St. Patrick—he's mad enough,  
If he were present to-night with thequire.

Now like a hog in a mortar-bed wallowing,  
Awk'rd enough, see him kneading his dough;  
Truth! the bread he could eat without wallowing,  
How it would favor his palate, you know.

His dish-cloth is missing—the pigs are devouring it.  
In the pursuit he has battered his shin—  
A plate wanted washing, gumalkin is scouring it;  
Thunder and turf, what a pickle he's in!

Pots, dishes, and pans, such greasy commodities,  
Ashes and pratta skins liver the floor;  
His cupboard's a store-house of comical oddities,  
Things that had never been neighbors before.

His meal being over, the table's left sitting so,  
Do-hes take care of yourselves if you can!  
But hunger returns, then he's fuming and fettering so!  
Och! let him alone for a beast of a man!

Late in the night he goes to bed shivering—  
Never a bit is the bed made at all;  
He creeps like a terrapin under the kiverin'—  
Bad luck to the picture of Bachelor's Hall!

An indignant tailor intends opening a shop opposite to the "Spiritual Rappers," with a tremendous notice over his door to the following effect: "Do not be deceived! This is the best shop for rap-rascals!"

In whatever shape evil comes, we are apt to exclaim with Hamlet, "Take any shape but that!"

When men try to get more good than comes from well doing, they always get less.

"Mother," said a little fellow, "I'm tired of this pug nose! It's growing puggier and puggier every day!"

It is said that the devil has many imps; we presume the following are among the number:—Imp-perfection, Imp-etuousity, Imp-lacability, Imp-udence, Imp-ertinence, Imp-riety.

Why is a man who spoils his children like another who builds castles in the air? Because he indulges in fancy too much.

"I am sitting on the 'style' Mary;" as the Irishman said, after taking a seat on a bonnet of "the la'st Paris fashion."

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, if bad fish were sold to the poor, the knavish fishmonger was decorated with a necklace of his own unsavory commodity, and was then perched on a stand in the market.

Transported for life. The man who marries happily. Which travels at the greater speed, heat or cold?—Heat; because you can easily catch cold.

## SINCERE ATTACHMENT.

"Hast thou ever yet loved, HENRIETTA?" I sighed  
"I should rather imagine I had," she replied;  
Oh, did not my glances betray  
When you helped me the third time to pudding to-day?"

## COCKNEY EPIGRAM FOR A COOK.—"Peace to his hashies."

General Lane said, one day at Indianapolis, in his speech after dinner, that he was "too full for utterance."

"You seem animated by this fine autumn scene my dear Annie," said a lover. "No," said she. "I never shall be Annie-mated till I become your wife."

At a camp meeting a number of ladies continued standing on the benches, notwithstanding frequent hints from the minister to sit down. A reverend old gentleman, noted for his good humor, arose and said:—"I think if those ladies standing on the benches knew they had holes in their stockings they would sit down!" This address had the desired effect; there was an immediate sinking into the seats. A young minister standing behind him, and blushing to the temples, said, "O, brother, how could you say that?" "Say that?" said the old gentleman, "it's a fact, if they had'n't holes in their stockings, I'd like to know how they could get them on."

A Wise Discerner.—The uncle of a Welsh minister having been sorely offended, declared that he would never forgive the offender. The minister asked him if he knew what the Bible said. "No," said he; "what does it say?" "Anger resteth in the bosom of fools." "Well, Thomas," said he, "go instantly and tell the man that I forgive him—all. I will not be a fool to please him or anybody else."

"I see," said a young lady, "that some stationers advertise blank declarations for sale, I wish I could get one."

"Why?" asked her mother.

"Because, ma, Mr. Green is too modest to ask me to marry him, and perhaps if I could fill up a blank declaration with the question, he would sign it."

A party of hunters a few days ago shot 700 rabbits in one day, upon an acre of ground at Sacramento. They had been hemmed in by the waters.

A "Carnous woman" in Rockville, says the Hartford Courant, counted the stitches she took in making a shirt. The number was fourteen thousand four hundred and thirty-five.



## Ladies' Department.

## THE FIRST GRAY HAIR.

The Matron at her mirror, with her hand upon her brow,  
Sits gazing on her lovely face—eye lovely even now  
Why doth she lean upon her hand with such a look of care?  
Why steals that tear across her cheek? She sees her first gray hair.

Time from her form hath ta'en away but little of its grace;  
His touch of thought hath dignified the beauty of her face,  
Yet she might mingle in the dance where maidens gaily trip;  
So bright is still her hazel eye, so beautiful her lip.

The faded form is often mark'd with sorrow more than years;  
The wrinkle on the cheek may be the course of actual tears;  
The mournful lip may murmur of a love it ne'er confess,  
And the dimness of the eye betray a heart that cannot rest.

But she hath been a happy wife;—the lover of her youth  
May proudly claim the smile that proves the trial of his truth;  
A sense of slight—of loneliness—hath never banish'd sleep;  
Her life hath been a cloudless one;—then, wherefore doth she weep?

She look'd upon her raven locks;—what thoughts did they recall?  
Oh! not of nights when they were deck'd for languor or for ball,  
They brought back thoughts of early youth, ere she had learnt to  
check.

With artificial wreath, the curls that spotted o'er her neck.

She seem'd to feel her mother's hand pass lightly through her hair,  
And draw it from her brow, to leave a kiss of kindness there;  
She seem'd to view her father's smile, and feel the playful touch,  
That sometimes feign'd to steal away the curls she prized so much.

And now she sees her first gray hair, oh! deem it not a crime  
For her to weep—when she beholds the first foot-mark of time;  
She knows that, one by one, these mute mementoes will increase,  
And steal youth, beauty, strength away, till life itself shall cease.

'Tis not the tear of vanity, for beauty on the wane—  
Yet though the blossom may sigh to bud, and bloom again,  
It cannot but remember with a feeling of regret,  
The Spring for ever gone—the Summer sun so nearly set.

Ah, lady! he'd the monitor! thy mirror tells the truth,  
Assume the matron's folded veil, resign the wreath of youth;  
Go!—bind it on thy daughter's brow, in her thou'lt still look fair;  
'Twere well that all would wisdom learn who behold their first gray hair!

## FANNY FERN ON WIDOWS.

I hate widows. They're the very —! I've heard the heathen called benighted; they're sense enough to burn widows when their husbands die—and that's a step farther in civilization than we have taken. There's nothing like 'em. If they make up their minds to marry a man it's done. I know one that was terribly afraid of thunder and lightning, and every time a storm came up she would run into Mr. Smith's house, (he was a widower,) clasp her little hands and fly round till the man was half-distracted for fear she would get killed; and the consequence was, she was Mrs. John Smith, before three thunder storms had rattled over her head. Wasn't that diplomatic? Then there's little blue-eyed Widow Wilkins. Didn't she drop her prayer-book coming out of church, for my handsome husband to pick up? And didn't I see him squeeze her hand when he handed it back to her? And when I told him a long rigmarole of a story to divert his mind from the main, didn't he answer "yes" and "no," at random, and laugh in the wrong place? And didn't he next morning put salt in his coffee, and sugar on his beefsteak! And won't she be Mrs. Samuel Jones No 2? Answer me that. I should like to cut her up into small pieces with a dull jack knife.

But it is no use to struggle against fate. I shall have to put my pride in my pocket, and tell Samuel it is my request that he should marry her when I am gone, and that will 'pull wool' over the people's eyes, and save his credit, for he'll have her if an earthquake should be the consequence.

It's astonishing widows will be so indecate as to daff their weeds. It is nothing more nor less than a walking advertisement for another husband. Mrs. Lee was spending a short time at the sea shore, in her new regimentals, when one of the ladies at the tea table, struck with a sudden thought, said very innocently— "By the way, Mrs. Lee, where is your husband?" I should have been very sorry to have told where I thought he was, for the way he used to swear when he talked was awful to mention.

Now what a glorious example I'd be to the sex, if Providence should see fit to make me a widow, I wonder if Samuel will pop off? I should hate to put my curls behind my ears, and wouldn't so much, as look at a man, unless it was Tom King, Wonder if he'd marry me? Well! there now. I've spoken in meeting! It can't be helped now as Deacon Smith said, when his daughter surprised him kissing Widow Moore—"It's nature, Sally, it's nature."