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ORIGINAL.

TO AMERICA.

Columbus! like Venus from the main,  
I see thy bright, broad bosom heaving far,—  
Oh! more than rosy evening's silver star,  
With sweet delight thou glad'st my heart and brain;  
Yes—when oppression's soul-encircling chain  
Had gall'd me with its bondage, 'twas to thee  
I turn'd my hopes, and dream'd of liberty  
And love, with all their smiling happy train;  
Or if I breathed a prayer 'twas not in vain,  
Since God hath heard it, and my eyes behold  
Thy green expanse and promontories bold,  
Glowing, as glorious, with thy azure plain,  
As when the world's great Architect at first  
Spoke, and with one vast bound its orb from darkness burst!

For the Pearl.

PRAIRIE TRAVELLERS.

In the very centre of the old grove, we discovered an Indian fort; a small apartment of about ten square feet, enclosed on three sides by rude walls, composed of trunks and fallen limbs of old rotten trees. The fourth side was left open, but the place was roofed securely with shrubs and branches, some of which were still green, contrasting strangely with the mouldering logs over which they were piled and interwaved.

Here we were told—slept the bones of four white men killed by a party of fifteen Pawnee Indians. The four brave Americans were journeying to the States on foot, from Fort William on the Arkansas, a distance of about 400 miles, and the whole route lying over dreary and desolate prairies. — *New Orleans paper.*

The Sun was setting, in gold and crimson, on the verge of a Western Prairie, which spread around, graceful in its solitude and immensity, like the ocean itself. Some gentle hills varied the expanse in one direction, and basin-like hollows gave a premature bloom to other parts; but one half the horizon stretched far away, unrelieved by any thing except its own dull verdure. In the westward indeed, the slant rays gave a golden glory to the else monotonous scene; but eastward, the leaden clouds of evening seemed to rest on a plain as lifeless as themselves.

And eastward were the toilsome steps of four travellers, bent. They moved along, travel-sore, and their only horse, which carried some baggage, journeyed on patiently, but languidly, as if nature called imperatively for that repose which is essential to the play of her machinery. The travellers quickened their heavy tread, and urged forward the lagging beast, — and, fording a little stream at its narrowest part, diverged from the direct path, making a course towards some hillocks which promised a degree of shelter for the night.

They soon arrived at their resting place, — one collected brambles and dry leaves, — another commenced unpacking one of the horse panniers, — another, taught mercy by misfortune, sought a grassy spot, drove a stake in the earth, and making the weary beast fast to it, prepared the night's comforts for their poor dumb slave, — the fourth with a few light poles, was erecting a temporary shelter, half tent and half wigwam, to shield himself and comrades from the dews of midnight.

The travellers were soon grouped outside their tent, around the cheerful fire which had cooked their repast. Rest and refreshment had enlivened their spirits, — and more than all, the thought that they were a day's journey nearer home, than they were at sunrise, seemed to renew their bodily and mental powers. These wavy knolls will help to hinder us from the Pawnees, if any are roving on the Prairies, said one of their companions. Heaven defend us from that evil, said another, except they come a fair match, and even then, I would go far out of their way. I want no more bloodshedding, and would return home with some of the feelings of my youth, rather than red-handed like a wild bush-ranger. Never mind, mates, said the third, if the Indians let us alone, we will let them, — or we will fight and conquer, if we can. If not, our bones will lie here instead of at Fort William or Natchez. I am pretty well fagged out, and have had so many alarms and scrimmages in my time, that I care not very much, and will answer a call here as well as any where else, if need be, although I would prefer I must own, dying like a white man and a Christian. Ah! said the fourth, many a day since any of us lived like Christians, — we are half Indians ourselves, living lonely among those far west woods, where the seasons may be marked, but the days appear as alike as the clouds when they scud before a south-east gale. I hope to hear church bells once more, — I think I hear them now, — ding, dong, ding dong, — as I did when my father used to lead me forth by the hand, after my mother had smoothed my hair, and bid me a

fond good-bye. Alas! alas! where be the old people now? What is their rambling son? How have the dreams of that time been dissipated, like the mist of morning, which lies blue and lake-like on the plain, but rises with the sun, and shows nothing but an arid waste to the thirsty traveller. Well, said the first speaker, my only hope that my brother Will lives. I know he'll welcome me back, and assist me for the sake of old times, in trying the busy world once more. And I, said the second, can scarcely sleep at night, even after my day's fatigue, thinking of that faithful wife and the little ones, whom I deserted five years ago. Well, I am content, — I was driven from them, I have done better, we will be happy, if we meet, — which may heaven grant, although I deserve but little at the hands of God or man. But, my children, I see, every one of them, even now, and death would be sweet if I could feel them in my arms once more. So conversed the wanderers, and the musings, and recollections, and waking dreams which flitted over each, lured them from their couch of leaves, until the stars had come out, like so many Seraph eyes, on the blue expanse of heaven.

Sleep at length exerted its gentle, its soul-soothing, its all-renewing influence — and the home-bound men lay in their frail shelter, silent and helpless as children wearied with play. Below was the lonely expanse of prairie, — dark and monotonous, like a calm sea in a dense shade; — above was the sublime concave of the heavens, spangled with stars; all was as motionless as silent, — except the twinkling of those everlasting watchers, the slow wheeling of the moon to the western verge, and the gentle sailing of an occasional cloud across the empyrean dome. But these motions, compared with the repose of the vast expanse of ether, and that of the outstretched earth, — only made the fixedness more apparent, while it relieved it from the rigidity of death. The profound rest of the sleepers accorded well with surrounding nature. The horse lay prone on the prairie grass, his strained nerves relaxed most gratefully, — his distended nostrils drew new life from the fragrant herbage, — and the sweetly cooling breeze chased his stifled limbs as if time had rolled back with the old brute, and the hand of childhood again smoothed the coat of the colt. The men also, intensely enjoyed the hour of peaceful rest. They lay on their bed of spruce branches, motionless as some of the ant hills which rose around the camp. There was the prairie, and the sky, and the sleepers, — a scene of inanimate nature, — quiet and silent, as if no excitement but that caused by the elements and the seasons, were known to any thing there. But within these sleeping heaps, were those amazing spheres, human hearts; and in each, as in a fairy circle, notwithstanding the solitude and the stillness, were scenes, and incidents, and hopes, and fears, which occasionally made the blood tingle. Images of Home, — that charmed place, and of city life, came over the wearied men; — they anticipated, they pictured, they enjoyed, in dreams, — scenes, which alas! like most of man's speculations, had no basis more substantial than those dreams. It was enjoyment, however, while it continued, and they rose in the morning refreshed and cheered, — and recommenced their homeward route, their souls flying before, impatient of the body's poor efforts.

Another evening saw them winding along, the banks of the broad Arkansas. Behind them the remains of sun-set gave a warm orange tint to the waters, which, by contrast, made the trees and herbage on the borders appear of a hue darker than that of night; before, the grey haze of twilight cooled down the distance, and filled the gazer with longings for the shelter of civilized men. A rising ground brought them suddenly in sight of a grove of tall trees, where they immediately resolved to encamp for the night. They might push a few miles farther, themselves, but their horse — on whom they depended for the carriage of their little treasure of rich furs, and their bag of bread, and the buffalo meat which the wilds yielded — gave symptoms, which could not be mistaken, that without rest he would founder, and, like an old ship, settle down where he stood, never to rise again. He had travelled far, during three days, and had fared hard, — and he had not the thoughts of home to cheer him onward, — and make him forget outward glooms amid the brightness of imaginary scenes. They resolved to encamp among the old tall trees of the grove, which rose in stately gloom, as if the spot which they shaded was the eternal resting place of some renowned chieftain of the desert; — but as they surmounted another breast of earth, the foremost called out, cheer up, my mates, we will be saved the trouble of camp building, see the Indian Fort, ready to our hands. The travellers looked forward anxiously, and not more than a pistol shot distant, amidst the deep shade of the grove, and sheltered by some hillocks, stood a small building, it was about ten feet square, open on one side, and roofed with shrubs and branches. The refuge was cheerless and forbid-

ding enough; — men used to the luxuries of a city would call it a wretched hovel; — but the travellers were rough men, — they had lived long in the wilderness, struggling for existence with wild beasts and wilder human beings, — more than all, they were faint and foot-sore, and the place which offered a handful of bushes, and shelter from the night dews, offered luxury. What feelings had they, — with their sun-browned visages, and their poor plodding horse, on the evening road of the desert, — in common with the lounging fashionables of the distant city? They rejoiced in the little cave-like shed, which seemed to welcome them, for as its discoverer said, it was ready to their hands. Alas for human hearts, — the joy and the sorrow of mortals come alike, often without any forethrowing shadows; and the cup, raised to the lips, sparkling with nectar, is frequently dashed to the ground, and replaced by a draught of vinegar and gall. It was ready to our hands, said the glad traveller, but after a moment's pause on the top of the bank, which they had gained, its pre-occupation was too surely verified. A look of congratulation passed among the wearied men, and they recommenced their path, when the sharp crack of a rifle made them start aghast, and the next moment he who spoke, the night before about the church-going bells, fell prone to the earth, the blood oozing rapidly from his temples.

"The red skins are in the fort, boys," shouted one of the travellers, called Great Beaver, from his skill in trapping, — "be on the alert or farewell to home, — follow me, quick, quick." So saying, he dashed down the hill they had just ascended, his companions following, — yielding themselves, instinctively, to the guidance of the readiest and the boldest. Another rifle shot was heard, and the ball whistled threateningly above their heads; but the swift messenger was too late, — the bank had already hidden them from the fort. Great Beaver, as soon as he was sure of safe cover, darted for the nearest edge of the Arkansas, stepped aside deep into the stream, walked westward some dozen paces, and then under shelter of a long bank, and some bushes, moved rapidly in a lateral direction with the road they were pursuing when the rifle shot made them retrace their steps. The poor pack horse seemed aware of the danger which impended, and scampered along with his masters, at a rate which would be thought impossible a moment before. Great Beaver told his comrades to keep straight on, while he proceeded to reconnoitre from the ridge, declaring that they might yet baffle the red skins, and perhaps rescue their wounded companion. A moment's glance showed him a band of twelve or fifteen Indians, running over the sward in pursuit; — they came down to the brow of the bank, stopped awhile over the body of the traveller, and then, after looking down the valley, scattered, in groups of three or four, to the eastward; conjecturing, as was to be expected, that the travellers had taken that course. Great Beaver found that his manoeuvre was correct, — and although horror-struck at the fate of his companion, and alarmed at the number of the enemy, he still felt that a hard fight and good generalship, might give victory to the weaker party. He regained his company, and after a few minutes run, they wheeled to the eastward, crossed the bank, darted through the thickest part of the grove, and plunged into the Indian Fort, horse and all, — their knives ready at their belts, and their axes prepared for immediate action. The fort, as they conjectured, was empty, — and, by this masterly manoeuvre, they obtained quiet possession, and gained an important advantage over their enemies. A hasty council of war determined proceedings, — the utmost vigilance, and fight to the last, were the tactics resolved on. A limb of a tree was placed across the open side of the Fort, and to his pack horse was lashed, so as to make his body a bulwark for his masters. The poor slave, if he understood the movement, resisted it not; — he was used to despotism, and if he could reason, he would be puzzled to ascertain which was the worse policy, — to avoid his open enemies, and by so doing incur the ill usage of his interested and tyrannical friends, or to submit passively, and leave all to the fortune of the moment. Behind the horse two of the travellers were posted, while the other kept anxious watch and ward, in the rear, his trusty rifle ready to deal death, through the loop holes, on any who might approach in that direction. The Fort commanded a cleared space, around about half a musket shot in extent, this was bounded by the banks that sloped off rapidly, immediately about the Fort was the old grove, and beyond the boundary of the glade, several forest trees raised their tops high over the summit of the banks.

The travellers were not many minutes in shelter, before they perceived a few of the Indians dart across the sward in front, evidently supposing that those they were in pursuit of had retraced their steps, and fled to the westward, when they failed in discovering them in the opposite direction. The band belonged to the Pawnee tribe, — brave and cunning enemies, who joined the