

But three hours more, and that next express
Would thunder by her, and she, alas !
Must stand there still and let it pass.
Duty was duty, and hers was clear ;
God seemed far off, and no friend near.
But the truest friend and the swiftest horse
Must ride that ride on a breakneck course ;
And with truest horse and swiftest friend,
To the fast express was the winning end !
And as if one pang was needed more,
There stood in the doorway, Nell Latore !—
Nell Latore, with her mocking face,
Restless eyes, and her evil grace ;
Quick to read in the wife's sad eyes,
The deep, strange woe, and the hurt surprise.
Slow she said, with a piercing breath,
“ Rebel fighter dies rebel death ! ”
Said, and paused ; for she seemed to see
Far through the other's misery,
Something that stilled her ; triumph fled
Shamed and fast, as the young wife said—
“ He keeps his faith with an oath he swore,
For the half-breeds' freedom, Nell Latore ;
And, did he lie here, eyes death-dim,
You, if you spoke but truth of him,