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HOME



ADVOCATE.

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SOLDIER AND SAINT.

A War Ballad.

BY J. EDGAR JONES.

[Cincinnati Commercial Gazette.]

Over Missouri's hills and plains war with its red tide swept,

Into a million lives war's rage, horrors and hatreds crept.

Homes divided against themselves, fierce words barbed with scorn,

Honors kissed by the sun at eve blackened and burned at morn.

Some men fighting in Union blue, some in "Rackensack" gray.

Some who raided in prowling bands fighting as beasts of prey

Chief of the pirate captains all, haunting the wood and glen,

Jimmy McKeen the border scout, leader of Quantrell's men;

Framed in a frontier ranger squad, matchless hunter or scout,

Victor ever in camp and field, scuffle or wrestling bout.

Handsome, devilish, gold hair curled, fierce and of reckless force,

Many a deed of darkest hue marking his wild band's course.

Near where Lexington's pointed spires rose in the azure air,

Moore, the planter of wealth and note, lived with his daughter fair;

Mistress of slaves, two brothers armed wearing the rebel gray,

Beautiful, headstrong, loving, brave, she was as fierce as they.

On them, too, war's thunderbolt fell breaking in flame and lead.

Morn found ruin and charred remains, mother and father dead.

Swiftly over the hills rode Belle, resolute proud of mien,

Seeking her lover in Quantrell's camp. There 'twas a curious scene.

Married they were; and from that hour ever the youthful bride,

Clothed like the men, in garb of gray rode at her husband's side;

Whether in camp or on the trail—parting nor night nor day—

Field or foray or charge of death, tiger and mate were they.

Days passed by and the war stream swelled into a crimson flood

Jim McKeen and his reckless crew making a trail of blood;

Yet, at eve, in the Keytesville hills, one of the bands in blue,

Nerved by personal wrongs and hate, cornered the Quantrell crew;

Then spake rifle and saber stroke, curses, balls well-spelt.

Numbers triumphed in bloody strife, striking the champion dead,

Jim McKeen, with his eyes aflame, fought like a fiend made mad;

Ever beside him, fierce and brave, struggled a slender lad;

Wounded, bleeding, blackened and grim, both were at last laid low—

Jim no more like a demon loosed over the land to go.

Soldiers grasping the struggling lad, suddenly came untied,

Masses of beautiful raven curls. This was the Raider's bride.

Placed in the surgeon's care and cured, silent she went her way,

Jim McKeen in his prairie grave, wrapped in his suit of gray.

Years of history followed close, history made in tents:

Forged in battle, annealed with fire, welded in great events,

These two lives were but grains of sand rolled in its mighty flow,

Drift weeds washed on the shores of war, caught in its undertow.

Swift years sped, and in New Orleans beautiful deeds were done

Day by day 'mid the suffering poor, led by a sweet-faced Nun:

Sickness, sorrow, the rage of pain soothed by her gentle voice.

Found its courage and strength renewed learned to hope and rejoice.

Then from Memphis an anguished cry rose on the fevered air.

Those struck down by the yellow scourge found that the Nun was there.

Day and night when the stoutest men shivered with awful dread

Calm and firm as an angel's step echoed the pale Nun's tread;

Souls were helped with a cheering word, many a dying face

Looked its reverent, grateful thanks, watching her peaceful grace,

Ever ready for saintly work, kindest aets to do.

Weak and weary, to lift each day burdens of care anew.

Pitying death observed one day, touched her and bade her rest;

Folded the busy hands at last over the gentle breast;

Thousands of hearts who loved her name echoed the funeral knell

Over her memory—shrined in souls—sorrowful blessings fell,

Strange are the paths through which God leads. Under the Nun's vest

Clasped was a portrait, Jim McKeen's, close to the pulseless breast.

"Soldier and saint!" Carved on her grave simply "Sister Celeste."

"Stranger than fiction?" Yes, my friend—Out of War's wrong and ruth

Blossom sometimes the flowers of heaven. Each line herein is truth.

NOTE—The incidents herein contained are strictly true, and without exaggeration.

Col. Moore and daughter, Belle Moore, lived near Lexington, Mo., until the homestead was destroyed, and the parents killed by bushwhackers.

Belle was married, in Quantrell's camp, to Jim McKeen, afterward wearing uniform, and fighting always at his side.

Some time afterward a detachment of Missouri cavalry, commanded by Lieut. Jones, overtook McKeen's raiders at Keytesville Landing, when McKeen was killed and his wife wounded.

After this she disappeared, but dying of yellow fever during the great epidemic at Memphis a few years ago, Sister Celeste, a noted nun, was identified as Belle Moore McKeen.

The writer was himself an actor in some of these scenes, and can vouch for the facts.

Bill Nye on Vesuvius.

One thousand eight hundred and eighty-four years ago, the Roman geographer and weather crank,

Strabo, spoke of Vesuvius as a burnt mountain; but it had not at that time turned itself wrong side out.

Quite a forest grew where the crater now stands. For fifty years Vesuvius had bilious spells,

but kept on drawing its salary without loss of time, but in A. D.,

it turned itself loose and tore up the ground a good deal. Real estate went to an astonishing height, but became depressed at once.

The south half of the mountain was jerked loose as Pliny has it, and knocked gally west. This was followed by a shower of hot, wet ashes which completely obliterated Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Those two towns have been exhumed lately, owing to the delay of the authorities in doing so no lives were saved. These cities are not covered with lava. Scientists say that the ruins were found under a deep layer of volcanic tufa.

I do not know what tufa is, but presume the term is perfectly proper and safe to use in good society.

I have heard of the tufa cigar, which is sold tufa five cents, but am comparatively ignorant of the general appearance of volcanic tufa.

In a Sixth avenue street car, filled with ladies, a ninety-pound dude sat wedged in one corner.

At Twenty-third street a fat woman handsomely dressed, and with a little dog in her arms, got on.

The little dude struggled to his feet and touched his hat politely, remarking facetiously: "Madam, will you take this seat?"

The fat lady looked at the crevice he had left and thanked him pleasantly.

"You are very kind, sir," she said; "I think it will just fit the dog," and it did.—St. Paul Globe.

JUMBLE-TUMBLE.

Ladies ought to make good soldiers—none of them are afraid of "powder."

"Oh, if I only had a neck like that what a collar I could wear!" said the dude, while looking at an ostrich.

The secret of Boston's superiority lies in the fact that she has 18,000 more women than men.

A correspondent writes us five hundred words on a postal card announcing that she is just recovering from an attack of failing eyesight. Our attack is just coming on.

"What do we owe Thomas Jefferson?" asks a New York newspaper writer. As Thomas never kept a bar, you probably don't owe him anything.

BOB INGERSOLL has been examining some of the latest improvements in fire-engines. It is surmised that Robert will take a good engine with him when he starts for the next word.

The latest style of greeting among fashionable young ladies is to rub their cheeks together. A more equal exchange of cosmetics is thus insured—Burlington Free Press.

PATIENT—"Brain favor, is it? Oh! docthur, it's a proud man I am the day! The odd, oman schwears Oi niver had enough fur a cockroach!"

"Can you see me dearest?," said a Chicago man to his dying wife. "Tell me can you see me?" "No," she faintly whispered, but I can smell your breath!"

Where shall I be buried?" sighs a poet—Isn't a graveyard good enough for you? Do you want to be buried in the top of a tree? Just name the place though, and we'll see that you are put here.—Oil City Dettick

Sister Annie—"Now Ethel, be sure and pray to God to make you a good girl." Ethel (praying)—"Dear, Dod, pleath troy and mak me a dood little girl, and if at first you don't succeed, troy, troy again."

"I don't enjoy poetry as a general thing," said an old lady who dropped in on us recently, "but when I step out to feed the hogs and histo myself on the fence, and throw my soul into a few lines of 'Captain Jenks,' it don't seem as if this arth was made to live on, after all."

The Pittsburg Telegraph denounces the heartless and cruel practice of destroying flies with fly paper. This method of extermination may be cruel, but life is too short for a man to catch each fly separately and tenderly impale it to a door-jamb with a pin.—Norris town Herald.

Uncle Rastus, ze nuze paper sez how Spain an' Germany is gwine ter tite," remarked Scipio Africanus.

"Who's Sprain and Gimminy, an' what's dey mad 'bout?" inquired Uncle Rastus.

"Dey lives in Urop and fell out