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'They Thought They Were Right.'

"They thought they were right," were the words uttered by a Union soldier, when applauding the bravery of the private soldiers who wore the gray. Ever ready to forgive and forget, we dedicate these lines to all, who, right or wrong, followed what they conceived to be the path of duty.

C. AUGUSTUS HAVILAND.

"They thought they were right,"
When their path was o'erstrewn
With our dead and our dying—
While the Heaven's bright moon
Shone through the dim clouds
And whispered away,
To the realms far above,
The pure souls from the clay.

"They thought they were right,"
Shall we longer refrain
To welcome them back
To our household again,
While the record they made,
Like our own sons, so bold,
Will ere long be written
In bright letters of gold!

"They thought they were right,"
Shall we longer deny
That their heroic deeds
Are recorded on high?
And we, though victorious,
And they backward driven;
Yet in Heaven above us,
Their sins all forgiven

Was it God, teaching lessons,
On each fatal day,
When the fields were o'erspread
With the Blue and Gray?
Was it God, hearing back
On each gentle wave,
The souls of his children—
The souls of the brave?

If it was! let us hide
From our men's to-day,
The dark thoughts we cherished
For those who wore GRAY;
And if God—always just,
Our God—can forgive;
May not we of the earth
As brothers still live!

SELECTED STORY.

REVENGE.

BY MARY KYIE DALLAS.

There dwelt in California, some years ago, three friends, wild fellows enough, who had seemingly linked their fortunes for better or for worse, and who, whatever their luck, were constantly in each other's company.

These young men were Charles Chester, Harry Bray, and Edward Warren. They were more brotherly than many brothers, more akin than many kinsmen. True to each other, even when women and money were between them, Damon and Pythias with a twin Damon added. For a long while they had been very poor, at last fortune favored them. Each had a certain sum, by no means contemptible, stowed away in the leather-belt he wore about his waist. Each carried a gold watch, and each wore a suit of clothes, supposed by himself to be the latest style and choicest fashion. Moreover, their revolvers were perfect, silver-mounted, and rejoicing in a multiplicity of barrels, for without these it would be quite impossible to maintain a position in this quarter of the world in any society.

How they came by these possessions, we will not inquire too particularly. They were neither burglars nor highwaymen, but "decks of keards," dice and betting may have helped them to the winning of their little fortunes. They were not over-scrupulous, but they would have knocked any man down who had neglected to address them as gentlemen, and use those wonderful revolvers promptly on any "strangers" who objected to drinking with them; and, consequently, stood rather high in the community. Certainly in their conduct to each other they were faultlessly honorable and miraculously generous.

One day soon after their "luck" had come to its best, a letter directed in a tremulous woman's hand, to "Charles Chester," was handed to that member of the trio, in the presence of the other two. The young fellow seized it eagerly, tore it open, read it through, and tearing off his belt, spread its contents before him upon the table and counted it over. Having done so, he burst into tears, and very unwisely and profanely cursed himself for extravagance, and requested for himself all sorts of uncomfortable things here and hereafter, a proceeding which seems to relieve some men extremely, though why, it would puzzle the unenlightened to declare. The cause of all this as his comrades soon discovered, was that his mother had written to him from her little farm, in a Southern State, to tell him a doleful tale of sickness, death amongst the stock, etc., and a final crash. A mortgage was almost due, and as the old people would find it impossible to meet it, they would be sold out and left homeless in their age. "It will kill your father," wrote the mother, "and I shall die with him."

"I did it all," said the young fellow, sobbing openly. "My debts and my wild ways encumbered them at first, and now look." And he pointed to the gold upon the table, and began his profane litanies again.

"The mortgage was three thousand dollars, and he had only two."

"Is that all?" cried Ned, hauling at his belt.

"Good Lord! What does he take me for?" cried Harry furiously. "Five hundred a piece and the expenses of the journey is about the figure. There, go to the old folks. We'll see about your horse while you pack your bag."

They waited for news of him, but none came. They waited quietly at first, then impatiently; at last they heard this. He had never been seen at home or by any one who knew him since the day on which they shook hands with him. Some terrible fate had befallen him in the lonely places over which he had journeyed alone. To doubt him never entered their minds. That he was true to them as they to him they well knew, and one thought filled each mind. They must discover his fate and if it were what they supposed, avenge him.

So one bright morning, well mounted, well armed, and followed by a favorite dog, a hound who would by no means be left behind, the two set forth in search of their lost comrade. They took the road he must have taken, and asked at every tavern and cabin for news of him. One old man remembered him well; another man had pointed out the dangerous place in the road leading past a precipice to a man of their lost friend's description, but at that point the clue was lost. After much travel, and many inquiries, our comrades began to fear that they should have paused to examine the rocks and ravines at the foot of the precipice alluded to, ere they proceeded further, and determined to turn back and do so. They came to this resolution about nightfall, and just as they had reached the borders of a little farm, which bore evidence of careful tillage. Upon this land stood also a farm-house, from the crevices in the closed shutters of which streamed long bars of ruddy lamp-light, and whence the sound of music was plainly heard. It was the only dwelling within sight.

We will stay there said one friend to another until dawn, and then return. That the house was not an inn did not matter to either of them. Hospitality was never refused in that land at that day.

They rode boldly up to the gate, and gave a loud hallo. In an instant the door opened, and they could see within a sudden panic in a lively eance, as all heads turned to see what it was that caused this interruption.

"Can you let us sleep here to-night?" asked one of the friends, as one asks who fears no refusal.

"Light down, gentlemen," said a pleasant voice. "You're welcome. You'll find a stable there, and corn for your horses. Every man, Jack, is on the floor to-night—but here's a lantern, if you'll lend to yourselves."

"All right, stranger," said Harry, "and thank ye too."

And the men led their horses into a stable, already tolerably full. Ned watered them, and secured them for the night, and would have left the place at once, but that one of the animals attracted Harry's attention.

He turned back to look at him, examined him from head to hoof, turned red and pale, and suddenly clutched Ned's arm.

"You remember the horse we bought for Charles Chester?" he asked.

"Yes," said Ned.

"Look at this fellow," said Harry.

"Yes, the very one. The star on his forehead, the scar on his foreleg, the color, the height. Ned, it's Charley's horse!"

"Wants to come in, perhaps," said Ned; "but it mightn't be agreeable to the ladies."

"Bring him in," said the old man; but the dog would not come. He stood beside a patch of grass in the garden, howling woefully, and scratching and tearing with all his might. Leaved the spot, he would not, and the friends as they saw him, and remembered the horse in the stable, felt the blood curdle in their veins.

"Whose horse is that with a white star on the forehead and a scar on his foreleg, a handsome brown horse with wonderful eyes?" whispered Henry to the old man.

"That's my son's horse," said the old man.

"Where did he buy it?" asked the other.

"Don't know," said the old man, laughing childishly. "Come to him with the rest of his good luck six months ago."

Again the dog outside began to howl. Again the friends felt cold chills creep over them.

"Where are we to sleep?" asked Edward of the old man. "We don't want supper; we need rest."

"I'll show you," said the old man. "The house will be full to-night, but you'll not mind roughing it." And he led the way to an upper room where a rude bed was already spread.

"Just lie down here, strangers," he said. "There's a blanket if you're cold and there's a candle. Good-night."

And he left them. But not to sleep. The two men had sought solitude that they might commune with each other. Yet now they could only say, "What does this mean?" They had said it in as many ways a dozen times, when Henry by accident lifted his eyes to a peg in the rough wall. On it hung something which riveted his gaze with horror. Yet it was an object quite common and innocent in itself—only a pair of brown saddle-bags, rather new in appearance, and with the letters C. C. on the side.

"Look!" he cried. "Look, Edward!"

The other in turn stood mute for awhile, then gave a spring toward the peg, tore the bags down and opened them. Within they found garments they knew their friend had worn, an empty belt, and the daguerotype of a young girl of whom they had known him to be very fond. "His horse in the stable, his saddle-bags and belt here, the dog howling on the turf without—what does it all mean?" cried Harry again. And Ned answered, "We shall soon see," and strode down into the great room where the dancing was going on, and up to the bridegroom, standing at the head of a Virginia reel, with his bride's hand in his own.

"Stop a bit," cried Ned, furiously. "We have a question to ask. Whose horse is that in the stable—the brown one with a star on the forehead?"

"MINE," said the farmer turning deadly white.

"And the saddle bags upstairs, marked C. C.?"

The farmer turned paler.

"Gentlemen," he said, "wait until morning, and I will explain everything."

"We choose to learn the truth for ourselves," said the young man fiercely. "You had a mysterious streak of luck six months ago, I understand from the old man there," said Harry Bray.

"Not very mysterious," said the farmer. "I went to the diggings and fell in with a nugget. As for the horse—I found him and the saddle-bags too. If you know to whom they belong, he's welcome to them."

"They belong to the man you murdered for his money and buried in the ground yonder where the dog stands howling," cried Harry Bray. "We are going to

dig there and God help any man who hinders us."

"Dig where you choose," said the farmer. "I am too well known here to be afraid of two madmen. I murder a fiddler—There, I'm a fool to care for such words. Dig, confound you. Many a horse strays in the woods; many a man has found one as well as I. Come, neighbors, set the fiddles going, and let those mad men dig."

And the spades sank into the turf, and the terrified guests gathered around, and the bride clung to her husband's arm, and the music was dumb, and the dog's long melancholy wail filled the air; and at last, just as the rising moon flung her yellow beams upon the new-dug earth, Ned Warren cried in an awful voice, "He is here!"

And the two friends lifted from the grave that which had been a man, with long death-grown black hair falling down over his shoulders.

He had been shot in the head and through the heart, and there was now no doubt in either mind that it was the body of their lost friend. The farmer seemed petrified with horror. The bride fell into a death-like swoon, the guests fell away from their host and looked at him askance. The old father tore his hair and pleaded for mercy. But there was no mercy in any heart there. The avengers were all powerful. The great room adorned for festivity and mirth was turned into a court-room. The women were thrust from it, the men remained.

On the raised stand, where the fiddlers had been seated, Harry Bray now took his seat in the character of Judge Lynch. The jury was named, the mock trial hurried on, the accused called upon to answer. He pleaded not guilty. He denied any knowledge of the fact that a grave lay so near his home. He persisted in the repetition of the statement that he had found the horse and saddle-bags, but he admitted that there had been money in the latter.

He stood before them looking very unlike a murderer, calling on them for justice—calling on God to witness the truth of his words; speaking of his young wife and his old father; bidding his neighbors remember that he had never done them any wrong.

But Judge Lynch had no mercy, no belief in the possibility of false accusation; and this Judge Lynch was an avenger of blood. The end was what the end of such a trial generally is; the sentence the awful one of death; and in less than three hours from the moment on which they first saw the bridegroom happy and blithe, standing with his bride at the head of the gay country dance, his body dangled, a horrible sight to look upon, from the branch of the tree that shadowed what all believed to be his victim's grave!

When all was over, they found the old father dead in his chair, beside the fire-place, and found among the women a hopeless, gibbering maniac whom they would hardly have known for the rosy-checked young bride.

They were avenged, but at what cost? The two men returned to their homes saddened and altered, yet not remorseful for they had but avenged their comrade; and this, to them seemed common justice. The legal code of border life had been adhered to, but for the last look at the mad bride they could scarcely have recognized how awful all this had been.

They lived on together, friends still, speaking often of poor Charley, and fancying that in some other world he might even know how well they had avenged themselves upon his murderer. And so five years passed; and one day the two went together into a coffee-room kept by an old Frenchman in the city of San Francisco, and being in low spirits, out of luck and with slender purses, were sitting disconsolately over their meal, when a hand came down upon either shoulder and a voice cried;

"Found at last. I've searched the city for you. God bless you, dear old boys."

It was Charles Chester, handsome and cheerful, well-dressed, and well to do looking; Charles Chester, whose murderer they believed themselves to have

lynched years before. And this was the story he told them, wondering at their pallid looks and awe-stricken silence, while: "The money he had with him being in gold and heavy for his belt, he had placed it in his saddle-bags, and had completed many miles of his journey, when near a new but apparently deserted dwelling, he saw a man lying groaning terribly. Dismounting he addressed him, and found that he was a traveler who had been set upon by ruffians, and robbed and murdered. He had crawled to this house for assistance, but found it empty, and now lay dying in the road. Charles Chester had done his best for the poor fellow, but without avail. He died in his arms, just as the sun went down, and by its fading light, he had dug a grave on the turf before the empty house, and there buried him. There was not one in sight, and his fears of an attack upon himself warned him to hurry off, but when the last had rites were over, and he turned to remount his horse, he found it gone. The animal had escaped into the woods, and with night coming on all search seemed hopeless. The money in the saddle-bags rendered the loss a maddening one. He threaded his way through the underbrush, calling his steed by name, until total darkness hid all objects, and at last striking his head violently against a tree, fell to the ground insensible. When he came to himself, he was lying in a wagon, to which he had been conveyed by a kindly German who could speak no English. In falling he had broken an arm and was very weak and ill. Before he was able to communicate his story to any one, all hope of recovering either horse or money had deserted him. He was in despair. He could not assist his parents. To return to his friends would be to cast himself upon their bounty. This he would not do; and his struggle had been great at first, but they were over now. He had done well by the old folks, and had returned to pay his debts and resume his friendship with his old comrades."

He was with them—he lived. The farmer had doubtless told the truth. He did not even know why the turf had grown so green in the little door-yard, and he had found the horse at large in the woods and known nothing of its rider; but the thing had been done and could not be undone—the dead brought to life or the maniac's mind restored, or the blood washed from the murderers' hands.

Of course they told their story, and of course they believed the friendship as warm as ever, but it was not so. They never could meet each other again as of yore. The two could not forget the man they had lynched to avenge their friend, and doubted the propriety of his returning alive and merry to trouble their consciences, which were quiet enough as long as he seemed dead. As for Charles Chester, he cleared the murdered man's memory among neighbors, and saw the wild-eyed, white faced woman who dwelt in the desolate house, and only shook her head and moaned and muttered when he spoke to her; and then he, too, was content to say good-bye to those who had done the deed—albeit for his sake.

So the three parted, each going his own way, for thus it seemed easier to forget the deeds done by Judge Lynch and his court upon the day of the bride's home-coming.

GIVE IT UP.—An old liquor drinker, who had been patronizing one drinking house for eight years, gave this as his reason for joining the Sons of Temperance, in the presence of several persons: "There," said he, pointing to the saloon, "is a drinking establishment that I have been trying to drink out for these eight years, and, finding it impossible, have concluded to withdraw from the field and try Lake Michigan."

Struggle on to victory. Never give up when you are right. A frown is a muscular contraction, and can't last long. A laugh of derision is but the modified bark of a cur. If you can be laughed out of good, or the good out of you, you are weaker in intellect than the fool, whose argument is a guffaw, and whose logic is a sneer.