

CHAPTER XXXIX.

LAST LINES.

AND now we must be brief; suffice it to say then, that we left Lawrence at an early hour upon the 9th, reached Westport, Mo., upon the evening of that day, where we booked ourself, *per force*, by Smashup's line for Jefferson City, where we arrived with, wonderful to relate, only one serious upset upon the 14th. Here, as we are very independent, we gave Smashup and Co the cold shoulder, by taking our own conveyance—our trustworthy Shauk's mare, for the Gasconade, a distance of some five and forty miles, which we walked upon the railroad ties in two days. Then came Herman, from whence we travelled by the Pacific railroad to St. Louis, where we put up at Barnum's, one of the few hotels in the Western country, which we have any knowledge of, that is *not* a *Barnum* in more senses than one. Here we tarried one night, and in the morning pursued our way eastward; but as we have already given the reader a somewhat lengthy sketch of our journey westward to St. Louis, we will bid him good-bye so far as our incidents of travel go at this point, for railroading is very much the same thing, whether you go or come.

And finally, for a grand display of rhetorical fireworks, by way of finish to our history of the Wakarusa war; we would respectfully request that we may be permitted to introduce the following.

We are about to say a long farewell to Kansas, unless, indeed,

her good citizens should graciously condescend to get up another war, in which case we shall be on hand with all convenient speed to see the fray, and it may be, "write up" its history. But for the present, good-bye to the Territory—a sad farewell withal, for—political rows, and this bitter winter weather, always excepted—we are disposed to like Kansas; moreover, we believe in Kansas, for she will, at some future day, accomplish much greater things than party quarrels, or Wakarusa wars. Her strength is within herself—she has natural advantages which nothing but the Almighty's arm can wrest from her grasp—a fertile soil—a healthy climate—a wide expanse of territory—the want of timber being her only indwelling drawback. Give her these, and—we care not whether they come from the North or from the South—for we have in this matter no sectional prejudices—give her, we say, but a sufficiency of true-hearted, and able-bodied Anglo-Saxon men and women, every-day working-people, not fine ladies and gentlemen, not broken-down politicians, or pot-house-ranting fillibusters, and we will venture to predict that the moral atmosphere of the Territory would clear itself from its impurities within six months time, but above all things, let the men who are to till those yet unbroken acres, and ere long make the laws of the State, which is soon to take her glorious place among the proud sisterhood of the Republic, be *conservatives*. For it is a well-established fact, that as Radicalism is the disorganizer, so is Conservatism not only the pacificator but the absolute preserver of the frontier. And we feel assured that if those who claim to be the best friends of Kansas—and in saying this we reiterate our disclaimer of any sectional leanings—would but be satisfied to attend to their own affairs, and let border disturbances alone, it would be infinitely better for the Territory and a real blessing to its inhabitants. Nations, like individuals, derive but little benefit from officious outside interference, however well intended it may be.

When we started for Kansas, we expected to see a fight, a "free-fight" at that, but we have been disappointed. For though we found her political lions quite ready to growl, and not unwilling to show their teeth; yet, when it came to using them, they—as a Western man would quaintly express it—"want thar," and we don't believe that many of them would have been "thar" if the struggle had come. This is, therefore, to our mind, another reason—as we would be denied even the poor consolation of knowing that a conflict might rid us of some bad men—for deprecating most strenuously either incendiary speeches or inflammatory publications, for all these things can tend to but one result, and that is, to arouse the worst passions of the most brutal and least reflecting people; and believe us, that there are none who appreciate more fully than *some* of the leading agitators in Kansas the truth of the assertion—that it is far easier to excite a mob, than to restrain that mob, when evil counsels have done their irritating work. And furthermore, do not every-day occurrences prove that those who are readiest to

"Cry havoc and let loose the dogs of war,"

are not always the first to be *in at the death*?

But we are not prepared to admit that a reasonable amount of "blood-letting," might not, *at one time*, have done the future Kansas a world of good, that is to say, if the bleeding could have been confined to her own "body politic." But when Kansas bleeds, Georgia must open her veins, and Massachusetts too, for when this comes to pass it requires no prophet to foretell a struggle which will crimson alike the Missouri and the Hudson. Were it otherwise, we would declare ourself an upholder of the doctrine that "a little *fighting* saves a deal of *quarrelling*." But of one thing we feel confident, Kansas Territory has already been the theatre of too many *windy* battles, in which words—words—words—bad words—harsh words—devilish words—have

been rattled down like hail-stones, night after night, and day after day, by interested *talkers* upon *either* side, who didn't care a brass farthing whether the true interests of the people went to *Pandemonium* or not, so long as they—Messrs. A B and C, the chief strikers upon the political anvil—got an office. Would to God that this great, and *at present* happy country, had some vast *lunatic asylum*, located, if you please, amid the wilds of the Rocky Mountains, where tried and convicted demagogues from all quarters of the Union, could find a home, be supported at the public expense, and punished by a forced perusal of their own mischief-making speeches, and verily, if this book could but accomplish the establishment of so laudable an institution, we, its author, should feel more than compensated for our labor and our time. Finally then,

"Farewell, and if forever, still farewell"

to Kansas and her children. We have, if we mistake not, left behind us, among our newly-formed friends of both the Free State and Pro-Slavery parties, many sincere well-wishers, whose kind regards will accompany us to our far Eastern home, and to whom our heart goes out, across the weary miles which separate us, and we flatter ourself, too, that for a New Yorker, and a newspaper correspondent, we have been wonderfully successful in our fraternizing with the so-called "Border Ruffians," a title, by the way, in which the residents of the frontier counties of Missouri take no little pride. We have even told you of a lady who, at a Kansas "sociable," refused to accept the hand of a Free State gentleman in the dance, because *she* was a "Border Ruffian." The epithet is therefore not one of reproach, save in the mouths of their political opponents. And since we have touched upon the subject, permit us, before closing this paragraph, to remark that a "Border Ruffian" is not always, as many would have you to suppose, necessarily either a villian, a low-bred fellow,

or a cold-blooded assassin, and yet were you to credit all that you hear, and we regret to add, much that you read, you might easily imagine that the Border Ruffian was a horrible compound of the three; in fact, a man so utterly degraded as to be unworthy of the Bible, and an outlaw, not only in the eyes of Christian men, but even to those who tell us weekly from their pulpits, of the blessings accorded to the peace-makers, who shall be called the children of God.

Let us, then—who have seen with our own eyes, and heard these matters with our personal ears, which are, we assure you, quite as long, *but no longer* than those of other people—sketch the inner and mental, as we have already done the outer and physical man of this much abused class of our Native American brotherhood.

The Border Ruffian, as the *better* half of his *sobriquet* indicates, is born and, as he himself would express it, "raised" upon the Border. He is generally a person of great endurance, strong limbs, iron constitution, and undoubted personal courage; he is, however, subjected to all the intellectual disadvantages and deprivations of bodily comforts, which are the inseparable accompaniments of a life upon the frontier. But, if some things have been denied, others have been granted; he can do that, my city friend, which you cannot; we would back him against you, and take long odds upon the issue, in a "rough and tumble" fight; where you would fail in hitting a barn-door with your rifle, he would draw the same weapon upon a squirrel, and turn coolly round, with his fore-finger upon the trigger, to ask you "where you would have him shot? in the right eye, or did you allow to prefer the other?" If you can flourish a yard stick, my nice young man, he understands the bowie knife; and though he couldn't do much at a "polka redowa"—"first time off"—he'd trouble you at a foot-race, and ride the scariest horse that ever put you in fear of your life, between Brooklyn

Ferry and John Eeyes. Be candid, then, and admit that in *physical* accomplishments at least, he is your *equal*. But stay, we haven't done with you yet; we want you to acknowledge something *more*. Would *you* have done better had you been in *his* place? Allow a little latitude then, for a difference in tastes, pursuits, circumstances, and above all in training. He sees the world in his way, not in yours; habit has taught him to consider a "bar fight" good fun, and a well-chinked log-cabin a "right smart house." You might consider the one a very terrible sort of amusement, and the other hardly fit for a cow-shed. What wonder, then, if our Border Ruffian *be* a little rough? Try it for yourself; spend six months in his shanty, and we will venture to say that, at the end of your probation, your dear friend, who *used* to know you very well upon Broadway, wouldn't be able to "tell tother from which," no, not even with the assistance of his best eye-glass. But does it necessarily follow that our "outsider" must, therefore, degenerate into a beast, or even be lacking in those finer qualifications of head and heart, which, after all, make or mar the man? We answer, most emphatically, *no*. For *as a general thing*, and we speak from a very large personal experience of American frontiersmen, as they really are, we firmly believe that, in *these respects*, they will compare—considering their educational defects—favorably with the inhabitants of any of our sea-board States, and we defy any man or any set of men to prove the contrary. Nay, we will even go farther, and declare that, were you to test this thing, and in so doing, place the man of the log-cabin beside the man of our metropolitan mansions, we would, in nine cases out of ten, back the Border Ruffian for natural intelligence, sterling integrity, and true worth, not to mention *honor*, against the smooth tongued, accurately-attired citizen, and trust confidently to the result to uphold our decision. Strike out the names of our self-made and rudely-nurtured men from the records of American

genius, literature, enterprise, and patriotism, and then tell us, if you please, how much would there be left upon the page, which History might find worthy of recording? We cry shame, therefore, upon the wholesale defamation of our own Far Western citizens, which has, of late, been scattered broad-cast through the land. If the shell be rough, does it then follow that there is no sweetness in its kernel? or must the diamond be deemed valueless, because there is no polish upon the stone?

And now, a word or two on the other side. Ultra Pro-Slavery men generally, and more particularly the *Missourians*, are but too much in the habit of denouncing every one with whom they come in contact—who is known to be a native, or even a resident of a Free State—as a fanatic, an Abolitionist, a negro-stealer, or, for that matter, almost anything which is bad, low, vile, and irreclaimable. They make the question of Slavery, in season and out of season, a *sine qua non*—an all-proving touch-stone—by which every man's moral and political character must, in their estimation, either stand or fall, as his belief inclines to the one side or the other. There is, in fact, but one question asked, and that is, "Do you endorse the peculiar institutions of the South?" or, as they define it, "Are you all right on the goose?" If you, being Free State born, answer *yea*, you may be believed, or, as frequently happens, be charged openly or in secret, with approving a doctrine by words, which you really do not endorse at heart. If, on the contrary, you should answer *no*, then look out for squalls; you may simply be insulted, but in some parts of the country, you might be tarred and feathered, and that too, without benefit of clergy. All this, of course, applies to a certain class, who are as great fanatics in their way, as the most incendiary Eastern Abolitionists, and we regret to add that this illibustering class, under the influence of an ill-judged outside pressure, is increasing daily; indeed, it would almost seem that the South was really striving to see the North

in its worst possible light, until, in their legislative assemblies, and public meetings, as well as in the editorials of their journals, we hear naught but disunion—Southern rights—war to the knife—and such like phrases, which must sound loudly *abroad*, and ought to be regarded as a national disgrace *at home*.

And now, farewell! Take care of yourselves, good people, and if you will go to Kansas, go there as conservative and law-abiding men. They feel the want of such persons there now, and will, it may be, need them still more in the stormy times to come; for, let the citizens of the United States take it to heart, that this disturbance in Kansas means something. At present, two thousand conservative men would do more to save Kansas and the Union than you

"Good easy men, who think full surely that
 Your greatness is a ripening,"

may ever condescend to realize until it is too late.

And now finally, farewell.

THE END.

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