

THE RED CLOUD CHIEF

VOL. II.

RED CLOUD, NEBRASKA, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 1875.

NO. 33

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THE ONLY PAPER IN WEBSTER CO. AND THE LARGEST PAPER IN THE REPUBLICAN VALLEY. THE CHIEF, A Weekly Newspaper, published at Red Cloud, Webster County, Nebraska, and is devoted to the Interests of Webster County, and SOUTHWEST NEBRASKA.

Special on will be given to all Home a cal matters Every thing of local or general interest transpiring in this and adjoining counties, will be accurately reported at the earliest possible date.

During the coming political campaign THE CHIEF will support and labor for the success of the Republican Party.

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All who are interested in having a wide-awake, lively, local newspaper published in the Republican Valley are invited to examine THE CHIEF and become subscribers.

MATHER & WARNER, Editors & Proprietors

WEY IS IT SO?

BY PATRICK RYAN. Some find work where some find rest, And so the weary world goes on; I sometimes wonder which is best; The answer comes, when life is gone.

Some eyes sleep when some eyes wake, And so the dreary night hours go; Some hearts beat when some hearts break; I often wonder why 'tis so.

Some will faint where some will fight; Some love the tent and some the field; I often wonder who are right; The ones who strive for those who yield.

Some hands fold, where other hands are lifted heavily in the strife; And so through ages and through lands Move on the two extremes of life.

Some feet halt where some feet tread; In restless march a throng way; Some struggle on where some have fled; Some seek, where other sleep away.

Some swords rust where others clash; Some fall back where some move on; Some seas are wild, where others dash; Until the battle has been won.

Some sleep on, while others keep The victors of the true and brave; They will not rest till roses creep Around their name, above a grave.

THE WISDOMS OF LIFE. Far away upon the hill-tops, Hang the purple clouds of even, Like the rainbow of the dawn, Teaching us to look to heaven.

But it seems an age of waiting Through a dark and so my night, And with fear all hope straying, It is hard to see the light.

One bright morn, all full of glory, I shall see the dawn of day, Sunshine tell its own sweet story Of the darkness—faded—gone.

All the joy and all the gladness, All my childhood's joys, Came to cheer my heart's sadness, Now so hard to surmount.

We are on life's boundless ocean, Borne upon its by a tide, Making the great sea our home, That is circling—resting—wide.

We are in the mighty tiding Of this heart's sea to and fro, And the life-lamp dimly burning, Every moment grows more low.

One by one we're going home, Y' clinging upon our latest care, Like the grain that falls to corn, Fading, surely, life in death.

Oh, the joy! oh, the sorrow! In this striving world of ours, Each to-day and each to-morrow, Minutes throb with brightest hours.

Select'd Story. In a pleasant little village in the far famed "Blue Grass" region of Kentucky, once lived a lawyer whose name was Hamilton, and whose character was as spotless as the untouched snow.

As the years passed over to the other side, William Hamilton's noble head grew gray, and at last he went away to dwell in that beautiful mansion on the banks of God's eternal river.

His golden-haired son Claude, had grown to be a man, and the blue-eyed faxen-haired little maiden was a witching, winsome, blooming beauty.

Claude inherited his father's generous nature, which, aside from his modest home, was all the good man had to leave, and with a small salary as deputy clerk of the county court, the young man maintained in tolerable comfort his widowed mother and fatherless sister.

He had no serious vices, except that once in awhile in a genial way, he had been led, by companionship with Ralph Rapley, to drink too much.

Ralph was a dark faced, hand-one and dashing fellow, who was generally very popular, but the keen observer could see, now and then, a sinister gleam in his small black eyes.

"Can I do anything for you, my lad?" said the lawyer.

"I have made bold, sir," said he, in reply, "having heard of your goodness, to come and ask you to let me read your books at night, and in the day time, I'll work at anything for you in exchange for the privilege, I have nothing else to give, and I want to be a lawyer."

"What have you read, my lad?" said Mr. Hamilton.

"Only this one book, sir," replied the boy, and he drew from the breast of his worn jacket a very cheap, and very much dog-eared copy of the new testament.

"My mother gave it to me before she died," he continued. "It was all she had to give, and a little girl taught me how to read it. When I go home at night from work in the woods, I take an armful of dry wood, and by its light on the hearth, I have often read this book through, page by page."

"I have many times dreamed that I was a good and great lawyer, and the poor man's friend, like you, and—"

"There that will do," interrupted Mr. Hamilton, cutting off the compliment, yet pleased; not only with the lad's rustic eloquence and good intentions, but also with the favorable opinion which the boy had formed of him, for he was philosopher enough to feel that he derived some selfish pleasure from his kindness to others, and meant it to be so; and while he was candid enough to admit that much to himself he was not so egotistical as to exhibit it to others.

The lad was taken into the lawyer's office as a student, with no other present duties than to keep the establishment in order, and those he owed to himself in the attainment of all the knowledge he could derive from constant intercourse with a well filled library and from the kind instructions of his benefactor.

In a few months he had improved to that extent, that he was of great assistance to Mr. Hamilton in his business affairs, and in a few years he was admitted to the bar as a promising young attorney.

His native eloquence his pathos and power in delivery, and his legal learning soon raised him to such a standing in his profession, that he was advised by his friend, and not village and go to a large city, where he could extend the circle of his usefulness, and at the same time, make for himself a fortune and a greater name.

During all this time, from the day the young attorney appeared in patches at the office door, until the time of his departure, he had been an inmate of Mr. Hamilton's home, and had won the friendship and esteem of the household. A golden-haired boy and a blue-eyed, faxen-haired little maiden, had come to William Hamilton's heart in those years, and they both loved the tall and gentle friend, whom their father and mother called Richard Forbes, and who used to tell them fairy stories and trot them on his knees, and they wept themselves to sleep in each other's arms, when he told them he was going away.

Richard did not forget the little girl who had taught him how to read, and who was now a full grown, hand-one and intelligent woman. His gratefulness had ripened into a pure and manly love for her, and they were married, and he took his way with him to a young and growing city in the far west where, in the course of a few years, as the city grew in population and importance, he grew in learning, reputation and wealth until he ranked among the leading jurists of the land, and was finally elected to the high and honorable position of one of the justices of the Supreme court of his adopted State.

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Another of Claude's very particular friends was Harry Talbot, a happy-hearted, whole-souled, jolly and raring young gentleman, whose father, like Ralph Rapley's, was a very rich man, and Harry had little else to do than to rejoice in the love of Claude's

charming sister, Callie.

Ralph too, loved the sweet girl, but she had seen that wicked glint in his eye, and had always, with maidenly instinct, avoided him, and with womanly tact, held him, aloof; and for this, Ralph Rapley secretly and deeply hated Harry Talbot, who had never dreamed that such a passion was lurking low, and dark, and treacherous in the ambush of his comrade's bosom.

They associated together as freely as brothers, and Harry often told Ralph of the joy and hope with which his love for Callie Hamilton was freighted.

One bright May morning, Claude and Harry and Ralph, well mounted, rode about ten miles into the country to attend a rustic picnic. They started so early that the dew still glistened over the grass blades, and the birds were warbling their sweetest notes, and every hedge was joyous with the music of the springtime.

Full of youthful buoyance, Claude and Harry were as happy as the blue birds which sang along their way, and Ralph was seemingly as happy as they, but in his heart rankled the venom of jealous hate, and near it lay a keen, broad blade which he had placed there with murderous intent against Harry Talbot.

The trio attended the picnic, and spent a jolly day with the hard hand-ed country boys and their red checked and baxton swatchcoats, and it was nearly dark when they started homeward.

After going about a mile they halted at a cross-road's tavern, and upon a pressing invitation from Ralph took a glass of bourbon. Several times this was repeated, until, when the young men were decidedly drunk, though so far as Ralph was concerned, the intoxication was for the most part feigned, and the whiskey dealer remarked when they went away:

"Ralph Rapley played off on those boys by throwing his liquor away, and he 'aint half as drunk as he lets on."

Just before mounting, Ralph managed to push Harry rather rudely against Claude, who became somewhat incensed against Harry, and the start of a half earnest, half joking, and altogether mauling quarrel which often occurs under such circumstances, and which both had forgotten in a few minutes.

As the young men rode on, it became evident that Harry and Claude, were getting to be more and more intoxicated, and it was about as much as they could do to keep their saddles.

After they had ridden three or four miles, and were now passing where the road led along a dark, north hillside which was thickly timbered, Ralph, riding behind the other two, suddenly leaned forward and struck Claude a heavy blow with the loaded butt end of his riding whip, which knocked him senseless to the ground, and in the next instant while that sinister light shone in his eye, he drew a terrible blow-knife from his breast pocket, and plunged it into Harry Talbot's heart. Then giving the wounded man's horse a severe cut over the head with the whip, the pain-stricken animal dashed off to the lower side of the road, and Harry's lifeless body fell with a dull thud to the earth.

The riderless horse galloped away in the darkness, and the murderer strove in vain to overtake him, but Claude's horse stood still where his master fell.

After a few moments Claude came to his senses, somewhat sobered by the terrific blow he had received, and the rough fall, and after searching in vain for his hat, which had tumbled off, mounted his faithful horse, and without perceiving the body of his murdered friend, rode away, bare headed, towards home, unable to conjecture how it had happened that he was left alone in such a place, at such a place, at such an hour, but imputing his severe bruises to an overhanging branch of a tree.

Within half a mile he was overtaken by a couple of gentlemen who lived in the same village where he dwelt, who had been attending court in a neighboring town, and the three traveled the remaining distance together.

Ralph Rapley suffered that night the fearful waking thoughts and horrible dreams of a cowardly murderer, and the next morning he was gone. He left a letter for the sheriff, stating that he had fled, in order to keep from hearing testimony against a friend who had murdered Harry Talbot.

The body of the murdered man was found next day, and Claude Hamilton was subsequently arrested as the author of the bloody deed. A preliminary investigation was held, and with the facts of the quarrel at the tavern, that Claude was overtaken, bare-headed near the place of the murder,

that his hat was found there, and added to these, the evidence of Ralph Rapley's letter—all staring the judge in the face—Claude was held for trial, and his case decided to be an unshakable one, and before the eyes of his heart broken mother, and doubly-stricken sister, he was taken away and locked up in the murderer's cell of the county jail.

Two long and weary years, Claude Hamilton lay in that felon's dungeon, while the attorney for the State was having the trial postponed, from one term of the court to another, and search was being made all over the country for the missing witness.

Finally, in the person of the keeper of a gambling house in San Francisco, Ralph Rapley was found by a detective and was brought to Kentucky, and the trial came on.

Poor Claude, almost broken in spirit and bleached and emaciated by his long confinement, was brought into court, manacled and in chains, but he knew he had not committed the fearful crime for which he was arraigned, and therefore he stood before the bar with a manful look of innocence, which almost put to shame those who had agreed among themselves, that he was guilty.

After the arraignment had been made, and the names of a couple of the village lawyers had been announced as the counsel appointed by the court for the defendant—for the Hamilton's had no money with which to employ able counsel—a tall man of stately bearing, and dignified mien, dressed in black broadcloth, and whose hair was mixed with the silver, that five and forty years lay on, but whose dark gray eyes bespoke eloquence and ability, rose quietly from his seat, and in an unobtrusive, calm voice, he asked the judge, and then in a somewhat hoarse voice, requested that he, too, should be enrolled as counsel for the prisoner.

While the strange lawyer conferred a few moments with the other attorneys for the defense, a flatter of applause, ran through the crowd, and as he turned toward the prisoner his large, benevolent eyes, Claude grasped his hand and thanked him with grateful tears, and the poor heart broken mother wept with a new born hope, and broke out:

"Thankfulness and trust, and love, Rapley turned a pale face.

The Sheriff commanded order, and soon a jury was empanelled and the witness sworn.

"Stand up, Claude Hamilton!" said the judge. "You are arraigned in this court, charged with, and to be tried for, the murder of Harry Talbot, in this county on the 15th of May, 18— Are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty!" Clear and firm, distinct, loud and musical, rang out the voice of Claude Hamilton in reply. And then he took his seat, and the trial proceeded.

Some men who were at the tavern, at the time the quarrel sprang up between Claude and Harry testified to that effect, and to the fact that the young men rode away together in a high state of excitement, and that all three of them seemed to be very much intoxicated.

Ralph Rapley's room mate, who was also a clerk in his father's store, testified that Claude, Harry and Ralph had been in his room before they left on the morning of the day of the picnic and the murder, and that he had witnessed a large bow-knife from a bureau drawer soon after they left; that Claude, as well as Ralph and Harry, knew of its whereabouts, and that the weapon produced in court, as having been found near Harry Talbot's dead body, was to the best of his knowledge and belief the same.

The men who overtook Claude, bare-headed near the place of the murder, proved that fact, and other witnesses identified Claude's hat, which had been found there. Indeed, it had his name, written with his own hand, rusted inside.

Then Ralph Rapley, pale, but almost defiant, and having the sympathy of the crowd, because he had been forced to bear witness against his friend, was brought to the stand and sworn.

He testified, that on a certain hillside, which he described, on the night of the 15th of May, 18—, by the clear light of the moon, he saw Claude Hamilton, in a drunken frenzy, stab with a bow-knife, until he fell dead Harry Talbot.

The strange lawyer introduced a few witnesses, by whom he proved Claude's good character before the murder; the fact that his nearest friends had never known him to carry a deadly weapon; and that he had always bitingly opposed it in others; that Ralph had surreptitiously thrown his liquor away, when the three were drinking at the cross-road's tavern, and the place where Harry's body had been found, was a north hillside in a thickly wooded section—all very trivial facts, in a case of such importance, but the

strange lawyer closed the testimony at this point, and the court adjourned for dinner.

Everybody had concluded by this time, that the new lawyer was a wash after all.

When the court convened after the noon recess the attorney for the prosecution opened the argument with a very elaborate and telling speech. He summed up the evidence against Claude in a startling manner; dwelt upon Ralph Rapley's direct testimony, and exhibited how strongly it was supported by circumstantial proof. He dealt with the old business, but made it an awful one, nevertheless for Claude, and his mother and sister, and again people shook their heads and said: "It is too plain."

Then the tall, darkly dressed, gray-eyed and gray-haired lawyer arose, and after saying:

"May it please the court and gentlemen of the jury," he turned to Claude and said:

"Stand up, young man, for before the sun goes down, I believe you will be a free man."

Then turning to the jury, he addressed them on the general merits of the case for about twenty minutes, in the most overpowering strain of oratory that ever fell from human lips. He presented the case as it really was, to wit: fragments, and flung to the winds the circumstantial evidence, and unmade the whole of the horrible details. Deep pathos came from every look and gesture, and words of liquid eloquence poured from his mouth by a torrent like water from a mountain stream. He spoke of Ralph Rapley's feigned drunkenness on that fatal day, his sudden flight, and his earlier when found. "And now," said he, "be come here to-day, and swear before this honorable court, that on that bloody night of the 15th of May, he saw by the clear light of the moon, that awful deed done by the hand of Claude Hamilton."

Suddenly then from his breast pocket—four near the place where he had once taken a dog-scarf testimony—the speaker drew forth an old almanac, and turning to the calendar for May, he passed it to the foreman of the jury, and said: "There, gentlemen of the jury, is the evidence, that on the night of that horrid crime the moon did not shine, and if it had Ralph Rapley could not have seen the deed done by Claude Hamilton or any north hillside, in a dense forest, and in its deep dark shade. However, in my deep dark shade. However, you know that William Hamilton, who has stood so often at this bar, and battled unpaid for the legal rights of poor men of this village, was the father of a murderer. I know it, for my name is Richard Forbes."

By this time the crowd had begun to grow, and the lawyer paused for breath, a great shout of joy rang through that old village court house, and all felt that Claude Hamilton was an innocent man.

After something like an hour had been restored, the old lawyer proceeded with his speech, and then everything became as quiet as the whisper of the lightest breeze.

"Ralph Rapley says he saw this deed done, and that he speaks the truth, for he was the arm that wielded the murderous blade now resting in the blood of his fellow; his hand that struck the cruel blow. And here, now, I charge him with perjury, and the murder of Harry Talbot, and that potent poison led his naturally vicious temper to the perpetration of this fearful double crime."

At this point Ralph Rapley fell to the floor. His accusing conscience had overmastered him, and while the crimson tide of his life flowed from his mouth and disordered nostrils, he confessed for the love of Callie Hamilton, he had murdered Harry Talbot, and in his extremity had sought to excuse Claude Hamilton of the crime.

Claude, and his sister and mother, now clinging to the old attorney's hand, and kissing him, and thanked him, and blessed him through their grateful tears, but disengaging himself from the mother and sister, he led Claude to an open window, and pointing to the setting sun, he said:

"Young man you have just saved your distance," and in another instant he was gone.

"And so it happened" that William Hamilton brought up and befriended, a long, poor, gray youth, to save his then unborn son from an ignominious death on the scaffold.

A rich wine dealer residing in London, recently, on his death-bed, being in great distress of mind, acknowledged to his friends that his agony was occasioned by the nature of the business he had followed for years. He stated that it had been his habit to purchase all the sour wines he could find by making use of yeast and other deleterious substances, to restore the wine to a palatable taste. He said he had no doubt that he had been the means of destroying hundreds of lives, as he had for some time noticed the injurious effects of his mixture on those who drank them. He had seen instances of this kind, where the unconscious victims of his capacity, after wasting and declining for years, despite the best of medical advice, went to their graves poisoned by the adulterated wine he had sold them. The wine, did not, he said, that a lawyer did he leave his children?