

## THE RED CLOUD CHIEF.

M. L. THOMAS EDITOR.

RED CLOUD, - NEBRASKA.

### TWO LOVERS OUT for a Walk.

Together we walked in the evening time,  
Above us the sky spread golden and clear,  
And he bent his head and looked in my eyes,  
As if he held me of all most dear.  
O! it was sweet in the evening time!

And our pathway went through fields of wheat,  
Narrow that path and rough the way,  
But he was near, and the birds sang true,  
And the stars came out in the twilight gray.  
O! it was sweet in the evening time!

Softly he spoke of the days long past,  
Softly of the blessed days to be;  
Close to his arm and closer I press—  
The corn-field path was given to me.  
O! it was sweet in the evening time!

Under the light green grass and the soft sun,  
The rocks fitted home through the purple shade;  
The nightingales sang where the thorns stood thin  
As I walked with him through the woodland glade.  
O! it was sweet in the evening time!

And the latest gleam of daylight died;  
My hand in his unfolded lay;  
We swept the dew from the wheat as we passed,  
For narrower, narrower wound the way.  
O! it was sweet in the evening time!

He looked in the depths of my eyes and said,  
"Sorrow and gladness will come for us, sweet;  
But together we'll walk through the fields of life  
Close as we walked through the fields of wheat."  
—Good Words.

### BEHIND TIME.

In '82 there wasn't a likelier fellow on the line than George Kirke. He was the son of a poor man and his mother was dead. His father was a confirmed invalid of the rheumatic order, and George played the dutiful son to him in a way that would astonish the young men of to-day.

Somehow, nobody knew exactly how, George had managed to pick up a good education, and he had polished it off, so to speak, by a two years' course at a commercial college.

Kirke began on Sandy Hill railroad when he was about twenty-one or two years old. First he was a brakeman. This railroad business is a regular succession, and, generally speaking, a man has to work his way up. It ain't often that he gets right up to the dignity of a conductor at one step, with a chance to pocket stray ten cent script, and the privilege of helping all the good looking and well dressed ladies out of the cars, and letting the homely sons with babies and handboxes in their arms, stumble out as best they may, while he is engrossed in talking to a man.

George did his duty so well that he was soon promoted to fireman, and after he had learned the workings of the machine he was made engineer and given an engine. The engine was one of the newest and best on the line, and was called the Flyaway, and George was very proud of it, you may well believe. I tell you now, sir, your true engine, r, one as is out-and-out for the business, and feels his responsibility, takes as much pride in his engine as the jockey does in his favorite race horse, and would sit up nights, or neglect his sweetheart, to keep the brasses and gills of his machine so's you could see your face in 'em.

There was another man who wanted George's chance. There's generally more than one after a paying job. Jack Haliday had been waiting some time to be engineer of the Flyaway, and when he lost it he was mad enough to pull his hair. He was a brakeman, likewise, and had been on the road full two years longer than Kirke, and it would seem that the chance really belonged to him but he was a quarrelsome, disagreeable fellow, with independence enough to have set an emperor up in business, and still have some left.

When Jack realized that George had got the inside track of him, his anger was at a white heat. He cursed Kirke and cursed the company, and old Whately, the superintendent, and things generally, until it seemed to be a pity that there was not something else to curse, he was in such a fine cursing order.

There was more than one thing which made Jack Haliday down on George Kirke. George had been his rival in many respects, and particularly where the fairer part of creation was concerned. George was a great favorite with the girls, for he was handsome and generous, and good natured, and Jack was sarcastic, and always on the contrary side, and the girls avoided him as they always should such a man.

Well, all expected that ill would come to George from Jack's bad blood against him and we warned him more than once, but he always laughed and reminded us of the old saying that "barking dogs never bite," which is true in the main.

And, as the time went on, until two, three, four months had passed since Kirke's promotion, and nothing had occurred, we forgot all about our apprehensions of evil, and if we thought of the matter at all, we concluded we had wronged Haliday by our suspicions.

It was a dark night in November, with considerable fog in the air, and strong appearance of rain. I was at Goloshia, the northern terminus of our road, looking after some repairs on a defective boiler, and I was coming down to New York on the 7:30 train—Kirke's train.

About seven there came a telegram from old Whately, whose summer residence was nearly midway between Goloshia and New York, and the old heathen had not yet forsaken it for the city. The telegraph operator came into the engine house where Kirke was at work and read it to him. Kirke made a note of it in his pocket book.

"Pay train on the line will meet you just west of Leeds, at 10:15. Spur on the siding at Deering's Cut, and well."

"WHATELY."

Kirke's watch hung on a nail beside the clock. It was a fancy of his always to hang it there when he was off a train so that he could make no mistake in the time.

He glanced at the clock and from it to his watch. Both indicated the same hour, 7:15.

"7:15," said Kirke, meditatively, "and we leave at 7:30 and the pay train meets us at Deering's Cut at 10:15. Scant time to make the run in this thick weather, but it must be managed." And

he turned away to give some orders to his fireman.

Jack Haliday was there, he had been strolling in and out for the last half hour, smoking a cigar, and swearing at the bad weather.

The train did not leave until near midnight, so he had plenty of time to swear.

We all went to the door and took a look at the weather and unanimously voted it duced bad, and then we walked up and down the platform, the white lantern which was to signal the approaching train—to tell them to go on, for all was well! On to their doom! She dashed across the track, flung the line to an amazed bystander, and striking the white lantern from the hand of the astonished official, she seized the ominous red lantern from its hook, and springing upon the track, waved it in the very teeth of the coming train. Two sharp short whistles told her that her signal was seen, and a moment later the train came to a stop, and officers rushed forward to confer with the train from Goloshia, which had not yet been telegraphed from the next station beyond.

The bell rang; I scrambled into my compartment on the Pullman, and felt horribly out of place among the salts and broadcloths and smell of musk—but I was in for a first-class ride and made the best of it so effectively that five minutes after, Gibson, who now fancies he owns all creation because he has got a silver coffin plate on his breast, with conductor on it, had shouted "all aboard!" I was sound asleep.

What occurred in other quarters to affect the fate of Kirke's train I learned afterward.

Old Whately, the superintendent of the road, as I guess I have already said, had a country residence in Leeds on a mountain spur, which commanded a view of the surrounding country for more than a score of miles. The line of the railway could be distinctly seen in each direction for fifteen miles, and Whately was wont to say that his lookout was worth more to the safety of trains than all the telegraph wires on the road.

Whately was a rich old buffer, kind enough in his way, but sharp as a ferret in looking after the road hands, and determined that every man should do his duty.

He had but one child, a daughter; and Floss Whately was the belle of the country. She was brave, beautiful and spirited, and more than once when her father had been away, had she assumed the responsibility of directing the trains and she had always acquitted herself with credit.

Old Whately was very proud of her as he had a right to be, and kept all the young fellows at a distance, until it was said that he intended keeping his daughter single till the Czar of all the Russias came on to marry her.

This night in November old Whately and Floss were out on the plazza of their country home, peering through the gloom and fog for the signal lights of the Goloshia train, which was nearly due.

"It's devilish strange it doesn't come in sight!" said Whately, laying down his night glass in disgust. "It is hard on to ten now! They ought to show their light round Spruce Pond by this time!"

"They telegraphed them, father? You let them know the pay train was on the road?" said Floss.

"To be sure. And good heavens! there is the head light on the pay train now! See! not ten miles away and running like the devil, as it always does!"

He pointed with trembling finger down the valley forge, where, far away, a mere speck in the gloom, could be seen a bright light, scarcely moving, it seemed, but those anxious watchers knew it was approaching at lightning speed. Father and daughter looked at each other in dismay.

"He can do it," said Floss, quickly. "If I can reach Leeds five minutes before the train—yes, two minutes—all will be well. Do not stop me, father!"

she said as he laid his hand on her arm. "But you must not go! It is dark and dimly lonely! No, Floss."

"Shall I go, father? Selim knows only me, and you could not ride him. I have ridden darker nights. And he is the only horse in the stable. Don't you remember? The others were sent to town yesterday."

Before old Whately could stop her she had ordered the hostler to saddle Selim, and she was already buttoning on her riding habit with rapid, nervous fingers.

The horse came pawing to the door, Floss sprang into the saddle, leaped down and kissed her father's forehead.

"Pray Heaven to spare me!" she cried hoarsely, and touching her horse with her whip, he bounded swiftly down the dark declivity.

It was raining steadily now and the gloom was intense, but Selim was used to the road, and the rider was courageous. She urged him on at the top of his speed, up hill and down through Pine Valley, over Pulpit Hill, and then struck upon the smooth road which stretched away to the Leeds, some two miles, and straight as an arrow.

She could see the headlight in the distance, and to her excited fancy it seemed but a stone's throw away. She even thought for a moment that she heard the grind of the wheels on the

track, but it was only the sighing of the wind in the pines.

On and still on she went. Selim seemed to fly. One might have fancied that he knew his mistress was on an errand of life or death. The lights of the station were in view—nay, she even saw the station master's white lantern as he rolled up and down the platform—the white lantern which was to signal the approaching train—to tell them to go on, for all was well!

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"Garth, are you going with me on the Flyaway?"

"No, thank ye," said I, "I get enough of that sort of thing in my every day life; I am to do a little swell business to-night and take passage in a palace car. Want to rest my back. Good night to ye, and hol' her in well round Rocky Bottom curve. The road is a little shaky."

"Aye, aye, sir!" responded Kirke, and he swung himself into position on the Flyaway.

The bell rang; I scrambled into my compartment on the Pullman, and felt horribly out of place among the salts and broadcloths and smell of musk—but I was in for a first-class ride and made the best of it so effectively that five minutes after, Gibson, who now fancies he owns all creation because he has got a silver coffin plate on his breast, with conductor on it, had shouted "all aboard!" I was sound asleep.

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