

UNRETURNING.

Three things never come again: Snow may vanish from the plain, Blossoms from the daisy bed, Verdure from the broken sod...

Never to the bow that bends Comes the arrow that it sends; Spent in space, its airy flight Vanishes like lost delight...

Never comes the chance that passed That one moment was its last, Though thy life is on it hung, Though thy death beneath it swung...

Never shall thy spoken word Be again un-said, un-heard, Well its work thy utterance wrought, Weep or weep where'er it brought...

Clay and tears of blood and fire; My wish pang of mad desire; Ourselves and soul, and all, The same sentence to recall...

DOROTHY WHITCOMBE.

Why She Called Herself a "Mean Old Woman."

The sun was slowly rising in the East. Brighter and brighter grew the great round ball, until with a sudden movement it seemed to burst, and a golden, dazzling flood covered the sky...

It was just after the battle of Long Island, where the Americans, pressed in on every side, had suffered a serious defeat, and the Tories were everywhere...

God Farmer Whitcombe, among all this glory of British, was a true patriot in the cause of freedom, but, residing as he did in a Tory neighborhood, outside from very near neighbors he was thought to be a loyalist.

Great consternation reigned in the kitchen of the farm-house on that beautiful morning, for news of the American defeat had just reached there. Joel Ashley, the boy who had brought the news, just now added to his tale...

"The nasty varnents, not a rest or a morsel of food will they get here, and if they demand it, why, they will find out with whom they have to deal..."

"The young woman answered, in surprise. 'Not! They have, and what's more, they'll probably come here and ask for lodging and food...'

"Well, well," was all Patty Whitcombe could find to say, but she finally exclaimed: "Mother, if you refuse them admission they may seize the property and fire the house..."

"That's so," the old woman said, musingly. "I suppose if it comes to the worst we'll have to let them in. Breakfast is ready; come, father..."

They had not sooner sat down when a knock was heard at the door. The two men looked at each other, and the old woman's lips were just framed to say: "Come in," when his wife said: "No, you don't, father; I'll meet 'em; but the younger woman was even quicker, and the dame sat down on her chair..."

But for all her bravery, Patty felt a sort of faint-heartedness creeping over her, she threw upon the floor, and there, to confirm her worst fears, she saw soldiers in the uniform of the British redcoats...

Conquering her repugnance with a mighty effort she managed to say: "You and your comrades may enter and partake of our breakfast..."

clously at them through her glasses. Her daughter-in-law, noticing these glances, stepped behind her and whispered: "Not so fierce, mother, not so fierce, or they will surely suspect something..."

"Don't fret; perhaps you would like me to go up to them, and shake hands with 'em, and say why didn't they come before, and hope they'll stay, oh! the wretches," and the old lady shook herself with a grim vehemence...

"No, we have had sufficient, thanks to your kindness," courteously replied the older man. "Tain't no thanks to me at all, she returned, tartly, 'you're soldiers, so I had to do it..."

"What an exceedingly curious cream cup," exclaimed the younger man, taking the curious piece of workmanship in hand, examining it, with the air of a connoisseur. That was the last drop in Mistress Dorothy's cup of bitterness which was already overflowing...

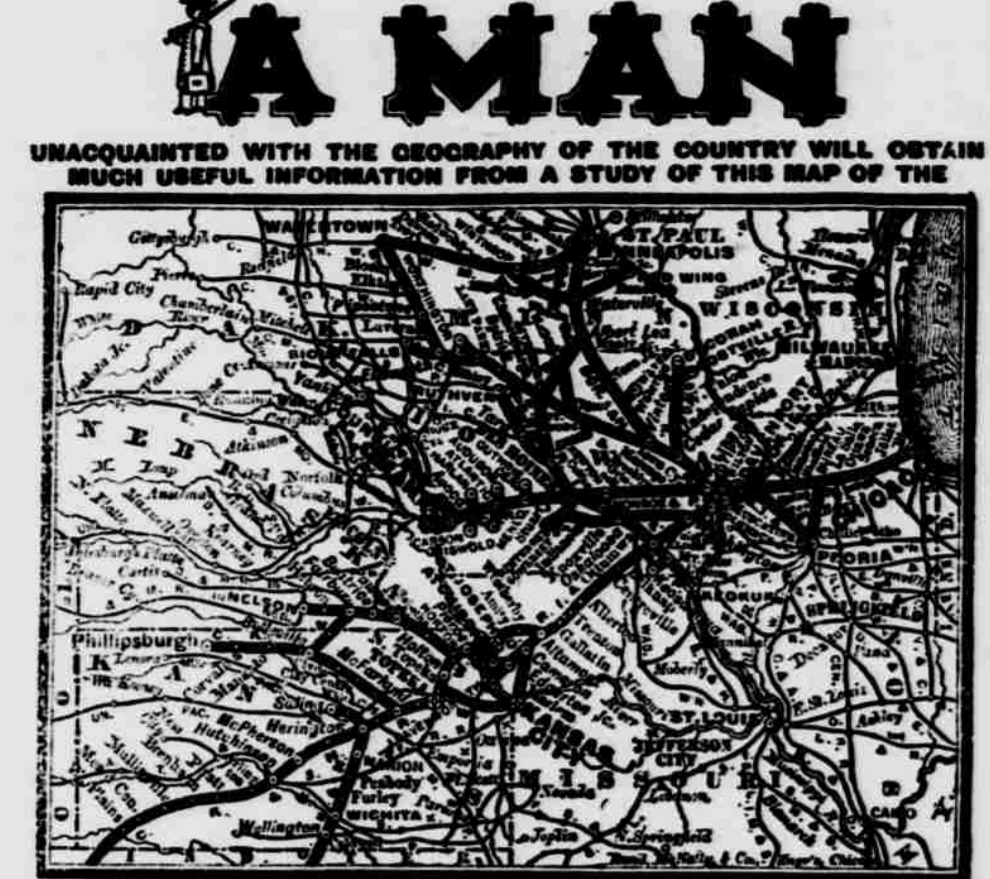
"But, my dear madam," the young man broke in, "I assure you I meant no harm, and really my friend and I need a rest so badly that we are afraid we must trespass on your hospitality..."

"Taint none of your business," was the uncompromising reply. "Well, will you allow us a bed?" he asked. "I think it's time you was a startin'," was the laconic answer...

"You know where the Continentals are stationed about ten miles from here, eh?" Joel nodded. "Well, you just stir yourself and go over there and tell their commander there are two redcoats in this house and if they want them to come for them right away, right away, mind you; now hurry..."

Madam sat rocking herself violently to and fro. "There, you've gone and done another mean thing," she said to herself, angrily. "Doin' a mean thing is just like tellin' a lie, you do one and you'll surely do another; I guess I'll just peek in the room and see if they've set it afire yet..."

Suddenly—what is that she hears! A hearty laugh re-echoed throughout the house. She hurried to the door where the soldiers were. And what did she see! Her two redcoats shaking hands heartily with the Continentals...



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