## KEZIAH THEW.

BY O. T. BEARD. Benjamin Thew was returning homeshoulder when he heard of Basil Boynwas little more than a mountain path

"You're a famous shot, uncle Ben," he said, "a famous shot." Benjamin eyes, which deepened greatly when she my promise in sperit as well as word." Thew was very proud of his skill as a turned toward her father and saw the hunter and of his daughter Keziah. stern look on his face. Basil saw noth- his feet, and in time the guests assem-He turned his dust-colored, wrinkled ing of all this. He was eager to escort bled at Thew's house to witness the be young Baz Boynford."

never knew a Whig yit that had narve for rail shootin'."

"Why, Uncle Ben, I thought you an' Baz were great friends. I've been hearing he is to be half of a wedding at your house, and your Kizzie t'other

thin nose, which was curved like the moustache, and he replied : "Him, Baz Boynford, why his father in his time was the rankest old Whig on the mountain. What an idea! Who

started that lie?" "I d'no, Uncle Ben. I heeard it." "It's all moonshine, Ez. No halffaced Whig can do any marrying with Kiz whilst I live, nor after; red deer

don't mate with gray squirrel." An hour later, after Beujamin Thew had carefully rubbed his rifle, probed a piece of buckskin into its nozzle and laid it on the pegs near the broad chimney in his kitchen, he turned to Keziah and said : "What's this I hear aboot Baz Boynford ?"

Keziah looked up from the browning corn bread in the Dutch oven, the lid of which she had just removed, and replied: "I don't know, pap, I didn't carry your ears."

"I denied it, Kizzie, right flat." Keziah bent lower over the oven and

said: "Yes, pap, what did you hear?" "I heerd that Baz Boynford had his eyes set on you."

"Who told you that, pap?"

"I met Ez Lewis when I was coming down the mountain and he told me." Hearing no response from his daughter Thew asked: "What do you say

to that, Kizzie?" "Oh, to that. I'm sure I think if Ez Lewis used his hands more and his tongue less he would be much better

"Yes, that may be so, Kizzie, he is raither a shiftless critter, but you are not answering about Baz Boynford's

eyes on you." "Oh, that; well, I'm sure they're not very bad eyes, pap. I've seen a

good many worse.' Thew stood beside his daughter, laid one of his long bony hands on her shoulder and said : "Now look here, Kizzie, sence you've no mother nor sister nor brother I'm responsible for

Keziah replied laughingly: "Of course you are, pap, and I am responsible for you since you have no one else to care for you, and you don't know how it worries me sometimes."

"Yes, of course, Kizzie, and my duty is to keep you from going wrong." Keziah's face became very red at this and she exclaimed hotly; "Me going wrong, pap; did Ezra Lewis dare say that, and did you hear it without shooting him?"

"He said there was talk of you and Baz Boynford marrying." "Oh, that! Is that all?"

"What worse wrong can you do than that, Kizzie?"

"Why, that's nothing, pap." "Nothing! That nothing! Why, Kiz-z-i-e, how you talk -- Nothing! Nothing! and him-a-Whig!"

"Bad! Why, what in the world can

"What, to be a Whig?" exclaimed Keziah with a little laugh; "and what are you, pap?"

"Me! me! Thank God there ain't nary drop of Whig blood in my veins.' "Isn't there, pap? I didn't krow." Then after a little pause Keziah added: "I'm sure my marrying Baz wouldn't add any Whig blood to your veins. Would it, pap!"

Keziah turned the smoking corn bread out of the Dutch oven and laid it on the table while she was speaking. Her father, who was already seated, looked across the table and said: "Kizzie, I'm responsible for you. There ain't no one else, and I'm responsible. I must do my duty for you, daughter, and you must remember you are a

"And he is a Boynford," said Keziah, interrupting, "but people of different names marry, den't they, pap?" "Yes, yes, Kizzie, that's all right. I don't object to the name, but he is as much like his father as one fox is a fellow's dead he loses his argement, like another."

"Well, pap, that isn't saying anything very bad about Baz. I always have heard his father was a very gentle, good-tempered and honest

"I have nothing to say against that Kizzie, nothing, no, nothing against that, but-he-was-a-Whig, and I am responsible for you. I must do my duty by you, Kizzie, mind that, child-I must do my duty-and I won't have any foolishness with Baz Boynford."

Then he helped himself liberally to venison and corn bread. He had said his say and laid down the law of mar- took a long time to git the argement riage in his household. Then he talked of his long and successful tramp over eating little and wondering much how briskly. "Oh," he said, you're Kizzie's paid; no claims after that time will be acknow-ledged.

She would get down the valley to a father, that makes the load lighter, Douglastown, August 26, 1885,

frolic to be held that night, to which Uncle Ben." all the young people of the neighborhood were invited.

While she was wondering she heard ward with a long, heavy rifle on his footsteps on the porch and a tap at the but I'm thinking if you want Kizzie ford's attentions to his daughter Keziah. but Basil Boynford. He was tall, long about your convincing argement." He met Ezra Lewis in the road, which | limbed, square shouldered, and slightly angular, but with his bright gray eyes, over the rugged eastern spurs of the light brown hair, and the light down Alleghanys. Ezra stopped in the road of youth on the chin of his nut brown, you and wanted Kizzie right bad, I to admire the large, fat buck thrown good humored face, he was very pleas- think I wouldn't never let her hear it; across the saddle of the horse Thew was ant to look on. When Keziah saw him not that I'm objecting, Baz, you may

Lewis added, "I reckon there ain't your said. "You ought to come along, to Thew's. On the way he confided to ekal in this part of Virginny onless it Uncle Ben" (so everyone called Benja- her the story of the cold night on the "Yes," Thew replied, "I hear he can young again." Basil was full of love wards said: "It only shows what a shoot a leetle at a blazed tree, but I and hope and there was a rollicking fool a man can be at times." Rhoda jollity in his voice.

Boynford, Keziah Thew can't go down

"Sho, Uncle Ben, you're joking; of course we'll go. Why, look here, At this the point of Thew's high, Uncle Ben, Kizzie wouldn't go with any one else, and I wouldn't go with beak of an eagle, appeared to creep any one but Kizzie. Why, bless you, down toward his short, straggling Uncle Ben, it wouldn't be any frolic, not to me, without Kizzie."

While Basil was speaking Thew walked over to the wall and lifted his rifle from the pegs on which it rested. Then turning toward Basil, he said: after my daughter."

"Sho, now!" said Basil, laughing good naturedly. "If I can swallow your rank locofocoism without getting sick, you oughtn't to make faces over the little Whig in me."

With that Benjamin Thew raised his rifle, and with an ominous softness in his voice he said : "Basil Boynford, I'll give you just a minute to git out inter the road."

Keziah ran in before the muzzle her father's rifle to shelter Basil, but he brushed her gently aside and said 'Let him shoot, Kizzie, if he wants to." Then looking into the eye sighting along the rifle barrel he added:

"You needn't shoot, Uncle Ben, onless you're spiling for it. That argement is good; it convinces me I ought to go." Then he went out into the road. And the frolic in the valley was held without the presence of either Basil or Keziah.

If any imagine that Keziah put Basil out of her heart after this, they are mistaken. Opposition does not work that way, and Basil only laughed, greeted Thew with a pleasant "How de Uncle Ben," whenever he met him, and whispered soft nonsense to Keziah on the sly whenever he could. So the months wore away until Christmas. The third day after Christmas Benjamin Thew started away from home early in the morning with his long trusty rifle on his shoulder. At midnight, a thing which never occurred before, he was not at home. Near daylight Basil Boynford entered Thew's house carrying Benjamin Thew on his

In the middle of the afternoon Thew slipped on the rocks; in falling he sprained an ankle severely and at the same time disturbed a great loose rock which rolled over against the stones between which he fell, so that he was confined and in danger of being crushed if he attempted to move the rock in any but one direction, and as to that one he was powerless. Basil Boynford, who was hunting higher up on the mountain, heard his cries for help and hurried to his side. When he saw who it was and how he was confined Basil sat down near him with his rifle across

"Well, Uncle Ben," he said, quietly, 'You're in a pretty tight fix, ain't you? she heard a voice behind her: "Kizzie, Cottons, Winceys Accidents ain't no respecters of persons, | is that you, or am I dreaming?" It was are they Uncle Ben? Even your old Basil Boynford who spoke. The surhide bound locofocus are liable to 'em, and you'd like to have help, wouldn't his life hung on a slender thread. Kezyou, Uncle Ben? Now I'm willing to iah bent over and kissed him. From "Oh, indeed, is that so dreadful help you if you are a locofoco-for a price, Uncle Ben'; for a price, mind you! I won't make any faces about your lecofocoism, and you stand out of home, where she nursed him until he the way between me and Kizzie. That's the price, Uncle Ben."

Thew refused. \* You had the best of the argement, touches the land with happiness and that night. You put me out inter the covers it with garlands. Many have road, and I've got just a leetle the best gone wooing to the home of Keziah eend of the argement now." So Basil Thew and to all she has said: - "I never waited, sitting on a rock a few feet had heart enough for but one love," away and occasionally walking up and and though in all these years she has down, stamping his feet to beat the gone every day, until the threads of gray chill out of his bones. The sun went in her head outnumber the brown, to down, the night air became colder, and see what she could do for mutilated Thew had not uttered one word after Basil Boynford, he has never spoken his first refusal of assent to Basil's pro- of the love in his heart which time and

Shortly after midnight Basil stood near his head and said gently: "I'm sorry for you, Uncle Ben, for you're a pretty good man, as locofocoses go, and I'm thinking the heavy frost will make it powerful onpleasant for you afore morning, and after that you can't stand between me and Kizzie. When

don't he, Uncle Ben?" Then thew muttered, "I wish I had pledged her! I wish I had." After a little pause he added, "I ain't sure but you're right about that, Baz, and I s'pose I might as well have it go on while I am living as after I'm dead." "That's about the size of it, Uncle Ben, and a very sensible way of looking

Very well, Baz, get me out and help

"Certain, Uncle Ben, certain, and I'm powerful sorry if you've been inconvenienced, powerful sorry. But you see it's

Basil rolled the stone away and lifted the mountains. But if fathers forget Thew, who, with the cold and his that love takes no account of politics injury was unable to stand on his or religion, young daughters, with love feet. Then Basil took the injured and in their hearts, do not, and certainly chilled man on his back. When they her father's words did not convince were in sight of Thew's home Benjamin Keziah there was any great wickedness Thew said: "Baz, you're a pretty in thinking of Basil Boynford and she stout lad, for I ain't no chicken to A LL persons indebted to the undersigned are same within the next three months, otherwise legal bent her brown face over her plate, carry." Basil laughed and walked on proceedings may be commenced; and all persons having claims will if required have the amounts

"Well, Baz," Thew responded, "there are worse fellows than you, and I'm a man of my word, in letter and sperit, door, and who of all men should enter bad you had better not brag much Notary "Oh, Uncle Ben, I'm not of bragging

stock. "That's sensible, Baz, and if I was much sweetness gathered about her tell her as soon as you get to the door, mouth and much trouble in her but I'm giving you fair warning to keep In two weeks Benjamin Thew was on

face towards the setting sun, and a grim Keziah to the frolic in the valley, and marriage of Keziah and Basil. Among self-satisfied smile gathered about the he plunged into his mission at once. the guests was one Rhoda Boynford, a cornors of his thin lips. Then Ezra "We'll have a splendid time," so he cousin of Basil's. He accompanied her min Thew), "you'll think yourself | mountain side, about which he afterwas an open-mouthed, rattle-brained Then Benjamin Thew spoke: "Basil | creature. She ran in to the room where Keziah was dressed, and looking pretty to the valley or anywhere else with as brides do, only waiting for the arrival of Basil, to have the ceremony begin. "Oh, how lovely you look. I don't wonder at Basil, dear me, but it

was the boldest and smartest thing, and

came to consent?"

Then the story came out. Rattlebrained Rhoda did not observe how the color was disappearing from Keziah's cheek. When she concluded Keziah opened the door and seeing Basil she beckoned to him. When he was in the "I won't have any Whig running here room and the door closed she asked, "Basil, is this story Rhoda tells true?" Basil hesitated a little, then admitted. Then Keziah said: "Come into the other room, Basil." There was something in her low voice that filled Basil with alarm. In the other room and amongst the guests, Keziah raised her voice. "Friends," she said, "there will be no marriage here to-day." There was a little trembling in her voice which was quite strong and audible to everyone in the room. Basil expostulated. So did Benjamin Thew. Then his daughter whispered in his ear, "Pap, I have heard how he won your

"Nonsense, Kizzie, I think I would have done the same for your mother.' "I don't believe it, pap. It was cruel, very cruel, and I will never marry any man who can be cruel to my father. Never, pap! never!"

Then Keziah turned to the wondering guests: "Come, friends, where the fiddle. Let us dance." She took the arm of the oldest man in the party. "Come, Uncle Ted, you'll be my partner. If we don't have a wedding we'll have a good time all the same." The music struck up and light feet carried wondering heads through the mazes of the Virginia reel.

Five years later the war began. Benjamin Thew and Basil Boynford espoused different sides in the great contest. At the first Bull Run, Benjamin Thew heard the command: "Forward! quick center! double quick! march!' He rushed forward and never returned He was buried on the field where he fell beside his comrades in gray.

The war storm rolled over the land. Several times it approached the home of Keziah Thew and then receded. In 1863 it burst upon a valley a few miles away. When the battle was over the wrecks of humanity were gathered in a temporary hospital. Tender-hearted Keziah came down from the hills to help the suffering: "I am not on your side," she said to the officer in charge, "but pity and affection have no sides."

The surgeon looked into her sweet. patient face, and gladly accepted her aid. She went about among the wounded blue coats like a ministering angel with a face of pity and a touch of gentleness helping the living and whispering words of comfort to the dying. On the second night she was in camp geons had amputated both his legs and that moment he began to grow stronger. When camp broke up, Keziah carried Basil over the hills to her was as well as he ever will be in this world, then she drove with him to his little farm and set his house in order. "All right, Uncle Ben, I'll wait. Years have passed away. Sweet peace Keziah's tender care have strengthened.



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