

## ADVENTURE OF A RANGER.

We do not know that we can fill a few pages more profitably, than by relating an adventure of our neighbour and friend Mr. Thomas Higgins, as we have heard it from his own mouth. He resides within a few miles of Vandalia, and receives a pension from the United States, for his services. The following statement may be relied upon, for Mr. Higgins is a man of strict veracity; his companions have corroborated his narrative and his wounds afford ample proof of his courage and sufferings.

Tom Higgins, as he is usually called, is a native of Kentucky, and is one of the best examples extant of the genuine backwoodsman. During the last war, at the age of nineteen, he enlisted in the *Rangers*, a corps of mounted men, raised expressly for the protection of the western frontiers. On the 30th of August, 1814, he was one of a party of twelve men, under the command of Lieutenant Journey, who were posted at Hill Station, a small stockade, about eight miles south of the present village of Greenville, and something more than twenty miles from Vandalia. These towns were not then in existence; and the surrounding country was one vast wilderness. During the day last mentioned, 'Indian signs' were seen about half a mile from the station, and at night the savages were seen prowling near the fort, but no alarm was given. On the following day, Mr. Journey, moved out with his party in pursuit of the Indians. Passing round the fence of a corn field, adjoining the fort, they struck across the prairie, and had not proceeded more than a quarter of a mile, when in crossing a small ridge, which was covered with a hazel thicket, and in full view of the station, they fell into an ambuscade of the Indians, who rose suddenly round them, to the number of seventy or eighty, and fired. Four of the party were killed, among whom was Lieutenant Journey; one other fell, badly wounded, and the rest fled, except Hig-

gins. It was an uncommonly sultry morning; the day was just dawning; a heavy dew had fallen the preceding night; the air was humid, and the smoke from the guns hung in a heavy cloud over the place. Under cover of this cloud, Higgins' surviving companions had escaped, supposing that all were left dead, or at all events it would be rashness to attempt to rescue them from so overwhelming a force. Higgins' horse had been shot through the neck, and fell to his knees and rose again, several times. Believing the animal to be mortally wounded, he dismounted, but finding that the wound had not greatly disabled him, he continued to hold the bridle; as he now felt confident of being able to make good his retreat, he determined to fire off his gun before he retired. He looked round for a tree. There was but one, a small elm, and he made for this, intending to shoot from behind it, but at this moment the cloud of smoke rose partially from before him, disclosing to his view a number of Indians, none of whom discovered him. One of them stood within a few paces, loading his gun, and at him Higgins took a deliberate aim and fired, and the Indian fell. Mr. Higgins, still concealed by the smoke, re-loaded his gun, mounted, and turned to fly, when a low voice near him hailed him with, 'Tom, you won't leave me.'

On looking round, he discovered the speaker to be one of his own companions, named Burgess, who was lying wounded on the ground, and he replied instantly, 'no, I'll not leave you; come along, and I'll take care of you.'

'I can't come,' replied Burgess, 'my leg is smashed all to pieces.'

Higgins sprang from his saddle, and picking up his comrade, whose ankle bone was broken, in his arms, he proceeded to lift him on his horse, telling him to fly; and that he would make his own way on foot. But the horse taking fright at this instant, darting off, leaving Higgins, with his wounded friend, on foot. Still the cool bravery of the former was sufficient for every emergency, and setting Burgess down gently, he told him, 'now, my good fellow, you must hop off on your three legs, while I stay between you and the Indians, and keep them off'—instructing him at the time to get into the highest grass, and crawl as close to the ground as possible. Burgess followed his advice, and escape unnoticed.

The cloud of smoke, which had partially opened before them, as he faced the enemy, still lay thick behind him, and as he plunged through this, he left it, together with the ridge, and the hazel thicket, between him and the main body of the Indians, and was retiring unobserved by them. Under these circumstances, it is probable that if he had retreated in a direct line towards the station, he might easily have effected his es-

cape, but Burgess was slowly crawling away in that direction, and the gallant Higgins, who coolly surveyed the whole ground, foresaw, that if he pursued the same track, and should be discovered, his friend would be endangered. He therefore took the heroic resolution of diverging from the true course so far, as that any of the enemy who should follow him, would not fall in with Burgess. With this intention he moved stealthily along through the smoke and bushes, intending when he emerged to retreat at full speed. But as he left the thicket he beheld a large Indian before him, and two others on the other side, in the direction of the fort. Tom coolly surveyed his foes, and began to chalk out his track; for although in the confidence of his own activity and courage, he felt undismayed at such odds, yet he found it necessary to act the general. Having an enemy on each flank, he determined to separate them, and fight them singly. Making for a ravine, which was not far off, he bounded away, but soon found one of his limbs failed him, having received a ball in the first fire, which until now he scarcely noticed. The largest Indian was following him closely. The other two were closing on him, and he found that unless he could dispose of the first one, he must be overpowered. He therefore halted resolved to receive a fire; and the Indian at a few paces distant, raised his rifle: Higgins watched his adversary's eye, and just as he thought his finger pressed the trigger suddenly threw his side to him. It is probable that this motion saved his life, for the ball entered his thigh, which would have pierced his body. Tom fell, but rose again, and ran, and the largest Indian, certain of his prey, loaded again, and with the two others pursued. Higgins had again fallen, and as he arose, they all three fired, and he received all their balls. He now fell and rose several times, and the Indians throwing away their guns, advanced on him, with spears and knives. They frequently charged upon him, but upon his presenting his gun at one or the other, they fell back. At last, the largest one, thinking probably from Tom's reserving his fire so long, that his gun was empty, charged boldly up to him; and Higgins, with a steady aim shot him dead.

With four bullets in his body, with an empty gun, two Indians before him, and a whole tribe but a few rods off, almost any other man would have despaired. But Tom Higgins had no such notion. The Indian whom he had last slain was the most dangerous of the three; and he felt little fear of the others. He had been near enough to see their eyes, and he knew human nature sufficiently to discover, that he was their superior in courage. He therefore faced them, and began to load his rifle. They raised a whoop, and rushed on him. 'They kept their distance as long as my rifle was loaded,' said he, 'but now when they knew that it was empty, they were better soldiers.' A fierce and bloody conflict ensued. The Indians rushed upon Tom, stabbed him in many places, but it happened, fortunately, that the shafts of their spears were thin poles, rigged hastily for the occasion, which bent whenever a point struck a rib, or encountered the opposition of one of Higgins' tough muscles. From this cause and the continued exertion of his hand and rifle in warding off their thrusts, the wounds thus made were not deep, but his whole front was covered with gashes, of which the scars yet remain in honorable proof of his valor. At last one of them threw his tomahawk, the edge sunk deep in Higgins' cheek, passed through his ear, which it severed, laid bare his skull to the back of his head, and stretched him on the plain. The Indians rushed on, but Tom instantly recovered his self-possession, and kept them off with his hands and feet, until he succeeded in grasping one of their spears, which, as the Indian attempted to pull from him aided him to rise, and clubbing his rifle, he rushed upon the nearest of his foes, and dashed his brains out, in doing which, he broke the stock to pieces, retaining the barrel only in his hand.

The other Indian, however warily he had fought before, now came manfully into battle. It is probable that he felt his character as a warrior at stake. To have fled from a desperately wounded man almost disgraced, or to have suffered his victim to escape, would have tarnished his manhood. Uttering a terrific yell, he rushed on, attempting to stab the exhausted ranger, while the latter warding off the spear with one hand, brandished his rifle barrel with the other. The Indian unwounded, was now by far the most powerful man; but the moral courage of our hero prevailed, and the savage unable to bear the fierce glance of the un-

tamed eye, began to retreat slowly towards the place where he had dropped his rifle. Tom knew that if the Indian recovered his gun, his own case was hopeless; and throwing away his rifle barrel, he drew his hunting knife, and rushed in upon him.

A desperate strife ensued, and several deep gashes were incised; but the Indian succeeded in casting Higgins from him, and ran to the spot where he had thrown down his gun, while Tom searched for the gun of the other Indian.

By this time, the smoke which lay between the combatants and the main body of the Indians, had passed away, and a number of the latter having passed the hazel thicket, were in full view. It seemed therefore, as if nothing could save our heroic ranger. But relief was at hand. The little garrison at the station, six or seven in number, had witnessed the whole of this remarkable combat. There was among them a heroic woman, a Mrs. Purseley, who, when she saw Higgins contending singly with the foe, urged the men to go to his rescue. The rangers at first considered the attempt as hopeless, as the Indians outnumbered them ten to one. But Mrs. Purseley declaring that so fine a fellow should not be lost for want of help, snatched a rifle out of her husband's hand, and jumping on a horse, sallied out. The men, who would not be outdone by a woman, followed, full gallop towards the place of combat. A scene of intense interest ensued. The Indians at the thicket had just discovered Tom, and were rushing down towards him with savage yells—his friends were spurring their horses to reach him first. Higgins exhausted with the loss of blood, had fallen and fainted—while his adversary too intent on his prey, was looking for his rifle. The rangers reached the ground first. Tom's friends lifted him up, threw him across a horse before one of the party, and turned to retreat just as the Indians came up. They made good their retreat, and the Indians retired.

We repeat this adventure just as it was related to us, and have no doubt that it is correct; or as nearly as Mr. Higgins' opportunities for observation would admit; for as he observes, he was in a desperate bad fix about that time, and it was a powerful bad chance for a man to take notice of what was going on around him.

After being carried into the fort, he remained insensible for some days, and his life was preserved by his friends, who extracted all the balls but two, which remained in his thigh, one of which gave him great pain. At length he heard that a physician had settled within a day's ride of him, whom he went to see. The physician was willing to extract the ball, but asked the moderate sum of fifty dollars for the operation. This Tom flatly refused, as it was more than half a year's pension. When he reached home, he requested his wife to hand him a razor. The exercise of riding had so chafed the part, that the ball could be felt. With the assistance of his help mate, he very deliberately laid open his thigh, until the edge of the razor touched the bullet, and inserting his two thumbs into the gash, 'fired it out,' as he assured us, 'without costing a cent.' The other ball remains in his limb yet, but gives him no trouble, except when he uses violent exercise. He is now one of the most successful hunters in the country, and it still takes the best of men to handle him.

From the Metropolitan.

## THE MOTHER'S FIRST TRIAL.

We miss thee from our side, sweet boy, we miss thee from our heart,  
With thine eye of beaming archness, and thy voice of playful mirth;  
Gladness was ever in thy smile, and sunshine on thy brow,  
Thou hast not caused our anxious hearts a single pang till now;  
Thy winning grace, thy artless glee, thy docile love, have cast  
A bright and lasting radiance o'er the records of the past;  
Home, to our thoughts has ever seemed a dear familiar name,  
But home, without our darling one, appears not now the same.

Yet reason aids and strengthens me to bear this trying day,  
Childhood's gay joys and frolic sports I know must pass away;  
The time has come, my cherished boy, for manhood to prepare,  
Thy quick and ready intellect demands instruction's care,  
'Tis true that learning's rugged steep may chill thee with dismay,  
But verdant paths and springing flowers shall cheer the upward way:  
And should thy glad triumphant steps attain the towering height,

Treasures that gold can never buy thy labours shall requite.

I think on thee in busy day, my brightest and my best,  
Thy image comes before me when I lay me down to rest;  
And yet my troubled thoughts become more tranquil and resigned,  
I know thou hast the privilege of precepts wise and kind.  
I feel the holy principles of pure and Scripture truth  
Imbued within thy father's house, shall yet sustain thy youth,  
And that thou still art in the path, from early childhood trod,  
Dwelling beneath the roof of those who love and serve their God.

MRS. ABBY.

## NEW WORKS.

From Howitt's Visits to Remarkable Places. THE WESTERN ISLES OF SCOTLAND.

What a sweet voyage is that up the sound of Mull! The clear, leaping waters—the wild, dreamy mountain-lands all around you! Every object which successively catches your eye brings some poetical associations. There is the Castle of Durat—there is 'Ardtonish Hall'—there the stern fortress of Aros; and, lastly, on your right, lies Morven itself, the land of Ossian, with its blue, misty hills—its rugged, wave-bathed coast—as its clear streams that come hurrying and shining in the sun! Another night at Tobermory, and then round the north headland of Mull forth into the rough Atlantic. All before you and to the right, Eig, and Canus, and Rum, and, in the dim horizon, the far mountains of Skye. The course now, however, was southward, past the clustered Islands of Thesbanish, with Gometra, Colonsay, and Mull, on your left; and Staffa, rising like an isolated crag from the wave, before you. I never visited any part of Great Britain which more completely met my anticipated ideas than this. The sea was rough; and wild-fowl were flying scudding, and diving on all hands, and wherever the eye turned were craggy islands, mountains of dark heath or bare splintered stone, and green solitary slopes, where scarcely a tree or a hut was to be discovered; but now and then black cattle might be descried grazing, or flocks of sheep dotted the hill sides. Far as we could look were naked rocks rising from the sea, that we worn almost into roundness, or scooped into hollows, by the eternal action of the stormy waters. Some of them stood in huge acres, like temples of some shaggy sea-god, of haunts of sea-fowl—daylight and the waves passing freely through them. Every where waves, leaping in snowy foam against these rocks, and against the craggy shores. It was a stern wilderness of chafing billows and of resisting stone. The rocks were principally of darkened granite, and were cracked across and across, as if by the action of fire or frost. Every thing spake to us of the wild tempests that so frequently rage through these seas. But Staffa rose momentarily in its majesty before us! After all the descriptions we had read, and the views we had seen, of this singular little island, we were struck with delightful astonishment at its aspect. It is, in fact, one great mass of basaltic columns, bearing on their head another huge mass of black stone, here and there covered with green turf. We sailed past the different caves. The Boat Cave and the Cormorant Cave, which are themselves very wonderful; but it was Fingal's Cave that struck us with awe and admiration. To see this magnificent cavern, with its clustered columns on each side, and pointed arch, with the black precipices above it, and the sea raging at its base, and its dashing and gloomy interior, was worth all the voyage. There are no words that can express the sensation it creates.

We were taken in the boats on shore at the north point, and landed amid a wilderness of basaltic columns thrown into almost all forms and directions. Some were broken and lay in heaps in the clear green water. Others were piled up erect and abrupt; some were twisted up into tortuous pyramids at a little distance from the shore itself; and through the passage which they left, the sea came rushing—all foam, and with the most tremendous roar. Others were bent like so many leaden pipes, and turned their broken extremities towards us. We advanced along a sort of Giant's Causeway, the pavement of which was the head of Basaltic columns, all fitting together in the most beautiful symmetry; and, turning round the precipice, found ourselves at the entrance of the great cave. The sea was too stormy to allow us to enter it, as is often done, in boats; we had therefore to clamber along one of its sides where a row of columns is broken off, at some distance above the waves, and presents an accessible, but certainly very formidable causeway, by which you may reach the far end. I do not believe that any stranger, if he were there alone, would dare to pass along that slippery causeway, and penetrate to the ob-