

"I believe," he continued, "I have loved you as a man ought to love—honestly, openly, and with a sense of honour unscreathed by the remotest thought of evil."

Poor Isabel burst into a flood of tears. "That course will be mine to the end—you shall be deceived in nothing."

And here Mr. Rivers briefly related to the young lady how he and his friend had disposed—not of her, but of each other—at a game of hazard—how he had played away his half of the estate, and left himself comparatively poor—and also the grounds of his suspicions that the growing jealousy of Mr. Savidge was daily rendering his life more and more unsafe, and the necessity for his speedy departure inevitable. He was also about to proceed to put that important question which, if answered, was to decide his fate for ever, when the very audible sound of some living thing amongst the trees close by arrested his speech. Isabella started momentarily; but from having been all her life accustomed to the prowling, though seldom dangerous, beasts of the forest and prairie, evinced none of that terror which, under similar circumstances in a more civilized country, would have been unavoidable. At the same instant, Mr. Rivers drew a pistol, and fired into the bushes behind them. To his astonishment and horror the shot was returned; and, as Isabel fell forwards with a slight shriek upon his arm, the blood of her he loved trickled down upon his clothes. He carried her into the house, and left her in the care of her mother and the slaves; while, having hastily snatched up a six-chambered rifle, which he had brought with him in the morning, he rushed out in a fit of uncontrollable fury to seek for and punish, with instant death, the cowardly assassin, could he but be found.

The night was clear, the moon shone, the prairies and forest patches were alive with the hissing sounds of millions of locust, the hollow cry of the night jar, the howling of wolves, and the occasional piteous, half human groan of the alligator. Far in the distance, a herd of some thousand or more wild buffaloes were sleeping or grazing under the moonbeams, while nearer at hand, the cattle belonging to the ferry location lay half buried in the luxuriant grass, ruminating, as they dozed, in the consciousness of undisturbed tranquillity. No signs however, of the presence, amidst the vast expanse, of any other human being than himself could be then discerned.

Mr. Rivers first searched the spot which he had so recently left, but searched in vain. The man, whoever he was, who had secreted himself there, had evidently taken the opportunity of his brief absence to make his escape. He then leapt the rude fence which enclosed the end of the garden, and ran in the direction of the next covert—a small clump of live oak, which stood upon a little knoll by the river side. As he entered, a dark object shot across the moonbeams that shone through from the opposite side, and our hero instantly pursued it with all speed. He lost, and regained sight of it several times until clear of the trees, when he beheld it drop below the bank of the Guadalupe ere he had time to fire.

When he reached the same spot, he beheld a man putting off in a small canoe, and exerting himself to the uttermost to get beyond reach of gunshot from the shore. Rivers called loudly to him to put back. The hollow sounding steeps repeated the cry, "Put back—Put back!" But the canoe man only increased his efforts; and in another instant, a rifle ball penetrated the sides of his frail vessel of bark. Another, and another followed in rapid succession, splashing in the water close about him, but without doing any damage. He hesitated a moment, and then vigorously pulled again for the opposite shore. A third bullet came—it hit him in the breast. Rivers saw him fall over the side and sink, while the canoe floated, ead or side to the stream, downwards towards the Bay of Esperito Santo.

On his return to the house of Madame Lamar, Mr. Rivers found to his great joy, that the wound which Isabel had (perhaps accidentally) received, although severe, was not dangerous, the pistol ball having only cut through the fleshy portion of the left arm. When he had related the result of his out door adventure—

"What a pity it is," remarked Isabel, "that a man should have lost his life for such a trifle. But who do you think it was, Mr. Rivers?"

"It was impossible for me, at that distance, and in the night time, to distinguish one man from another; but I suppose it was my friend, Mr. Savidge."

"Indeed; I hope not; for if it were, we shall have 'The Regulators' here, and you will be the next, to a certainty."

"I have no fear," replied he; "my own cause is my justification."

No wedding was talked upon or dreamed about that night; and under all the circumstances of the case, both Madame Lamar and her daughter joined in soliciting Mr. Rivers to remain under their roof until further information could be obtained. But he determinedly refused their kindness, on the plea that if it did so happen that Mr. Savidge lay at the bottom of the stream, his own presence upon the plantation was indispensable. Accordingly, he recrossed the water, under the guidance of Juan, the boatman, and mounting his horse, with the rifle laid across his saddle, rode off at a speed which brought him home within a quarter of an hour.

On entering the house, a thrill of gratification passed over him—the like of which he had long since ceased to feel, save when his eyes beheld anew the form of Isabel—when he saw Mr. Savidge sitting quietly by the side of a pleasant fire of logs, and half enveloped in curling clouds of undisturbed smoke from that pipe which the poetical Indiana of the wild has

long since dedicated to the beautiful Spirit of Peace.

Next morning, however, Rivers discovered that one of the slaves was missing from the establishment. He mentioned the circumstance to Savidge, who accounted for it by remarking with an air of the most perfect indifference, that he had sent him out fishing on the previous day, and from the fact of his not having returned, he supposed he must have upset his canoe and got drowned.

"Perhaps he misunderstood you, and went to the wrong river," was the reply. Savidge coloured deeply, but said nothing.

LYNCH LAW.

Time passed on; matters were finally arranged between Miss Lamar, her mother, and Mr. Rivers; and the very day on which the handsome creole and her lover were to set out for the nearest city to be married, was named. Arrangements had been effected for the young couple to occupy the ferry location; it wanted a master, and Madame looked forwards to but few years between then and the time when she should be laid beside her husband. In consequence of all this, Mr. Rivers had of course abandoned his original intention of leaving the country, and instead, had purchased additional lands, to the extent of nearly a thousand acres, adjoining those already owned by the mother of his intended bride.

In the meantime, however, Mr. Savidge let slip no opportunity of giving his old friend such offence and provocation, as was calculated to draw him into a final and deadly quarrel, but the firmness and better sense of Young Rivers for awhile averted that calamity; yet, on the evening preceding the day fixed for the wedding, Mr. Savidge went still further than ever before, and in the course of some rather angry conversation that ensued between the two swore solemnly, and with fearful oath, that, do as Rivers might on the morrow, he himself would make Isabel his bedfellow before she died.

Rivers drew a long bowie knife from his thigh, and, starting instantly on his feet, flung himself at one bound upon his antagonist. The latter was scarcely less dexterous in unsheathing his weapon, and a fierce and sanguinary fight ensued, upon that very household hearth where, years ago they had sat knee to knee together, talking over old tales of bygone, innocent boyhood, or planning, in friendly chat, the means of mutual advancement. The mingled blood of two former friends soon ran darkly upon the sacred hearthstone of home, while the clash and sullen plunge of reeking knives seemed to tell, in an audible voice, that the angel of death was there, awaiting the final gasp of one or both. The confusion created by this dreadful conflict soon brought the slaves to the house-hold upon the spot, but exclamations of horror and affright were all in which they could indulge, not one even daring for a moment to raise the hand of peace between two white men, though so evidently bent upon each other's murder.

At length Mr. Rivers fell, without making the any effort to rise again; animation was fled, at least for the present, if not for ever; and in the next instant, Savidge himself staggered into a chair, and swooned the moment he sat down.

Both were carried by the slaves to their respective apartments, and ministered to according to their condition. Mr. Rivers was not dead, though desperately wounded; and on rallying again, ordered himself to be conveyed that very night, at any risk, to the house of Madame Lamar, having taken the precaution, previously, to despatch a slave with the information that an accident had befallen him, and that he would be brought there within the space of an hour or two.

With the greatest difficulty his wishes were fulfilled; and though it was past midnight when he was carried within those hospitable doors, Isabel learned too soon that instead of a happy bridegroom she had only to meet a man upon the confines of the grave. But now came the trial of woman's faith—of that passion which Mr. Savidge had doubted, but the effects of which he was soon doomed to feel to the fullest extent.

To attempt, for a moment, to represent our heroine as one of those highly polished earthly seraphs, the produce of high civilization and refinement, and the delight of all who indulge in unnatural romance, would be worse than idle. If men are moulded by circumstances, the truism holds equally good of the other sex too. Between the wild young creature whose playground is the boundless prairie, and whose instructress is nature alone, and the artificially tutored beauty of the proudest city, we find scarcely more resemblance between the native wild flower, which springs spontaneously in the path of one, and the same flower when it blooms from artificial culture beside the garden walk of the other. Still Isabella's feelings and emotions were as pure, as feminine, as beautiful in their development as those of the courtliest dame that ever rustled silk o'er velvet carpet, or led captive in her train the most gallant of cavaliers. But she was more open-hearted, more bold (if you will have it so);—she was such a woman as nature makes in all purity, and whom the petty artifices and idle forms of crowded societies never reach to unmake or mar.

That such a creature should deeply feel the injury done to the one she loved best on earth—the only one, indeed whom, in that sense, she ever loved, can readily be conceived. That she had, also, spirit and determination to resent it, no one will feel surprised. Her feelings were wounded bitterly by these repeated atrocities of Mr. Savidge; and bitterly, though justly, did she make him suffer for it.

Mr. Rivers had scarcely so far recovered as to be considered well out of danger, when

Isabel proposed to her mother to take a journey of a few days' duration, for the double purpose of visiting their neighbours and acquaintance, and relieving the anxiety and weariness of her own mind. No material objection was raised on the part of that worthy lady; and accordingly she set out, accompanied by the female slave, whose duty it was to attend her, and Juan, the Spanish boatman, as at once a guard and guide. Isabel was mounted on a beautiful reclaimed wild horse [or mustang] of the desert, fancifully decorated with coloured trappings and mountings of gold, while the heavy Spanish bit, and the shoe that hung at the saddle, were, according to the prevailing taste of the Mexicans, of solid silver. Juan adorned himself with all the finery he could command, added an eagle's feather to his high conical hat, brightened up his buttons, and with a glittering rifle in one hand, and a whip, the lash of which was at least two yards long, in the other, bestraddled his mule with all the grace and ease of a Camanchi chief, and capered and cracked up and down the prairie around his young mistress with the serious yet boyish glee of a newly made knight errant; while, to complete the party, Margaret the slave, elevated upon the back of a second mule, flaunted in the gaudiest of coloured dresses, and displayed upon her head a brilliantly striped scarf, tied up like a turban, but with the ends streaming from behind some ten or fifteen inches in the air.

On the afternoon of the third day, Miss Isabel returned home with a considerable addition to her train of attendants, consisting of five armed and mounted gentlemen wearing masks. To see them was at once to know their errand, without question or inquiry—they were the embodiment of the law, such as it is in these parts—they were "The Regulators!" Isabel had made known her story at every plantation where she had visited, and aroused these wild ministers of justice to punish the unlucky Mr. Savidge. They were all either respectable planters, or the sons of such, from the surrounding country. No man removed his mask during the evening, but drunk, played and chatted agreeably with the inmates of the Ferry, unrecognized until the time for retiring to rest.

An hour before daybreak, the strangers were again stirring. Leaving their horses behind, they crossed the ferry, rifle in hand; and before the cold light of morning shewed itself in the eastern sky, had taken possession of one of Mr. Savidge's stables.

A negro boy, whose early duty it was to fetch out the cattle at sunrise, was the first person who discovered them. He cried out, for the purpose of giving an alarm, the instant he opened the stable door. The sharp crack of a rifle was heard, and a corpse lay upon the threshold where a boy had stood before. After a time, another slave made his appearance, gabbling strange jargon as he approached, condemnatory of the delinquencies of his predecessor. He likewise fell in the same manner. A third then came to ascertain what was amiss, and, in running back to the house, was with the same unerring certainty, shot down.

These cries and sounds had, by this time, aroused Mr. Savidge himself; and being now nearly recovered from the injuries sustained in his last conflict, he descended from his bed-chamber in a loose night gown, and looked out at the door. One of the five, who was upon the watch, instantly advanced towards him, and pointing his rifle, commanded him, in a loud voice, to stand his ground, if he did not wish to be a dead man. Savidge remained fixed to the spot, and trembled as he heard that challenge. He knew his time was come.

"You know our business, of course," said the man, as he reached the doorway; "your friend Rivers has friends yet left, although he has found an enemy in you. It is useless to resist; there are five of us; and three of your slaves lie dead already. Walk out, and your rifle shall be brought you; we do not wish to kill an undefended man."

Savidge begged that he might be allowed to go back to his chamber, and dress himself; but the head regulator would not permit him.

"No," replied he, "we have you safe now; and you might do mischief. You shall have a chance of your life. But walk out at once, I say again, or by the living G— I'll bring you down where you are!"

Savidge obeyed the command at once, and soon stood with shivering limbs upon the cold wet grass of the prairie.

The individual who had accosted him thus, then entered the house, took a rifle from the wall, loaded it himself, returned to the victim without, called up his four masked companions, and then presented Savidge with the piece, as he made the following remarks—

"You will be allowed sixty yards' start. You may then run for your life, and make use of your weapon as you please. If you attempt to do so before, five balls will be put into your body. Now, take sixty strides; and at the sixtieth, we shall fire and follow you."

Savidge had nothing to do but to obey. He slowly counted sixty, turned, and discharged his weapon ineffectually, threw it to the ground, snatched up the gown that encumbered his feet, and ran forwards with all the speed that terror could add to a by no means inactive body. Three shots instantly passed him, one only wounding him on the lower part of the right leg, but insufficiently to offer any impediment to his course. After he heard these human hounds behind him; and as shot came after shot, in quick succession, he felt that every succeeding moment was but a protraction of the act of dying—a painful delay of that pursuing death the escape from which was next to impossible.

Scarcely knowing whether he fled, the victim of Lynch law made off in the direction of a tract of bushy ground that lay between his own

house and the river, as though instinctively seeking that same covert which nature points out to the hunted and harassed beast of the field; but the bushes impeded rather than protected him; and being thickly intermingled with that beautiful though dangerous plant, the prickly pear, whose leaves are covered with millions of venomous points as sharp and invisible as the stings of bees, his feet were wounded beyond human endurance; and seeing the Guadalupe not far before him, and a few more last desperate bounds, he leaped headlong from the high bank of the stream, and for the space of a minute or two, was buried beneath the shining waters. When his head again appeared upon the surface, the regulators were standing upon the heights above, anxiously watching for his whereabouts. Quick as the momentary sight, five balls were despatched to the mark; and with that volley closed the life of a man whom passion had made mad, and dishonour a premeditated murderer.

The five masked men—at once judges, jurymen, and executioners—returned to the Ferry by the hour of breakfast. When that meal was over, one of the disguised party, thus addressed Mr. Rivers:—

"Robert Rivers, the sentence of death passed by his Honour Judge Lynch upon the body of James Savidge, has been duly executed. He died this morning, no doubt full of repentance for his crimes, and deeply sensible of the justice of that verdict of his countrymen, under which he suffered. If his body should chance to be found in the river, give it decent burial; for, although the law be severe, it decrees, that all animosities shall die upon the edge of the grave, and the weeds of hatred shall be plucked up and buried beneath the same sod with him who nurtured them. All his offences are now expiated, and from this time you will recollect nothing of Mr. Savidge but that he once was your friend."

"The court have also consulted respecting the property lately belonging to him. Under all the circumstances of the case, his honor the judge decrees, that the whole thereof be restored to you, without let or hindrance, charge or cost of any kind; and the same is hereby put into your possession, by a right and title conferred and confirmed to you and your heirs for ever, by and from Judge Lynch, whose decision is final and irrevocable, and shall not be called in question by any man or body of men, save at his or their most extreme and utter peril. So help us God, in keeping the peace henceforth as now, and defending the rights of our neighbor."

They then swore him upon a Spanish Bible, never to betray or raise his hand against the Regulators, but to support and protect that body as long as the exigencies of the country required their services, and until legitimate laws could be, by legal processes, carried into execution, and justice secured. After this, each of the party, separately, wished the young couple every happiness that life could afford, and mounting their horses, rode off in different directions across the prairie.

During the course of the morning, Mr. Rivers ordered the Guadalupe to be searched for the body of his friend, but as it could never be found, he came to the probable conclusion that it had fallen a prey to the alligators.

Subsequently he took possession of the old location; and upon his perfect recovery, the beautiful creole became his bride. Besides other friends invited on the occasion, there were present at the marriage feast, five gentlemen, with their wives and sisters, who appeared to enjoy the festivities with more than ordinary delight. The toast of "Honor and Justice!" was proposed by one of them, and drunk in a bumper, but not a single word escaped any tongue on the subject of Lynch Law.

New Works.

Walter Clayton; a Tale of the Gordon Riots. 1 vols. London: Newby.

THE GORDON RIOTS—BURNING A DISTILLERY.

"Of all the scenes of madness and of crime, upon which the summer's sun had yet shone, those through which Walter had to conduct his cousin, were the worst. The mob had given over riot, plunder, religious zeal, every appetite, and every sense, but one, and the place where they were, unfortunately supplied the means for its gratification. They drank until they could not stand, and then wallowing in the streams of pure spirit, that ran down the channels of the street; or made pools in the holes and crannies of the yard, they lapped up intoxication, licking it off the very stones. Mothers had dropped from their hands their helpless children—the old seemed to forget their age—the lame, the blind, the afflicted, all laid aside their wants and miseries, and drank, until some died of repletion; and then others fought and squabbled, dealt blows, and whilst one stood on the brink of death, he had sent his fellow there before him. Some fell into the burning ruins—the flames paused for a moment—a black object would appear, and then the fire shot up more briskly than before, and the drunken rioter was buried in the tomb he had assisted in making."

"The spirit ran in burning streams, carrying death upon their surface, while the fire had now penetrated the entire buildings used in their manufacture, attacking vats, and barrels, and puncheons. Many of these had been staved by the mob, who would have nothing but a wholesale delivery of their contents, while the flames were besieging others. They eat through wood and iron, until they reached their prey, hissing and roaring in their own madness, one would have thought their creatures of life. Then there would be an explosion—another and another while the blue flames curled and