

## Literature, &amp;c.

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THE BROTHERS.

THE last peremptory summons had reached Stephen Turnbull, and the grim captain of Ironsides, whose unsparring sword had so often done fatal execution in the ranks of King Charles's partisans, lay feeble as infancy in a small house near Lyndhurst, in the New Forest, the obscurity of which had shielded the latter years of the veteran's life from the persecutions of the Restoration. From this loop-hole of retreat he had witnessed the final overthrow, as he deemed it, of the cause upheld by the military and governmental genius and sagacity of the statesmen of the Commonwealth, and the old man's heart died within him; a few more years of melancholy, dreary life limped slowly past, and now he was sinking heart-sick, spirit-broken, into a welcome, if unhonoured grave.

A son and daughter were with him in the dark hour. The first was a tall lad of about seventeen years of age; the other, a fair, meek-eyed girl, could not have been more than ten at the utmost. She was kneeling by the bedside of the dying man, her natural and pious gracefulness of attitude, and the pale sorrow of her face divinely tinted and illumined by the rays of the evening summer sun. Her brother stood at the head of the bed, holding in his right hand an open bible. There was a deep silence in the room, and the restless eyes of the expiring soldier wandered from the innocent beauty of his youngest born to a heavy sword suspended on the wall at the foot of his bed, whilst thoughts suggested and contrasted apparently by the two objects, flushed his worn features with varying color, and kindled his dim eyes with transient fitful light.

'The reasoning,' he at length said, resuming the broken conversation, 'the reasoning, almost the very words thou useth, Mark, are thy mother's; they have a savour of truth yet they convince me not. Still, it has truly come to pass as she prophesied it would: our harvest of the sword has made unto itself wings and fled away, and it may be that the palm branch and the olive will avail more than shield and spear.'

'Truth, and right, and conscience,' replied the boy, in a low, gentle voice, 'will triumph in His own good time; but the instruments will not be the warrior's flashing steel, nor the shouts and curses of the battle, nor garments rolled in blood, but strong faith, unwavering hope, and all-embracing charity.'

'Thou art perhaps right,' interrupted the father, in a changed and tremulous voice; 'but the night in which no man can work is falling thick and dark around me, and I have that to say which may not be delayed.' A slight motion of his hand beckoned the girl to move nearer to him; she did so: his feeble fingers wandered for a few moments amidst her light, clustering hair, and over her smooth forehead, and then, reluctantly withdrawing them from the grasp of the weeping child, who had caught and pressed them to her lips, he drew his son's hand towards his sister's, and joined them together.

'Thou wilt hasten, Mark, as quickly as may be, with Rachel to Bridgewater, to thy mother's brother, Ebenezer Matthews, the wealthy cloth-worker: he is a God-fearing, though timid man; and being childless, has promised to adopt you both as his own, the simple and easy condition being that you take his name.'

'A hard condition,' said the son; 'our father's name is not one to blush for.'

'It has an ill-odour, boy, in these silken times. Its mere sound has indeed before now routed a column of horse; but those days are past, and thou wilt humour thy uncle in this matter; and take care that not a hireling in his service shall know that thou art the son of the proscribed captain Turnbull.'

The young man inclined his head, and the deep silence of the fast darkening room was again for several minutes unbroken, save by the ill-suppressed sobbings of the kneeling girl upon whose bowed head the fingers of the old man again tremulously played.

'Does either of you remember,' said the dying soldier, with a strong effort to speak clearly; 'but thou, Mark, must of course—thy brother Stephen, the wayward son of my first and unblest marriage?'

'I but faintly remember him,' cried Mark. 'It is six years since I saw him; and as to Rachel, she you know was a child of about four summers only at the time.'

'True, true; but he loved you both; a brave but wilful lad; I have seen him, young as he was, do valiant battle in the good old cause. He is now, Heathcote told me, an officer in the Stuart's Guards. We parted in ill-blood. Tell him, Mark, if he should ever cross thy path, that his father repented him of his anger, and blessed him with his dying breath.'

The utterance of these words were slow and difficult. A pause, not to be again broken by the veteran's quivering lips, followed, and it seemed, by the expression of his upward glance, that he was engaged in silent prayer. This lasted for some time; then the eye-lids slowly fell, as if from very weariness; a few deep sighs succeeded, and another renowned leader of the world-famous Ironsides had passed away.

A few weeks after his decease Mark and Rachel were quietly domiciled with their uncle at Bridgewater, in Somersetshire. The

rich cloth-worker took kindly to both; but he perhaps soonest and best loved the pretty and gentle Rachel. Mark won strongly, if more gradually, upon his uncle's esteem and affection by the mild firmness, the untiring kindness, and open truth which shone in every word he spoke and act that he performed. Rachel was a varied reflex of her brother; the same cast of features, softened and refined into feminine beauty: the same firm and gentle spirit, subdued and rendered plastic by female weakness and timidity.

There was another member of the household, one Reuben Heyworth, a relative, although a more distant one than they, to Ebenezer Matthews. He was two years older than Mark Turnbull; and having dwelt with the cloth-worker from childhood, had till the nephew and niece appeared looked upon himself as the sole, undisputed heir to the old man's wealth. That golden dream was now dissipated, and he long brooded in intense and vengeful bitterness of spirit upon the frustration of his hopes.

When a few years had passed away, a stronger passion mingled with and heightened his thirst for riches. He loved Rachel Turnbull almost in his own despite; and his sanguine spirit, when deceived into hope by the girl's naturally kind and winning manners, leaped exultingly at the thought that one day the hand of the niece and the uncle's wealth might be both irrevocably his own.

The year 1685 found him apparently as far off as ever from the self-promised goal. Rachel was now twenty years old; and her uncle, alarmed at the increasing disquiet of the times, had been sedulously preparing to wind up his affairs and betake himself to some part of England less agitated by religious politics than the western counties. He had already realised the greatest part of his wealth, which, in twenty and thirty shilling pieces, angels and half angels, was securely stowed away in an inner apartment, to which no one but himself and nephew had access. But not the less was the concealed treasure ever present to the day vision of Reuben Heyworth, and in night and darkness lying like a glittering night-mare on his soul, suggesting dreams—wild, fearful, and desperate—which ultimately his waking brain strove, though not without intervals of remorseful terror, to mould into shape and action.

Once—and each time the remembrance flashed upon him he shook as if confronted with a spectre—once the whispered promises of the sleep tempter had been near fruition. The black confusion, horror and dismay, of the few minutes during which, like to a man passing through the incoherent changes of a frightful dream, he had shudderingly attempted to realise the suggestions of his evil thoughts, were rarely absent from his mind. His taking, with officious zeal, from the hands of Rachel, the warm posset drink intended for the uncle and nephew—both slightly indisposed—passing with it through an intermediate chamber; pausing there, and his purpose hastily accomplished, looking up to find himself confronted with a white face and burning eyes, which for several moments he did not recognise as the ghastly reflection of his own features in the Venetian mirror; then the fixed and meaning look with which the nephew regarded him as he, with shaking hands placed the poisoned drink upon the table; the offer made by Mark of a glassful of cordial to his sister who had followed into the room—still as he did so keeping that searching glance upon the trembling catif before him; his own wild, spasmodic, self-betraying cry as he dashed the glass from the girl's outstretched hand, and the instant upsetting of the table and jug by Mark, as if by accident; all these incidents were seared in characters of flame upon his brain; and so were the words whispered in his ear a few minutes afterwards by the hated nephew—

'I forgive and pity thee, Reuben, from the bottom of my heart; strive that God may pardon thy offence. They suspect nothing; go.'

He had never since looked Mark fairly in the face—could not have done so had a king's crown been the reward; whilst the knowledge that his cousin had detected his foiled purpose, excited in his breast a fostering rage and hate which each day but fed and strengthened.

The almost openly-defiant temper of the Somersetshire people, coupled with the menaced descent of the duke of Monmouth, greatly alarming James, numerous emissaries, many of them military officers, were despatched into the country to watch and report upon the affairs, aspect and condition of affairs there; and not unfrequently riot and bloodshed, between the citizens and the royal agents and partisans, disturbed the quiet of Bridgewater and other places, giving color to the sinister forebodings everywhere prevalent. One evening in March, just as the cloth-worker's establishment was about to be closed, Mark rushed in bearing in his arms the insensible form of his sister Rachel. A partially-intoxicated person—a major Redward, of the King's guards he was said to be—had met her in the street, and struck by her appearance, emboldened also, doubtless, by her seemingly unprotected state, had insisted upon saluting her. Her screams brought up several persons, amongst others her brother, from whom she had only parted a few hours previously, and the vigor and good will with which he plied his blackthorn stick about the head and shoulders of the assailant, abundantly proved that the young man's avowed disdain and abhorrence of professional fighting arose neither from lack of strength or hardihood.

The nephew briefly explained to his uncle what had happened, and then both applied

themselves to restore Rachel. This was soon done. She was far more frightened than hurt, and but a short time passed before she was as well—and but for an apprehension suggested by Ebenezer Matthews, that the officer might seek to revenge himself upon Mark for the chastisement he had received, as cheerful—as ever.

Reuben Heyworth not long afterwards left the house, directing his steps towards the Talbot, in the principal street. Entering the public room of the tavern, where a few of the townspeople were seated, he ordered some wine, and sat down in mute but eager expectation. Half an hour had thus passed in sullen watchfulness, when the sudden gleaming of his eyes at the entrance of two military-looking men, betokened that the hope which had brought him to the Talbot had not been disappointed. One of the new comers appeared to be in anything but a gracious mood; his head was bound up with a handkerchief, and he bore other evident marks of having been recently engaged in a somewhat disastrous affray. The officers sat down in a corner by themselves, and were soon engaged in drinking and smoking, whilst ever and anon a muttered growl or curse, which Heyworth perfectly understood, issued from the dense cloud in which they speedily managed to enshroud themselves.

Ten o'clock chimed, and the townspeople present got up and went their several ways. Heyworth rose also, but only for the purpose of approaching the military strangers. He placed a chair opposite them, and deliberately seating himself, said, addressing the elder of the officers—

'You desire, major Redward, not only to know the name of the fellow that assaulted you, but where he may be conveniently met with?'

'By G—, yes,' replied the major, at the same time striking the table between them with great energy; 'do you know him?'

'Well, and let me tell you it would be a service to king James, as well as, I doubt not, a satisfaction to you, if he were slipped off to the plantations.'

'As I supposed,' exclaimed the officer, with increasing fury, 'a canting fanatic; a cowardly round-headed, crop-eared puritan.'

'Round-heads or crop-ears,' said the younger guardsman, sharply, 'whigs or puritans, may be, but, as to being cowards, you and I know better than that.'

'Of course, you say so,' rejoined his companion, with a sneer. 'You were one of them yourself not so very long since, and what's bred in the bone—you know the proverb, Turnbull.'

'Turnbull?' ejaculated Heyworth, with an involuntary start. 'Is your name Turnbull, sir?'

'Aye, truly; and pray what may there be in that name to take the color so suddenly out of those lantern cheeks?'

'Nothing—noting; only I once knew a friend—a very dear friend, who was so called. Since dead—since dead; added Heyworth, in answer to the soldier's piercing look.

'What kind of a person was he—where did he come from?' responded the officer.

'An old man,' hesitated Heyworth, 'quite an old man, and came, if I remember rightly, from London; yes, from London, I am pretty sure.'

Captain Turnbull was silent for a few moments, and then said—

'Do you, perchance, know two young persons named Mark and Rachel Turnbull? I am told they are living in Somersetshire; but where, I have hitherto been unable to discover.'

Heyworth said he did not; the disappointed officer relapsed into silence, and the previous subject was resumed between Reuben and Major Redward.

'You do not wish to harm or annoy the young woman?' said Heyworth.

'That is my affair, not yours,' replied the major.

'Now, however,' continued Heyworth, speaking as it were to himself, and glancing towards captain Turnbull, 'that fear need not trouble me. Let us leave this place,' he added, 'we may be overheard here, and as we walk along I will give you the information you desire.' The strangers rose, and all three left the Talbot together.

'A strange coincidence,' muttered Heyworth, when he again found himself alone; but there can be now no danger for Rachel; captain Turnbull, should there be occasion, can be appealed to, and that to in a manner not to commit myself. So that this unexpected rencontre is perhaps, after all, a fortunate one.'

Whatever scheme had been arranged between Heyworth and the officers was frustrated by the sudden recall of those gentlemen to head quarters. Major Redward, however, hinted that he might probably soon revisit Bridgewater, and that it was not very likely he should cool upon the matter of which they had talked.

The long threatened attempt of the Duke of Monmouth at last took place; and after various marchings and counter-marchings, the enthusiastic peasantry, abandoned by their silken leader, were overthrown after a desperate resistance at Sedgemoor; and the town of Bridgewater was given up to rapine, cruelty, violence of the worst kind. Mark Turnbull had not joined the insurgents; but now that defeat had overtaken them he was as fearless and active in affording succour and consolation to the proscribed fugitives, as he had been in dissuading them from their rash enterprise, especially under the duke-general, whose capacity as a soldier the son of the veteran Ironsides had read at a glance. This generous but imprudent conduct of his nephew

determined Ebenezer Matthews no longer to delay his departure from the ill-fated town, and his preparations for doing so were hastily completed. Everything was soon in readiness. A light hired waggon stood ready loaded in the back yard, and at five o'clock on the following morning they were all to be off, with the hope of reaching Warminster by dusk, and Salisbury, their present destination, the next day. Late on that evening Heyworth once more met his acquaintances, major Redward and Captain Turnbull, by appointment. The horse guards had fought at Sedgemoor, and a portion of the corps were quartered in the town. The conference was a long one, and ended apparently to Reuben Heyworth's entire satisfaction.

'That is a miserable rascal, Turnbull,' observed major Redward, as soon as Heyworth disappeared. 'How ingeniously the varlet, with all his cunning, has twisted a halter for his own neck. The notion too of the sorry dog that we are to leave him the girl and half the money, the other half being payment in full for ridding him of the brother—ha! ha! ha! was there ever so brainless a scamp!'

The hoarse chuckle of his companion responded to the major's brutal merriment, and it appeared from their subsequent talk that they intended to seize upon the money-bags of Ebenezer Matthews, put the two young men out of the way, if not the old one, and carry off the girl, for whom the major professed great admiration. All this was to be done under colour that the victims were traitors fleeing from the king's justice—a plea that in those days sufficed to shield and excuse even greater enormities.

The vehicle containing Ebenezer Matthews, his niece and his wealth, escorted by Mark Turnbull and Reuben Heyworth on foot, was descending the long inclined road which leads into Warminster, just as the summer-night, with its shadowy light of stars, and calm breathings of repose, was silently falling upon wearied man, and closing flower, and slumbering bird and brute. The mind of Reuben Heyworth was evidently not in harmony with the tranquility of the hour and scene, and the nearer they approached the town the more fidgety and anxious he became, and his furtive, backward glances the more frequent and unaccountable. The waggon the first scattered houses at the entrance of Warminster, when the furious galloping of horses, followed by loud shouts and imprecations, as of men in hot and successful pursuit, burst upon them, and presently a dozen of mounted troopers, were seen pressing forward at a headlong pace. They speedily came up, and without a word of warning Mark Turnbull was mercilessly cut down by one of the officers who rode in advance of the party, while the other struck fiercely at Heyworth.

'It is I, major Redward!' shouted the wretched man with frantic energy, as he dodged from the quick flashes of the guardsman's sword. 'I your friend—your—'

'Traitor!' cried the officer, as sword fell upon the screaming villain, 'I know you well!'

The assault scarcely lasted half a minute; and before the uncle and niece could comprehend what had occurred, the waggon was given in charge to a sergeant and four troopers, the hired driver commanded to move on, and silence enjoined under pain of instant death. The vehicle proceeded, followed for a short distance by the remainder of the troop.

The bodies of Mark Turnbull and Reuben Heyworth, left with brutal indifference on the road for dead, as soon as the soldiers had disappeared, were timidly approached by the inhabitants of the houses near which they had fallen, and found still to breathe. A hasty consultation took place; but, however well-disposed to the cause in which the sufferers were supposed to have been engaged, the Warminster folk, after the catastrophe of Sedgemoor, were not at all inclined to take the wounded men into their own houses. As a reconciliation to self and humanity they determined to convey them to the nearest church, which happened fortunately to be open, evening service having but a few minutes concluded. This done, medical assistance was procured, and it was found that not the faintest hope of life could be entertained for either of the victims. They had been laid upon mattresses within the railed enclosure where the communion table stood, upon which a few candles were placed, faintly lighting up the space immediately around, and throwing the body of the silent church into yet darker and more solemn shadow. Powerful restoratives were administered, and the dying men gradually revived to consciousness.

There was a remarkable difference in the expression which beamed from the failing eyes of the cousins, as fluttering life again looked forth upon a world about to close on it forever. The calmness of an assured hope, the great reward of a pure and sinless life, shone upon the pale, mild features of Mark Turnbull; the voice which bade the sympathising spectators sorrow not for him but for those still left to struggle with the wrongs and oppression of the times was musical and mild as ever, and the smile which played about his lips gleamed like a ray from out the opening gate of Paradise.

No hues from heaven were those which fitfully chased each other over the haggard countenance of Reuben Heyworth. Fiery despair, black hate, and a wild burning hope of vengeance possessed him utterly, and flashed in terrible glances from his bloodshot eyes. He beckoned the surgeon close to him.