EASTON GAZETTE.

WHERE THE PRESS IS FREE—"Literature, well or ill-conducted, is the Great Engine by which all Popular States must ultimately be supported or overthrown."
Religion purifies the Heart and teaches us our Duty—Morality refines the Manners—Agriculture makes us rich—and Politics provides for the enjoyment of all.

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THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS.

"They linger yet,
Avengers of their native land."—Gray.

The warning call of the scout was not uttered without occasion. During the occurrence of the deadly encounter just related, the roar of the falls was unbroken by any human sound whatever. It would seem, that interest in the result had kept the natives, on the opposite shores, in breathless suspense, while the quick evolutions and swift changes in the positions of the combatants, effectually prevented a fire, that might prove dangerous alike to friend and enemy. But the moment the struggle was decided, a yell arose, as fierce and savage as wild and revengeful passions could throw into the air. It was followed by the swift flashes of the rifles, which sent their leaden messengers across the rock in vollies, as though the assailants would pour out their impotent fury on the insensible scene of the fatal contest.

A steady, though deliberate, return was made from the rifle of Chingachgook, who had maintained his post throughout the fray with unmoved resolution. When the triumphant shout of Uncas was borne to his ears, the gratified father had raised his voice in a single responsive cry, after which his busy piece alone proved that he still guarded his pass with unwearied diligence. In this manner many minutes flew by with the swiftness of though ; the rifles of the assailants speaking, at times, in rattling vollies, and at others, in occasional, scattering shots. Though the rock, the trees, and the shrubs, were cut and torn in a hundred places around the besieged, their cover was so close, and so rigidly maintained, that, as yet, David had been the only sufferer in their little band.

'Let them burn their powder,' said the deliberate Scout, while bullet after bullet, whizzed by the place where he so securely lay; 'there will be a fine gathering of lead when it is over, and I fancy the imps will tire of the sport, afore these old stones cry out for mercy! Uncas, boy, you waste the kernels by overcharging; and a kicking rifle never carries a true bullet. I told you to take that loping miscreant under the line of white paint; now, if your bullet went a hair's breadth, it went two inches above it. The life lies low in a Mingo, and humanity teaches us to make a quick end of the sarpents.'

A quiet smile lighted the haughty features of the young Mohican, betraying his knowledge of the English language, as well as of the other's meaning, but he suffered it to pass away without vindication or reply.

'I cannot permit you to accuse Uncas of want of judgment or of skill,' said Duncan; 'he saved my life in the coolest and readiest manner, and he has made a friend who never will require to be reminded of the debt he owes.'

Uncas partly raised his body, and offered his hand to the grasp of Heyward.—During this act of friendship, the two young men exchanged looks of intelligence, which caused Duncan to forget the character and condition of his wild associates. In the meanwhile, Hawk-eye, who looked on this burst of youthful feeling with a cool but kind regard, made the following calm reply:

'Life is an obligation which friends often owe to each other in the wilderness. I dare say I may have served Uncas some such turn myself before now; and I very well remember, that he has stood between me and death five different times: three times from the Mingoes, once in crossing Horican, and—'

'That bullet was better aimed than common!' exclaimed Duncan, involuntarily shrinking from a shot which struck on the rock at his side with a smart rebound.

Hawk-eye laid his hand on the shapeless metal, and shook his head, as he examined it, saying, 'Falling lead is never flattened! had it come from the clouds this might have happened!'

But the rifle of Uncas was deliberately raised toward heaven, directing the eyes of his companions to a point, where the mystery was immediately explained. A ragged oak grew on the right bank of the river, nearly opposite to their position, which seeking the freedom of the open space, had inclined so far forward, that its upper branches overhung the arm of the stream which flowed nearest to its own shore.—Among the topmost leaves, which scantily concealed the knarled and stinted limbs, a dark looking savage was nestled, partly concealed by the trunk of the tree, and partly exposed, as though looking down upon them, to ascertain the effect produced by his treacherous aim.

'These devils will scale heaven to circumvent us to our ruin,' said Hawk-eye; 'keep him in play boy, until I can bring 'kill deer' to bear, when we will try his metal on each side of the tree at once.'

Uncas delayed his fire until the scout uttered the word. The rifles flashed, the leaves and bark of the oak flew into the air, and were scattered by the wind, but the Indian answered their assault by a taunting laugh, sending down upon them another bullet in return, that struck the cap of Hawk-eye from his head. Once more the savage yells burst out of the woods, and the leaden hail whistled above the heads of the besieged, as if to confine them to a place where they might become easy victims to the enterprise of the warrior who had mounted the tree.

'This must be looked to!' said the scout, glancing about him with an anxious eye.—'Uncas, call up your father; we have need of all our weapons to bring the cunning varment from his roost.'

The signal was instantly given; and before Hawk-eye had re-loaded his rifle, they were joined by Chingachgook. When his son pointed out to the experienced warrior the situation of their dangerous enemy, the usual exclamatory 'nugh' burst from his lips, after which, no further expression of surprise or alarm was suffered to escape from him. Hawk-eye and the Mohicans conversed earnestly together in Delaware for a few moments, when each quietly took his post in order to execute the plan they had speedily devised.

The warrior in the oak had maintained a quick, though ineffectual fire, from the moment of his discovery. But his aim was interrupted by the vigilance of his enemies, whose rifles instantaneously bore on any part of his person that was left exposed.—Still his bullets fell in the centre of the crouching party. The clothes of Heyward, which rendered him peculiarly conspicuous, were repeatedly cut, and once blood was drawn from a slight wound in his arm.

At length emboldened by the long and patient watchfulness of his enemies, the Huron attempted a better and more fatal aim. The quick eyes of the Mohicans caught the dark line of his lower limbs incautiously exposed through the thin foliage, a few inches from the trunk of the tree. Their rifles made a common report, when, sinking on his wounded limb, part of the body of the savage came into view. Swift as thought, Hawk-eye seized the advantage, and discharged his fatal weapon into the top of the oak. The leaves were unusually agitated; the dangerous rifle fell from its commanding elevation, and after a few moments of vain struggling, the form of the savage was seen swinging in the wind, while he grasped a ragged and naked branch of the tree with his hands clenched in desperation.

'Give him, in pity give him, the contents of another rifle!' cried Duncan, turning away his eyes in horror from the spectacle of a fellow creature in such awful jeopardy.

'Not a karnel!' exclaimed the obdurate Hawk-eye; 'his death is certain, and we have no powder to spare, for Indian fights, sometimes, last for days; 'tis their scalps, or ours!—and God, who made us, has put into our natures the craving after life!'

Against this stern and unyielding morality, supported, as it was, by such visible policy, there was no appeal. From that moment the yells in the forest once more ceased, the fire was suffered to decline, and all eyes, those of friends, as well as enemies, became fixed on the hopeless condition of the wretch, who was dangling between heaven and earth. The body yielded to the currents of air, and though no murmur or groan escaped the victim there were instants when he grimly faced his foes, and the anguish of cold despair might be traced through the intervening distance, in possession of his swarthy lineaments. Three several times the scout raised his piece in mercy, and as often prudence getting the better of his intention, it was again silently lowered —At length, one hand of the Huron lost its hold, and dropped exhausted to his side. A desperate and fruitless struggle to recover the branch succeeded, and then the savage was seen for a fleeting instant, grasping wildly at the empty air. The lightning is not quicker than was the flame from the rifle of Hawk-eye; the limbs of the victim trembled and contracted, the head fell to the bosom, and the body parted the foaming waters, like lead, when the element closed above it, in its ceaseless velocity, and every vestige of the unhappy Huron was lost forever.

No shout of triumph succeeded this important advantage, but the Mohicans gazed at each other in silent horror. A single yell burst from the woods, and all was again still. Hawk-eye, who alone appeared to reason on the occasion, shook his head, at his own momentary weakness, even uttering his self-disapprobation aloud.

"'Twas the last charge in my horn, and the last bullet in my pouch, and 'twas the act of a boy!" he said "what mattered it whether he struck the rock living or dead! feeling would soon be over. Uncas, lad, go down to the canoe, and bring up the big horn: it is all the powder we have left, and we shall need it to the last grain, or I am ignorant of the Mingo nature."

The young Mohican instantly complied, leaving the scout turning over the useless contents of his pouch, and shaking the empty horn with renewed discontent. From this unsatisfactory examination, however, he was soon called by a loud and piercing exclamation from Uncas, that sounded even to the unpractised ears of Duncan as the signal of some new and unexpected calamity. Every thought filled with apprehension for the precious treasure he had concealed in the cavern, the young man started to his feet, totally regardless of the hazard to which he was exposed. As if actuated by a common impulse, his movement was imitated by his companions, and, together, they rushed down the pass to the friendly chasm, with a rapidity that rendered the scattering fire of their enemies perfectly harmless. The unwanted cry had brought the sisters, together with the wounded David, from their place of refuge, and the whole party, at a single glance, was made acquainted with the nature of the disaster, that had disturbed even the practised stoicism of their youthful Indian protector.

At a short distance from the rock, their little bark was to be seen floating across the eddy, towards the swift current of the river, in a manner which proved that its course was directed by some hidden agent. The instant this unwelcome sight caught the eye of the scout, his rifle was levelled as by instinct, but the barrel gave no answer to the bright sparks of the flint.

"'Tis too late, 'tis too late!" Hawk-eye exclaimed, dropping the useless piece, in bitter disappointment; 'the miscreant has struck the rapid and had we powder, it could hardly send the lead swifter than he now goes!'

As he ended, the adventurous Huron raised his head above the shelter of the canoe, and while it glided swiftly down the stream, waved his hand, and gave forth the shout, which was the known signal of success. His cry was answered by a yell, and a laugh from the woods, as tauntingly exulting as if fifty demons were uttering their blasphemies at the fall of some Christian soul.

'Well may ye laugh, ye children of the devil,' said the scout, seating himself on a projection of the rock, and suffering his gun to fall neglected at his feet, 'for the three quickest and truest rifles in these woods, are no better than so many stalks of mullen, or the last year's horns of a buck.'

'What, then, is to be done?' demanded Duncan, loosing the first feeling of disappointment, in a more manly desire for exertion; 'what will become of us?'

Hawk-eye made no other reply than by passing his finger around the crown of his head, in a manner so significant, that none who witnessed the action could mistake its meaning.

'Surely, surely, our case is not so desperate!' exclaimed the youth; the Hurons are not here; we may make good the caverns: we may oppose their landing.'

'With what?' coolly demanded the scout. 'The arrows of Uncas, or such tears as woman shed! No, no, you are young, and rich, and have friends, and at such an age I know it is hard to die! but,' glancing his eyes at the Mohicans, 'let us remember, we are men without a cross, and let us teach these natives of the forest, that white blood can run as freely as red; when the appointed hour is come.'

Duncan turned quickly in the direction indicated by the other's eyes, and read a confirmation of his worst apprehensions in the conduct of the Indians. Chingachgook, placing himself in a dignified posture on another fragment of the rock. had already laid aside his knife and tomahawk, and was in the act of taking the eagle's plume from his head and smoothing the solitary tuft of hair, in readiness to perform its last and revolting office. His countenance was composed, though thoughtful, while his dark gleaming eyes, were gradually losing the fierceness of the combat in an expression better suited to the change he expected, momentarily, to undergo.

'Our case is not, cannot, be so hopeless!' said Duncan; 'even at this very moment succour may be at hand. I see no enemies! they have sickened of a struggle, in which they risk so much with so little prospect of gain?'

'It may be a minute, or it may be an hour, before the wily sarpents steal upon us, and its quite in natur for them to be lying within hearing at this very moment,' said Hawk-eye; 'but come they will, and in such a fashion as will leave us nothing to hope! Chingachgook'—he spoke in Delaware—'my brother, we have fought our last battle together, and the Maquas will triumph in the death of the sage man of the Mohican's, and of the pale face, whose eyes can make night as day, and level the clouds to the mists of the springs!'

'Let the Mingo woman go weep over their slain!' returned the Indian, with characteristic pride, and unmoved firmness; 'the great snake of the Mohicans has coiled himself in their wigwams, and has poisoned their triumph with the Wailings of children, whose fathers have not returned! Eleven warriors lie hid from the graves of their tribes, since the snows have melted; and none will tell where to find them, when the tongue of Chingachgook shall be silent? Let them draw the sharpest knife, and whirl the swiftest tomahawk, for their bitterest enemy is in their hands. Uncas, my boy, topmast branch of a noble trunk, call on the cowards to hasten, or their hearts will soften, and they will change to women!'

"They look among the fishes for the dead!" returned the low, soft voice of the youthful chieftain; "the Hurons float with the slimy eels! They drop from their oaks like fruit that is ready to be eaten! and the Delawares laugh!"

"Ay, ay," muttered the scout, who had listened to this peculiar burst of the natives with deep attention; "they have warmed their Indian feelings and they'll soon provoke the Maquas to give them a speedy end. As for me, who am of the whole blood of the whites, it is befitting that I should die as becomes my colour, with no words of scoffing in my mouth, and without bitterness at the heart!"

'Why die at all!' said Cora, advancing from the place where natural horror had, until this moment, held her rivetted to the rock: 'the path is open on every side, fly, then, to the woods, and call on God for succour! Go brave men, we owe you too much already, let us no longer involve you in our hapless fortunes!'

'You know but little of the craft of the Iroquois, lady, if you judge they have left the path open to the woods!' returned Hawk-eye, who, however, immediately added in his simplicity; 'the down stream current, it is certain, might soon sweep us beyond the reach of their rifles or the sounds of their voices.'

'Then try the river. Why linger, to add to the number of the victims of our merciless enemies!'

'Why, repeated the scout, looking about him proudly, 'because it is better for a man to die at peace with himself, than to live haunted by an evil conscience! What answer could we give to Munro, when he asked us where and how we left his children.

'Go to him, and say, that you left them with a message to hasten to their aid,' returned Cora, advancing nigher to the scout, in her generous ardour; 'that the Hurons bear them into the northern wilds; but that by vigilance and speed they may be rescued; and if, after all, it should please Heaven, that his assistance come too late, bear to him,' she continued, the firm tones of her voice gradually lowering, until they seemed nearly choked, 'the love, the blessings, the final prayers of his daughters, and bid him not to mourn their early fate, but to look forward with humble confidence to the christian's goal to meet his children.'

'The hard, weather beaten features of the scout began sensibly to work, as he listened, and when she had ended, he dropped his chin to his hand, like a man musing profoundly on the nature of her proposal.

'There is reason in her words!' at length broke from his compressed and trembling lips, 'ay, and they bear the spirit of christianity; what might be right and proper in a red skin, may be sinful in a man who has not even a cross in blood to plead for his ignorance.—Chigachgook! Uncas; hear you the talk of the darkeyed woman!'

He now spoke in Delaware to his companions, and his address, though calm and deliberate, seemed very decided. The elder Mohican heard him with deep gravity, and appeared to ponder on his words, as though he felt the importance of their import. After a moment of hesitation, he waved his hand in assent, and uttered the English word 'good,' with the peculiar emphasis of his people —Then, replacing his knife and tomahawk in his girdle, the warrior moved silently to the edge of the rock most concealed from the hostile banks of the river Here he paused a moment, pointed significantly to the woods below, and saying in a few words in his own language, as if indicating his intended route, he dropped into the water, and sunk from before the eyes, of the anxious witnesses of his movements.

The scout delayed his departure to speak to the generous maiden, whose breathing became lighter as she saw the success of her remonstrance.

'Wisdom is sometimes given to the young as well as to the old,' he said; 'and what you have spoke is wise, not to call it by a better word. If you are led into the woods, that is, such of you as may be spared for a while, break the twigs on the bushes as you pass, and make the marks of your trial as broad as you can, when if mortal eyes can see them, depend on having a friend who will follow to the ends of the 'arth afore he desarts you.'

He gave Cora an affectionate shake of the hand, lifted his rifle, and after regarding it a moment with melancholy solicitude, laid it carefully aside, and descended to the place where Chingachgook had just disappeared. For an instant he hung suspended by the rock; and looking about him, with a countenance of peculiar care, he added, bitterly, 'Had the powder held out this disgrace could never have befallen!' then, loosening his hold, the water closed above his head, and he also became lost to view

All eyes were now turned on Uncas, who stood leaning against the ragged rock, in immoveable composure. After waiting a short time, Cora pointed down the river, and said—

'Your friends, as you perceive, have not been seen, and are now, most probably, in safety; is it not time for you to follow?'

'Uncas will stay,' the young Mohican calmly answered, in his imperfect English.

'To increase the horror of our capture, and to diminish the chances of our release! Go generous young man,' Cora continued, lowering her eyes under the ardent gaze of the Mohican, and, perhaps with an intuitive consciousness of her power' 'go to my father, as I have said, and be the most confidential of my messengers. Tell him to trust you with the means to buy the freedom of his daughters. Go; 'tis my wish, 'tis my prayer, that you will go!'

The settled, calm, look of the young chief, changed to an expression of gloom, but he no longer hesitated. With a noiseless step he crossed the rock, and dropped into the troubled stream. Hardly a breath was drawn by those he left behind, until they caught a glimpse of his head emerging for air, far down the current, when he again sunk, and was seen no more.

These sudden and apparently successful experiments had all taken place in a few minutes of that time, which had now become so precious. After the last look at Uncas, Cora turned, and, with a quivering lip, addressed herself to Heyward.

'I have heard of your boasted skill in the water, too, Duncan;' she said, 'follow, then the wise example set you by these simple and faithful beings.'

'Is such the faith that Cora Munro would exact from her protector,' said the young man smiling mournfully, but with bitterness.

'This is not a time for idle subtleties and false opinions, she answered; 'but a moment when every duty should be equally considered. To us you can be of no further service here, but your precious life may be saved for other and nearer friends.'

He made no reply, though his eyes fell wistfully on the beautiful form of Alice, who was clinging to his arm with the dependency of an infant.

'Consider, after all,' continued Cora, after a pause of a moment, during which she seemed to struggle with a pang, even more acute than any that her fears had excited, 'the worst to us can be but death; a tribute which we must pay at the good time of God's appointment.'

'There are evils even worse than death,' said Duncan, speaking hoarsely, and as if fretful at her importunity, 'but which the presence of one who would die in your behalf may avert.'

Cora instantly ceased her entreaties, and veiling her face in her shawl, drew the nearly insensible Alice after her into the deepest recess of the inner cavern.

From late London Papers.

The following disgraceful act took place on Saturday se'n-night, at Horsham-market:—A journeyman blacksmith, with great effrontery, exhibited his wife a decent looking woman, with a halter about her neck, for sale, and actually sold her for two pounds and five shillings, the purchaser agreeing to take one of their three children. Information of the circumstance was sent to a magistrate, but before any steps could be taken the contracting parties had disappeared.

We understand that there are letters in Dublin from Rome, bearing date the 15th of October; at that time the Pope had been restored perfectly to health, and packets were dispatched throughout the whole christian world, communicating the indulgences, conditions and regulations of the approaching jubilee.

Dublin Morning Post.

A Deep Well.—The modern system of boring for water, when wells are to be sunk, carries very deep indeed; but it appears that the old practice of digging, when duly persisted in, was capable of going deeper still. As a proof of this, a French author (in the *Traits de Verite*) relates an instance where laborers had been employed for several months in digging a well without finding water; and at length, after getting through various strata, they came to a broad, flat, whitish stone. Upon this they struck for a considerable time until, as they were wondering at its extreme hardness, one of the workmen fancied that he heard voices somewhere beneath. This was actually the fact, for they had, without knowing it, reached the antipodes; and upon listening between the blows of the pickaxe, they could plainly distinguish the voices of women, crying to one another to "come and take the clothes in, for it would soon rain," and asking "if they did not hear it thunder."

The Goodwin Sands, which have so often caused the destruction of our ships, are very remarkable banks situated between the North and South Forelands, opposite Deal and Ramsgate and about 7 or 8 miles from the coast. The length of the sand is about 10 miles, and the breadth nearly 2, and consists of a more soft, fluid, porous, spongious, but withal tenacious matter, than the neighboring sands, and consequently of such a quality, that when a ship strikes upon it, there is little chance of her getting off, the nature of the sand being such as to swallow the vessel up sometimes in a few hours, while the surf which breaks upon them renders all attempts to approach her impossible. When the water is off these sands, they become exceedingly hard and firm, so that people may land and stay for hours upon them in the summer; indeed cricket matches have been played upon them, but woe to those who do not quit at the proper moment, for in a very short time they become quick sands, and float to and fro with the waves.—When the Trinity House, some years since, formed a design to erect a light-house upon them, the ex-

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