

# Highland Messenger.

"LIFE IS ONLY TO BE VALUED AS IT IS USEFULLY EMPLOYED."

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

### Charles Elliston.

"I must leave this place to-night; I can bear their marked neglect and open taunts no longer," said Charles Elliston, and he left the richly furnished parlor, where, with some fashionable guests, said Mrs. Merton and her eldest daughter, and went forth into the garden. "Yes, I must go," he continued, "no one cares for me; and why should they for the poor penniless being, whose very origin is unknown. Alas, how hard it is to be thus cast upon the world friendless, and beloved by none! and he buried his face in his hands, overcome with the intensity of his feelings.

"None, Charles!" said a clear silver voice behind him, and a hand was gently laid on his shoulder. He started, and turning round said:

"Yes, yes, Helen, pardon me, I spoke unthinkingly. You still love?" he added inquiringly.

"I do, Charles, and my father--"

"Yes, your father, my noble benefactor Helen, he still loves me."

"Then why leave us, Charles?" she said in a tender tone.

"Because, Helen, you know I have been already the cause of much dissension in your family--God forbid that I should be so any longer! And besides, Helen, you know what treatment I have received from your mother and sisters. I have borne it out of respect to your father and love to you; but I can bear it no more. I will go forth into the world in hopes of building up a fortune, and say Helen, if I should be successful and return, will you--"

"I will love you still," she said interrupting him. "Oh, I will always love you, Charles."

"Farewell!" said he, and imprinting a kiss upon her rosy lips, he tore himself away. In another hour, he quitted that house where he had spent so many happy days with Helen.

Charles Elliston was a dependent on the bounty of Mr. Merton. He had found him one day, when about four years old, wandering about the streets of the city, a lost child. He kindly took him home, and used every endeavor to discover his parents--but to no purpose. At last, finding his inquiries were useless, he raised and educated him as his own. Unlike her husband, Mrs. Merton was of a proud aristocratic spirit, and could not bear one whose birth was so uncertain as was that of young Elliston. She had diffused some of this spirit into her eldest daughters; but Helen, the youngest, like her father, possessed a noble and kind heart; and looked only with compassion upon the poor noble youth. He was now about seventeen years of age, and the insults that were heaped upon him, were felt severely. It is true, when Mr. Merton was present, none dare show the least disrespect towards him; but this only served to make him feel it more acutely in his absence. It was on this very mentioned evening, that a new insult had been offered to him, and he determined not to live another day where he was exposed to them. Nor would it have caused him a feeling of regret had it not been for Mr. Merton and Helen; but however dear they were, he resolved to leave them. He left, too, without informing Mr. Merton, for he well knew he would not be the author of discord in that family, where dwelt the only two on earth that he could call his friends.

It was near the close of a summer day that a steam-boat touched the wharf of one of our Southern cities, and from its crowded decks poured a stream of weary travelers, eager once again to set foot upon land. Among the last who stepped on shore was a tall youth with a valise in his hand, walking slowly from the landing, bent his way toward the shipping ware-houses, along the wharves. He was in search of employment; but alas! he was a stranger and had no recommendations. With a dejected mien, and sorrowful step, he was about giving up all hope, when he came to a large warehouse, where sat a gentleman apparently about forty years of age. To the youth's enquiry whether he was the head of the establishment, he replied in the affirmative.

"What do you wish my lad?" he inquired.

"Do you want a lad to assist in your store? I have no recommendations to offer you," he continued modestly. "I have just arrived in the steam-boat from the North, and have neither friends nor money. I cannot even buy a lodging for the night; and seeing the merchant look incredulous at him, he could contain himself no longer, but said impudently, "Oh, sir, do not refuse," and tears trickled down his cheeks.

The merchant, touched by his grief, and convinced by the openness of his manner, hesitated for a moment, and finally took him to his home. A few days proved the truth of the youth's story, and he was employed at once by his benefactor. In the course of time he arose by degrees, until he became head clerk in the establishment of Mr. Thompson. He also, by his amiable nature, became the favorite of the wealthy family of the employer, with whom he still resided. All loved him, and he loved them in return, as father, mother, and sister.

For although Charles Elliston thought that Emma Thompson was almost as beautiful as his own Helen, yet he remained faithful to the latter, and could not think of the former only as a sister.

Five years had rolled by, and he had now become proprietor of the large establishment which he had entered as an errand boy--Mr. Thompson having retired from business. One evening he was sitting in familiar conversation with the family, when Mrs. T. after looking steadfastly at Charles for some time, remarked how much Emma and he resembled each other.

"Yes," said her husband, "I have often observed it; they look as much alike as though they were really brother and sister. Our lost Charles--poor little fellow! could not be more like Emma."

"Your Charles! I never knew you had any other child than Emma," said he; when did he die?"

"Would to God he had died!" exclaimed Mrs. Thompson, "then would I have known he was in Heaven; but now, perhaps, if he still lives, he may be buffeted about by strangers, whose hard hearts can seldom feel like a parent's;" then she gave vent to her feelings, in tears.

"He was lost!" then inquired Charles.

"Yes," said Mr. Thompson, "about seventeen years ago, I and Mary journeyed North for the benefit of her health, and to visit some friends in New York city, took with us our little Charles, who was scarcely four years old, and then our only child. We arrived there in safety, and after staying with our friends some time, set out on our return home. Anxious to prosecute our journey, we immediately on our arrival in Philadelphia, took the steam-boat to proceed directly on. I went to see to the safety of the baggage, thinking that my Mary and Charles were in the cabin, but what was my surprise, when on going into the cabin sometime after the boat had left the wharf, to find Mary there alone! She thought I had Charles with me, and she swooned away when I informed her I had not. We searched the boat over but no Charles could be found--and then it struck us that he must have wandered on shore before the boat left the wharf, and consequently was left behind. How harrowing were our thoughts, to think that the distance was increasing between us and our dearly beloved child. But there was a thought still more distressing--perhaps he had fallen overboard, unseen, and had been drowned! However, I determined on arriving at New Orleans, and leaving Mary with her friends and relatives, to return again to Philadelphia, and spare no pains nor expense in trying to discover his fate; but the great mental excitement, and bodily fatigue I had undergone, threw me into a fever on the way, and it was several months before I recovered. When I did, and arrived in Philadelphia, no trace could be discovered of our child, and never since have we heard any thing concerning him;--but God be praised, Charles, he has given us a son in you!"

"But was there no mark by which he could have been known, if he had been left behind as you supposed?" asked Charles eagerly.

"Yes, there were scars of a dog's teeth on his left wrist, and besides, he wore a locket--a birth-day present by his father--around his neck, with 'Charles' engraved on it," said Mrs. Thompson, with tears in her eyes.

"Then father, mother," said Charles, "bearing his arm and drawing from his bosom a locket, which he threw into Mrs. Thompson's lap, 'behold your long lost son!'"

For an instant they stood amazed--the next they were locked in each other's arms; then turning to Emma, he for the first time pressed to his bosom a sister.

How different was his situation now, from the day on which he first set foot in the city of New Orleans! Then he was poor and friendless, with scarce a place to rest his head; now he was wealthy, surrounded by friends, and blessed with a father's, mother's, and sister's love. He could claim now what the noble father would not have refused to the poor youth, had he asked it; Helen's hand; and even her proud mother would not object to receiving for her son-in-law the heir to the richest merchant in N. Orleans.

Mirth and music resounded throughout, and gladness reigned predominant in the splendid mansion of Mr. Merton. It was the birthday ball of his lovely and accomplished daughter, Helen, given in honor of her nineteenth birthday; and the magnificent saloons were thronged by youth and beauty, and the elite of the metropolis. All paid willing homage to her fascinating charms. Nor beneath their fervent congratulations did there lurk aught of malice or envy, for the sweet disposition and gentle manners of Helen Merton had the good will of all who knew her. And now as she replied to their warm-hearted wishes, she looked more beautiful than ever. She was attired in a plain white dress, looped with roses, and fitted finely to her exquisitely moulded form; her shining chestnut curls were confined by a costly diamond head-band that sparkled on her forehead, rivaling the transparent beauty and clearness of her complexion. At times when she would mingle in the giddy whirl of the dance, a smile would play upon her lovely features; but occasionally a melancholy expression would steal into her laughing eye, telling of something yet wanting to complete her happiness. She was thinking, perhaps, how he who many years ago, had won her maiden love, might, whilst she was sur-

rounded with wealth and luxury, be dragging out the prime of his life in poverty and distress. Yes, she still remembered the companion of her childhood. Such is woman's constancy and love. Alas, that it should so often be abused!

The evening was somewhat advanced when Mr. Merton approached Helen, locked arm-in-arm with a young man whose dark countenance, raven hair and eyes, and tall, straight form indicated a native of the South.

"Mr. Thompson, of New Orleans, my dear," said Mr. Merton, introducing him to Helen; and after conversing a few moments, sauntered to the opposite of the saloon.

"Who is that handsome young man you just now introduced to Helen?" asked Mrs. Merton of her husband.

"That is Mr. Thompson, of New Orleans, the richest merchant of that city, and his father was before him. He arrived here but the day before yesterday. I was introduced to him yesterday, and invited him here to-night, and if the impressions of his feelings are not left on Helen's little heart, which has hitherto been so callous, none never will be."

"And if they are, I suppose you will regret the disappearance of your protegee, Charles Elliston?" said his wife, sarcastically.

Mr. Merton did not answer her: he only turned away.

At first, when the stranger was introduced to Helen, there appeared to be an air of embarrassment, but it gradually wore off, and he entered into conversation with unusual vivacity--in the course of which she asked him if he had ever been in the city before. He replied that he had been when he was about seventeen years of age, and that he had been acquainted with several of his own age, whose acquaintance he highly prized. Among those he mentioned, was that of Charles Elliston, in particular. As he mentioned the name, he bent his dark eye full upon her, and perceived that she started, while for a moment agitation was visibly depicted in her countenance. After a minute's pause, he continued, "but I have made inquiries since my arrival respecting him, and hear that he has returned the kindness of his benefactor, your father, with ingratitude, by leaving his house, and going, no one knew whither."

"Oh, no, sir, do not believe that; it is an idle report. He had reason for leaving my father's house," said her voice trembled, and a tear stood in her eye.

Just then a gentleman advanced to claim her hand for the next cotillon, and the conversation was abruptly terminated. Charles resigned her silently; but his heart was full.

It is strange how the lapse of a few years between youth and manhood will change the face and disguise the form; the slight stripling that a little while ago clambered on our knee, we can scarcely recognise in the full and stately form and staid demeanor of the man. So it was with Charles Thompson, and no wonder Helen and her father could not see, in the rich merchant of the South, the poor lad who six years before had left them with scarcely a dollar in his pocket.

It was the morning following the ball--and Mr. and Mrs. Merton and Helen were sitting in the parlor, the former two discussing some private affairs, the latter with her head resting upon her hand, apparently in deep thought. The servant entered and handed Mr. Merton a letter. He opened it, and having perused it a few moments, he uttered an exclamation of joy. Both his companions looked up seemingly overcome with the excitement of some unusually pleasant news. He approached his daughter, and gently patting her on the cheek, said:

"Come, come, Helen dear, cheer up now, Charles, our own dear Charles, has returned, is in the city, and will be here in half an hour--cheer up, my dear!" and he began to pace the floor.

"See here," he continued, as a splendid equipage, with servants in livery, drove up to the door, from which a young gentleman alighted; "here is Mr. Thompson too; how glad I shall be to introduce them to one another."

"I don't see why you should be," said his wife, "though perhaps Charles, as you call him, may be as rich as Mr. Thompson. You know he left word he was going to seek his fortune," and she pronounced the last word with a sneer.

"And he hopes he has found it, madam!" exclaimed Charles, who entered just at that moment, "thanks be to an all-wise Providence that directed me to my father's house. It is Charles that stands before you!"

With a shriek of delight, Helen threw herself into his out-stretched arms, and wept tears of joy upon his bosom; whilst the old man stood motionless, but his eyes were wet, and his lip quivered, though not with grief.

When they had become somewhat composed, Charles related to them what had occurred since he had left them. The joy that beamed in the swimming eyes of the delighted girl, was only equalled by the tenderness with which he returned her look of affection. How deep was the bliss of that moment, making amends by its delight, for the long years of doubt and absence! It was not long before Charles renewed his boyish vows he had pledged to Helen, and the blushing girl listened, smiling and weeping by turns.

Need it be added, that in a short time Helen and Charles were united at the altar;

and that even the aristocratic mother smiled upon the union of her daughter with the descendant Charles Elliston.

### The reigning Czar of Russia.

The true character of the Emperor Nicholas as a ruler, may be best shown by placing it in juxtaposition with that of Alexander his immediate predecessor. Alexander was ambitious of being beloved by his subjects; Nicholas scorns their love, and is determined to be feared. Though his figure is finer and more commanding than that of Alexander, he is less pleasing; his aspect is stern, and no smile graces his lips. Alexander was mild and affable; severity looks out from beneath the brow of Nicholas; but insolent and harsh, he has an air of distrustful timidity. The traits of his character resemble those of his ferocious brother, Constantine, with this material difference, that as the fury of the latter was directed upon individuals, that of Nicholas is directed against classes of men, races, and whole nations. It is reduced to a system, and therefore the more frightful and pernicious. Perocious as was Constantine, he not unfrequently repented of the evil he had committed, and would even make reparation when it was in his power, to those whom he had wronged. Not so with Nicholas--however he may err, he never repents. Cruel by nature, it is a remarkable fact, that during his reign, no sentence of a court martial, on being presented for his signature, has ever been known to be cancelled, or even mitigated by him, and most frequently he aggravates the penalties. The religious creeds and liberties of the various nations subject to the sceptre of Alexander, were respected by him. Nicholas evinces utter disregard of them, violating alike charters and privileges, oppressing alike religions and sects.

Alexander appears to have had some affection for the Poles, or at least seemed anxious to gain theirs by flattering them with the hope of preserving their nationality. The very names of "Poland and Poles" are abhorrent to the ear of Nicholas; he cannot endure them, and would rejoice that the whole population of Poland had but one neck, that with his own hand he might cut it off at a blow. This hatred it is that urges him to endeavor, with the concentrated force of his despotism, to erase that nation from the memory of man, and to wage, as he is doing at this moment, a barbarous war of extermination against its language, history, and religion. Alexander was fond of science and the arts, encouraged learned men, and bestowed upon them rank, honors, and rewards; Nicholas affects to do the same, but in reality he looks upon them with aversion and distrust; for he suspects them, in common with all enlightened and upright men, of a crime unpardonable in his eyes, namely, liberalism, (columbism, &c.) The most infamous characters, robbers, highwaymen, felons of every description, may hope to obtain his pardon for their crimes; but let every liberal man beware how he comes within his reach, if he would avoid being doomed to perish on the Caucasus. Alexander established Colleges and schools for the encouragement of learning and the arts; he restored a Polish University at Wilna, and founded another at Warsaw. Nicholas has abolished both together with most of the schools existing in Poland; and in those that remain, he has introduced the most compulsive system of corrupted education. There was no difficulty in getting access to Alexander; the humblest peasant could approach him with a petition; and he was distinguished for his courtesy to men and his gallantry to women. Nicholas is as inaccessible as he is inexorable to his unfortunate subjects,--and brutal both to men and women. His courtesy to the empress seems intended only for outward show, as he is known to be both imperious and harsh in private; and if the example of licentiousness which he sets for himself, his court runs great risk of becoming as profligate as that of Catherine II.

All the men who were held most in esteem by Alexander, are disliked by him, and some among them have become the objects of his most cruel persecution. It must be acknowledged to the credit of Alexander, that he did much toward civilizing Russia by introducing into it European industry and improvements;--but Nicholas barbarizes by prohibiting his subjects from travelling; and thus calling off in a great measure their intercourse with other nations, hopes to facilitate his meditated conquest of the adjacent countries, and his project of trampling under foot Europe and her civilization. Alexander, at least during the first years of his reign, was liberal;--but in this respect, also, Nicholas has shown himself the reverse of his brother, for he hates liberty alike in his own empire and in others. Countries, enjoying a popular form of government and liberal institutions, are abhorred by him as his natural enemies. The sound of the drum and the peal of the cannon are the music in which he most delights; he can conceive no higher standard of excellence than Napoleon; and no sublimer plans than his; it is, in fact, to this idea fixe that Prince Leuchenberg is indebted for obtaining the hand of his daughter. He is susceptible of no gentle affections, no generous emotions, no magnanimity. Even in his youth, when it was his custom to drill his soldiers in his apartments, he was always provided with a whip, and would flog them mercilessly for the least inaccuracy; and if he met one of his guard in the streets, and the man did not

salute him in a manner that suited his fancy, or happened to have a button of his uniform unfastened, he would put him under arrest for several weeks, or degraded him to one of the regiments of the line.

Now that he is emperor, those who incur his displeasure are marched off to the Caucasus. Cruel and inexorable himself, he dislikes men of a different disposition; to witness concord and friendship is offensive to him, and he is much better satisfied when dissensions arise at his court or amongst foreign nations, which latter he is ever ready to foment by his secret agents, "Divide et impera" being his motto. The commander of a regiment, who does not behave ill to his officers, and encourage these in their turn to ill-treat their subalterns, is despised as unfit for service, and soon dismissed. Even his own son, the presumptive heir of the crown, has, on account of his little disposition to cruelty, received from him the appellation of "old grandmother," and his tutor has been rebuffed for giving him that turn. All established customs and judicial forms must give way when one of his fancies intervenes; his will is a decree, and brooks no delay in its execution. From his military predilections, the Czar will devote hours to drilling a company of raw recruits, which could be equally well performed by any corporal;--but he will give himself no trouble respecting the civil government of the state, and still less the administration of justice. He does not, indeed, object to sign decrees for the augmentation of imposts; but if any of the oppressor's self present him a petition complaining of injustice, both the petitioner and writer of the petition are sentenced to Siberia, the one as a rebel, the other as an abettor of a rebellion!

### THE LAND BILL.

The following is the Land Distribution Bill (substantially the same with that hitherto known as "Mr. Clay's Land Bill") reported from the Land Committee by Hon. Wm. Cost Johnson, and which has passed in the House of Representatives by a vote of 116 to 108. It has since been received by the Senate and referred to the appropriate Committee.

#### A BILL

To appropriate the proceeds of the sales of the public lands, and to grant pre-emption rights.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the thirty-first day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-one, there be allowed and paid to each of the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Alabama, Missouri, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Michigan, over and above what each of the said States is entitled to by the terms of the compact entered into between them and the United States, upon their admission into the Union, the sum of ten per centum upon the net proceeds of the sales of the public lands, which, subsequent to the day aforesaid, shall be made within the limits of each of said States respectively: Provided, That the sum so allowed to the said States, respectively, shall be in no wise affected or diminished on account of any sums which have been heretofore, or shall be hereafter, applied to the construction or continuance of the Cumberland road, but that the disbursement for the said road remain, as heretofore, chargeable on the two per centum fund provided for by compacts with several of the said States.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That after deducting the said ten per centum, and what, by the compact aforesaid, has heretofore been allowed to the States aforesaid, the residue of the net proceeds--which net proceeds shall be ascertained by deducting from the gross proceeds all the expenditures of the year for the following objects: salaries and expenses on account of the General Land Office; expenses for surveying public lands; salaries and expenses in the surveyor general's offices; salaries, commissions, and allowances to registers and receivers; the five per centum to new States--of all the public lands of the United States, wherever situated, which shall be sold subsequent to the said 31st day of December, 1841, shall be distributed among the twenty-six States of the Union and the District of Columbia, according to their respective Federal representative population, as ascertained by the last census, to be applied by the Legislatures of the said States for such purposes as the said Legislatures may direct: Provided, That the distributive share to which the District of Columbia shall be entitled, shall be applied to free schools, or education in some other form as Congress may direct: And provided, also, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to the prejudice of future applications for a reduction of the price of the public lands, or to the prejudice of applications for a transfer of the public lands on reasonable terms, to the States within which they lie, or to make such future disposition of the public lands, or any part thereof, as Congress may deem expedient.

Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, That the several sums of money received in the Treasury as the net proceeds of the public lands shall be paid at the Treasury half yearly on the first day of January and July in each year, during the operation of this act, to such person or persons as the respective Legislatures of the said States shall authorize and direct to receive the same.

Sec. 4. And be it further enacted, That any sum of money which at any time may become due and payable to any State of the

Union, or to the District of Columbia, by virtue of this act, as the portion of the said State or District, of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands, shall be first applied to the payment of any debt due and payable from the said State or District, to the United States; provided, that this shall not be construed to extend to the sums deposited with the States under the act of Congress of the 23d June, 1836, entitled "An act to regulate the deposits of the public money."

Sec. 5. And be it further enacted, That this act shall continue and be in force until otherwise provided by law, unless the United States shall become involved in war with any Foreign Power, in which event, from the commencement of hostilities, this act shall be suspended during the continuance of such war: Provided, nevertheless, That if, prior to the expiration of this act, any new State or States shall be admitted into the Union, there be assigned to such new State or States, the proportion of the proceeds accruing after their admission into the Union to which such State or States may be entitled, upon the principles of this act, together with what such State or States may be entitled to by virtue of compacts to be made on their admission into the Union.

Sec. 6. And be it further enacted, That there shall be annually appropriated for completing the surveys of such lands, a sum not less than one hundred and fifty thousand dollars; and the minimum price at which the public lands are now sold at private sales shall not be increased; and in case the same shall be increased by law, at any time during the operation of this act, then so much of this act as provides that the net proceeds of the sales of the public lands shall be distributed among the several States, shall, from and after the increase of the minimum price thereof, cease and become utterly null, and of no effect, any thing in this act to the contrary notwithstanding.

Sec. 7. And be it further enacted, That the Secretary of the Treasury may continue any land district in which is situated the Seat of Government of any of the States, and may continue the land office in such district, notwithstanding the quantity of land unsold in such district may not amount to one hundred thousand acres, when, in his opinion, such continuance may be required by public convenience, or in order to close the land system in such State at a convenient point, under the provisions of the act on that subject, approved twelfth June, one thousand eight hundred and forty.

Sec. 8. And be it further enacted, That there shall be granted to each State specified in the first section of this act (which has not heretofore received of the United States five hundred thousand acres for purposes of internal improvement) a quantity of land which shall, together with the amount such State has already received as aforesaid, make five hundred thousand acres, to be selected within the limits of such State in such manner as the Legislature thereof shall direct; and located in parcels, conformable to sectional divisions and subdivisions, of not less than three hundred and twenty acres in any one location, on any public land subject to entry at private sale; which said locations may be made at any time within five years after the lands of the United States, in said States respectively, shall have been surveyed, and offered at public sale, according to existing laws.

Sec. 9. And be it further enacted, That the lands herein granted to the States above named shall not be disposed of at a price less than one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, until otherwise authorized by a law of the United States; and the net proceeds of the sales of said lands shall be faithfully applied to objects of internal improvement within the States aforesaid, respectively, namely: Roads, bridges, canals and improvement of water courses, and draining swamps; and such roads, canals, bridges, and water courses, when made or improved, shall be free for the transportation of the United States mail, and munitions of war, and for the passage of their troops, without the payment of any toll whatever.

Sec. 10. And be it further enacted, That from and after the passage of this act, every person being the head of a family, or widow, or single man, over the age of twenty-one years, and being a citizen of the United States, or having filed his declaration of intention to become a citizen, as required by the naturalization law, who since the 1st day of June, A. D. eighteen hundred and forty, has made or shall hereafter make a settlement in person on the public lands to which the Indian title has been at the time of such settlement extinguished, and which has been, or shall have been, surveyed prior thereto, and who shall inhabit and improve the same, and who has or shall erect a dwelling thereon, shall be, and is hereby, authorized to enter with the Register of the Land Office for the district in which such land may lie, by legal subdivisions, any number of acres not exceeding one hundred and sixty, or a quarter section of land, to include the residence of such claimant, upon paying to the United States the minimum price of such land, subject, however, to the following limitations and exceptions: No person who has heretofore had the benefit of a right of Pre-emption under any other law of Congress, shall have such privilege under this act; nor shall any person be entitled to more than one pre-emptive right by virtue of the same; no person who is the proprietor of three hundred and twenty acres of land in any State or Territory of the United States, and no