THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY

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CASTLES.

There's a building boom in Nowhereland—
It's the one that comes each year,
When the spring is new
And the skies grow blue
And the south winds whispers cheer.
With Fancy as architect we've planned
(It's charges are small but fair)
To improve his grounds
For each vast estate
And our castles in the air.

It's only a minute we pause to see
The memories and powers
To beauty rise
Neath our very eyes
And those transitories all are yours.
Your fancies may be bold and strange
And free,
For easily goes repair
The wrecks that falls
When the old chariot falls
In your castles in the air.

When the golden towers of twilight star
And the scarlet sun sinks low,
It's a journey slight
To that land of light
Where, if maybe Dissolution blow,
Only the friend with the honest heart
Who has followed the sigh ill and fair
Will can be your guest
As you dream and rest
In your castle in the air.

A DESPERADO'S WHIM.

"When you're talking of bad men that are past and gone, don't put any one ahead of old Sam Brown, Long-haired Brown. He was the worst all-round one that ever struck the Pacific slope, I believe. If he had any good points except nerve and strength, nobody ever found 'em out. Yet I know one good deed he did, after his own queer fashion, and why he did it I never fully settled in my mind, but I suspect he settled with one party to square off a grudge he held against the other. I'll tell you about it, and you [illegible]".

It was old Sam Tipton, the proprietor, who was talking. What he doesn't know about the old Nevada days, when Comstock mines were booming, you'd have to travel a long way to find out.

"Sam wasn't exactly a pleasant man to have around, for nobody could tell but it might be killing day with him and it might seem necessary to his comfortment to shoot somebody or carve him with his big knife. Then it was bad luck for the first man that got in his way. Oftentimes he worked up his drop, got the man that he was laying for to take a drink with him to put him off his guard, and then playfully disembowled him as they clicked glasses together. He having that sort of disposition you can understand that when he rode up to where I was camping one night I wasn't a bit pleased to see him, though you can bet I didn't let on to him how I felt.

"It was in the early sixties, a few months before Sam was killed by Van Sickle. I was travelling alone by wagon from the Lone Pine district to Virginia City, and had gone into camp toward dusk at a spring known as Ojo Tenedrio that came out of a wood hill grown up with pines and underbrush. There was an emigrant party already camped near the spring, a well-fixed outfit with two wagons and some good stock. The party I judged to be all one family, taking in the son-in-law and daughter-in-law, and they seemed to be very decent people. I had drawn up my wagon at a sheltered place about a hundred yards away from their camp, watered my horses and picketed them out to feed, and set about getting supper. I got my fire going and was cutting some bacon to fry when a big man came riding up among the trees and I saw that it was Sam Brown. He was not only a big man, but also a dangerous looking one, with a revolver at each hip, and his long hair held up with pins under his hat. He rode up to where I was, looked at me, and asked gruffly:

"Who are you?"

"If most any other man had asked me that question in the way he did, I should have told him to go somewhere, but men answered Sam Brown civilly if they knew who they were talking to, I told him my name and where I was travelling.

"'H'm!' he grunted. 'I've heard your name and seen you in Bodie. My name's Brown—Sam Brown. I reckon you've heard of me?'

"He looked at me as if he expected I'd fall down when I heard his name. But I didn't, because I knew him, to start with, and because there was no use in doing it.

"'Keep right on cutting bacon,' he said. 'I'm going to take supper with you and I'm hungry as a wolf.'

"Of course I told him he was welcome, and kept on cutting off slices until I was good and sure there was enough for both. He unsaddled and picketed his horse while I got supper ready, and then we sat down on the ground and ate together. Scarcely a word passed between us while we ate, but two cups of strong coffee and a pipe made him a trifle more sociable.

"'What outfit is that over there?' he asked.

"I told him as much as I knew of them. He got up and walked over near enough to see them and looked their horses over carefully. Then he came back and sat down and gazed at the fire without speaking. He had the air of a man with a set purpose in mind, and he made no move toward going away. They were having a good time over at the emigrants' camp, and the talk and laughter as it floated over to us was in odd contrast to Brown's grim silence as he sat brooding darkly in the moonlight. Presently somebody over at the other camp twanged a banjo, and then we heard a girl's voice sing a plantation melody, and after that she sang another and another. One of those plantation songs had a jingle to it that seemed to strike Sam's fancy, for he lifted his head to listen until it was finished.

"'Well, that's a rattler!' he growled, as if he were talking to himself. 'Reckon I'll go over and make 'em a visit.'

"And without another word he got up and stalked over to the other camp, and soon I heard the girl singing the song again.

"The moon would set early, and the thought struck me that, Sam being away, it would be a good idea, while the moonlight lasted, to make a little circuit round the camp just to see if I could get any hint of what Long Haired Brown was up to—for I knew he wasn't riding out on the Lone Pine road for a pleasure ride. As I came near the road I saw a man riding down the hill from the direction of Lone Pine, walking his horse slowly and peering through the trees about the spring. He stopped opposite the emigrants' camp where the fire was blazing brightly, and looked long and carefully at it. I was out of sight behind a tree, and my own camp fire had gone down to ashes, so that it could not be seen from the trail. The horseman was too far away from the emigrants' camp to distinguish people or voices there, but he moved along two or three times to get a better view. Then he turned round and went back up the trail toward Lone Pine.

"Strangely enough, my only thought was that the stranger was a sheriff or vigilante on the hunt for some man that was wanted—looking for Sam Brown perhaps. It did not strike me then, as it would most likely have done at another time, that he might be the scout of a horse-stealing gang getting the lay of the camp so as to run off the emigrants' stock. I came back to my wagon, thinking over in my mind whether I'd best tell Sam what I had seen. He was still at the emigrants' camp, so I walked over and found him sitting on a keg listening to a girl of fifteen or thereabouts, who was strumming the banjo and singing, and she did it very nicely I must say. I was made welcome by the emigrants, and the gray haired father of the crowd told me they had come all the way from Iowa in their wagons and were going to California. As the hour was getting late for campers to be awake, I presently got up to go, but Sam kept his seat on the keg.

"'Give us the plantation song once more, little gal,' he said, and she willingly sang for him. It was only a breakdown cake-walk tune, with nonsense words; but it was lively and rollicking, and I felt for Sam Brown's taste, and the correctness of that was not to be questioned in Nevada in the early sixties.

"The singing finished, we went back to the wagon and lay down on the ground to sleep. I had my partner's blankets alone to lend to Sam, so we were both well fixed for the night. We rolled ourselves up in our blankets a little distance away from each other, and with his weapons by him handy to grab. Of course, we picketed a place where we could see the horses, which we had tied by the wagon. I had decided not to tell Sam about the horseman, but to let matters take their course.

"Sam Brown seemed to drop off to sleep as soon as he lay down, but that may have been pretence. I was restless at first and woke two or three times from short naps, and each time I found that he was awake. At last, as everything was quiet, I fell into a sound slumber and slept for hours. I woke with a start at the sound of a shot. The moon was down and it was dark among the trees. There was the sound of voices and a strange rattling about of things over at the emigrants' camp. I looked for Sam and found he was gone.

"I slipped out of my blankets and took a look round my camp to see if everything there was all right. The horses, Sam's and mine, were standing quietly where we had tied them, and nothing had been disturbed. The blanket that Sam Brown had slept in, and his saddle, which served as a pillow, were as he had left them on the ground, so it was reasonable to believe that he was not far away. Having found out so much, my next move was to go over to the emigrants' camp to see what the matter was there. I made sure that my revolver was in place and in working order before I started, and then crept to a place where I could see what was going on without being seen myself.

"What I saw there was bad enough. Four men, with crape masks pulled over their faces, were holding up the emigrant party. One of the grown sons sat on a wagon pole, his right hand supporting his left arm, which had been broken by a bullet. A young woman, his wife probably, lay in a dead faint at his feet. The others of the party stood or crouched about, the women moaning and crying, the men holding their hands above their heads. They had been surprised in sleep and were defenceless. Two of the masked men covered the party with revolvers. The other two had searched the wagons and thrown everything in them out upon the ground.

"Of course, my first thought was that Sam Brown was in the job, but I could not see him anywhere about. I was certain that he was not one of the masked men, for his build and bearing couldn't have been mistaken by anyone who had once seen him. I felt that it would not be time for me to take a hand in the business until I found out where he was and how he stood in the matter. The two masked searchers were busily at work ripping up bedticks, cutting the lining of clothes, and emptying trunks and boxes, tucking everything that struck their fancy into a canvas bag that lay open between them. They had found a jug of whiskey, and by appearances all of the robbers had drank of it more than once, a bad thing to do while conducting a holdup. At last they stopped, and one of them said to the man who seemed the leader:

"'We've got everything we can find in the wagons and on the men.'

"'What have you got?'

"'Their guns, a lot of jewelry, and fifty dollars in money.'

"'Is that all? They're not travelling to California with no more money than that. Search the women.'

"At this order the women shrieked, and the old father of the outfit, standing there with his hands held up above his gray head, spoke:

"'In heaven's name, spare us that. You have wounded my son and taken all we have. Don't add outrage to that.'

"'Shut your mouth and keep it shut,' commanded the leader, brutally. 'One word more and we'll kill every man on the outfit. Searchers do your work. We've wasting time.'

"With me looking on, the impulse to turn upon the robbers at any hazard was almost overmastering. But I knew that with the odds of one against four, and with Sam Brown uncertain, a shot would almost certainly cost not only my life, but also the life of every one of the emigrants. As I hesitated I saw a little movement in the shadow of a great pine tree behind the two robbers, who were standing, and not two steps away from them. Silent as a shadow, the form of a man blended with the dark tree trunk, and through the darkness I saw the cold gleam of two revolvers that he held one in each hand. The fearless of the man I could not distinguish, but by his large bulk and the intimate glint of the eyes I knew that of an unarmed person. I knew it was Sam Brown. His long hair fell down over his shoulders, and that was a sign always that he was out for killing. Something the robbers had to say about him was not likely to soothe his feelings.

"The man first the leader spoke. The whisky had loosed his tongue or he would not have said a useless word at such a time as this.

"'Number Five sent me from Bodie that Sam Brown's gang had this outfit spotted and meant to run off their horses on the way. But they slipped off a day earlier than he expected, and he missed 'em. Won't old Brown shake his long hair and flourish round when he hears we've got the boodle. Maybe he'll be over to see us.'

"'Brown be hanged,' said the leader. 'He's a cur, anyway. He went to Bodie because he was afraid he'd get killed if he stayed at Lone Pine. You couldn't drag him there with a rope to-day. Here, Six, don't miss that girl' and the poor little banjo player shrieked, and her mother screamed still more loudly, as one of the searchers seized her roughly.

"It was right at this point that Sam Brown came in with his little piece of business, and it was all finished in five seconds. The girl's scream was lost in the cracking of two pistol shots that sounded like one loud report. Sam Brown had taken one step forward and fired from each hand. The two masked men covering the emigrants with pistols fell two ways, both dead before they struck the ground. Crack! His right-hand pistol spoke again and one of the searchers, as he started up, sank back and lay still. The man who had started to search the little banjo player turned at the sound and held the child before him as a shield, so that Sam could not fire without hitting the child. He drew his pistol as he did so. In an instant more Sam had closed in upon him, reached above the girl's head and smashed the robber's skull with his heavy revolver. The fellow's pistol exploded, sending the ball into the ground as he dropped down senseless. As he fell the mother sprang forward and drew the shrieking girl away.

"Sam fired a pistol ball into the man's head as coolly as he might have shot a snake on the prairie. Then he turned round to survey his work. Stooping over, he pulled each one of the robbers up from the ground by the hair or collar and tore the mask off and looked at his face. He nodded his head and through the dark I thought I could see the grim smile of satisfaction on his lips.

"'I know 'em all,' he said, talking to himself as if no one had been round. 'It was bound to come, but I didn't think 'twould come so soon. Four at a lick! That's bright. Reckon I won't have to go to Lone Pine! I'll take a drink now.' He turned to the emigrants. 'Where's your whisky? The jug's upset?'

"The emigrants were most too demoralized and too wonder-go to attend to anything, but one of the young men found a quart bottle that had been overlooked by the robbers. The stopper was sealed and Sam knocked off the head against the wagon wheel and drank from the bottle. He took two or three deep gulps.

"'That's good,' he said. 'I'll take the rest of it along with me,' and he slid the bottle into the rear pocket of his long-tailed frock coat. 'I wonder if these fellows have got anything about 'em that I want?' he continued, and went through the pockets of the dead men. He looked their weapons over, but threw them down. 'They're not up to much,' he said.

"Then he turned over the canvas bag that the robbers had put their plunder in and picked up the money.

"'This pays for some coaching,' he said. 'I'm a little short. Reckon I'll borrow half of it. Call it half! Even changes. There's the rest.' And he handed the old gray-haired patriarch what was left with an air of great consideration.

"I had been rooted to my wagon box. I could see him and hear what was said at the emigrants' camp. I thought Sam had gone through there and would come back, and I'd rather he'd think I'd let him know all that had been going on. But nobody could ever tell what Sam Brown would do here or at any place or time, except that it would be something unusual. He had one more thing to say to make himself agreeable to the emigrants.

"'Which of you sang that plantation song again?' I heard him ask the banjo player. Asked him in that camp after what had happened with four dead men lying there and the girl shrieking in hysterics. Sam gave up his point for once in his life, and when I was setting by my wagon it struck me as a rude best to say much to a man that's been having a shooting match and you find out whether he's got all of the idea of killing. But I saw that Sam was in high good humor.

"'Likely you heard some shooting over there,' he remarked.

"'Yes,' I said. 'I thought you might be concerned in it, and thought I had better stay to home for company. Hope you had good luck.' It seems all [illegible]

"'You bet it's quiet,' he said. 'I've got some whisky. Have a drink.'

"I drank some whisky out of a tin cup, and he took a long pull from the neck of the bottle.

"'Reckon I'll turn now and get some sleep. Picket my horse out to feed, will you, if you wake up in the morning before I do.'

"I said 'certainly,' and he rolled himself in the blankets and slept as peacefully as a child until high sunrise. The emigrants pulled out in the early morning, by starlight, and at sunrise the buzzards were settling down on the place where they'd camped. When Sam Brown woke he was still in good humor and I would never have believed he could make himself so agreeable. I had breakfast ready, and while we were eating he talked of what had happened the night before in a matter-of-fact way, but with a little professional pride. After breakfast we rode different ways. I never saw Sam Brown again."—New York Sun.

BRIEF STATEMENTS

An Able Effort.

Bishop Cheshire's sermon before the graduating class at the Oak Ridge Institute was a very able effort from 1 John, 2:14, "I write unto you, young men, because you are strong." He combatted the idea that religion is for the old, the weak and the effeminate. He said that courage and manliness are essential to the highest form of Christianity. His words were well chosen and the impression made will prove lasting. He was assisted by Rev. Mr. Jones, rector of St. Barnabas' church, Greensboro.

To Deliver Wiley Gray Medal

Hon. Clement Manley, of Winston, has been selected to deliver the Wiley Gray medal at the coming commencement of Trinity College, at Durham. The presentation will be made on Wednesday, June 10th. This medal is offered by Mr. R. T. Gray, of Raleigh, in memory of his brother, Wiley Gray, who nobly gave his life for his country. It is presented for the best oration by any student at Trinity.

The Colored Normal School.

The annual commencement of the colored State Normal and Industrial School was concluded Wednesday. Diplomas to five members of the graduating class were presented by Hon. A. H. Eller. Bishop Rondthaler, of the Moravian Church, was present and made an encouraging address. The corner-stone for the new school's beautiful new home was laid.

Charlotte's graded school has been presented with a North Carolina State flag. It bears the dates May 20, 1775, for the Mecklenburg Declaration, and April 12, 1776, for the declaration of freedom in convention by North Carolina, the first State that did declare freedom.

Mr. E. E. L. Faison, brother of Mrs. Marion Butler, has been appointed to a place on the Geological Survey, and stationed for the summer in North Carolina.

Col. Julian S. Carr, of Durham, gives $250 a year to the State Normal and Industrial School at Greensboro to establish the "Lida Carr Fellowship."

Wednesday eight cars were wrecked at Lexington by a collision of two freight trains, causing a loss of $15,000.

Hackburn & Willett, of Newbern, have thus far this season shipped 5,000 boxes of cabbage—about one-third of their crop.

Charlotte has accepted the crematory, or garbage plant, which was erected last fall by a Northern company. The cost is $5,000.

Col. Jas. E. Boyd and Congressman Linney will deliver memorial addresses at Asheville Federal Decoration Day, May 30th.

Cotton has been damaged by hail in Richmond and Robeson counties. The farmers have ploughed up the few plants left and replanted.

The Woman's Edition of the Charlotte Observer netted the Y. M. C. A. $600.

It is said that the fruit crop throughout Mecklenburg county will be immense.