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The Highlanders by the Well at Cawnpore.

Foot-sore they were, and weary,
The day's grim work was o'er;
And the hot pursuit, and the dying yell,
And the strife, were heard no more.
When they came to their night encampment,
As the tropic evening fell,
And staid their steps for a little space
By that thrice accursed well.

Theirs were no fresh quick feelings:
Few but had bravely stood
On battle-fields where the soil was soaked
Till each footprint filled with blood.
Well did they know the horrors
Of War's unpitiful face;
Yet they sobbed as with one great anguish
As they stood by that fatal place.

Sill was the eve around them;
But they knew that that sultry air
Had thrilled to the cry of murderous rage
And the wild shriek of despair.
They saw in the chasm before them
The bloody and self-sought grave
Of many a heart that had cried in vain
On heaven and earth to save.

Mother and child were lying
Locked in a last embrace,
And death had printed the frenzied look
On the maiden's ghastly face.
And one of the slaughtered victims
They raised with a reverent care,
And shied from her fair and girlish head
The tresses of tangled hair.

They parted the locks between them,
And with low, quick breathing aware,
That a life of the cruel foe should fall
For every slender hair.
"Leave to the coward, wailing,
Let woman weep woman's fate,
Our sword shall weed red tears of blood,
For the hearts made desolate."

They will keep their vow unbroken:
But oh! for the bitter tears,
The nights of horror, and days of pain,
That must fill our future years,
Woe! for the glad homes stricken
On our own green, quiet shore,
Woe! for the loving and the loved
Whom our eyes shall see no more.

THE SKAPTAR YOKUL.*
A TALE OF ICELAND.

BY PAUL H. HAYNE.

I passed the winter of 1842 at Naples. Dining one day with the American Consul, I became acquainted with a Monsieur De La Roche, a Frenchman of middle age, whose precarious health obliged him to reside altogether in the south of Italy. From the first we were attracted towards each other. To what this was owing I could never precisely divine, for our difference of temperament was remarkable. De La Roche, notwithstanding his delicate constitution, was blessed with a constant flow of animal spirits, which no bodily infirmity could depress; whereas I was a staid, melancholy individual, given to solitude and philosophy.

Nevertheless, our accidental acquaintance ripened into intimacy—intimacy into disinterested friendship.

M. De La Roche had been, during his youth, an extensive traveller. Induced, under the influence of his health, nothing could quench his thirst for novelty. Having always possessed an independent fortune, these tastes were readily gratified, and at the age of twenty-six he had probably seen as much of the world as Alexander von Humboldt, or the Wandering Jew. He was a man, too, upon whom travel wrought manifold improvements. An inquiring mind, and an address which early knowledge of good society had polished to the extreme of suavity and grace, were, as regards the first, rendered more sound and deep, and, in relation to the second, deprived of that Parisian politesse which carries with it, I know not what of hollowiness and insincerity. My friend owned a villa in the vicinity of Naples, and not being cumbered with a family, was generally very much at his ease. Here we passed many weeks of delightful converse together. In the mellow winter evenings of the South we repaired to the well-stocked library, and while M. De La Roche reclined upon a couch before the fire, I would read to him from some favorite book, until a happy idea, or vivid description, caused the face of the invalid to glow, and his own notions and experiences were substituted for those of the author. It was at these times that I was favored with a number of interesting details, recounted in a lively and striking manner, several of which I well remember, and have arranged in the following narrative.

"I was in London," said M. De La Roche, "during the January of 18—, where I was happy to encounter an old travelling companion, whom I had known in Persia, an eccentric gentleman, by the name of Merton."

"We met, unexpectedly, at a soiree, and immediately renewed our acquaintance. Merton was an impulsive, fanciful, extravagant, dashing fellow, who, like myself, never tarried long in

"The Skaptar Yokul is an Icelandic volcano, situated near the boundary of the district called Skaptafell, near the sources of several rivers. It is supposed to have a subterranean communication with Ornesa, Side, and other volcanoes, though at a distance of many miles. To all ice mountains the word 'YOKUL' (which signifies masses of ice) is applied by the natives of Iceland.—Snelling's Polar Regions.

one place, and lived upon the excitement of continual change and motion. We had not been three hours with each other, before planning a new expedition, which was sufficiently original and romantic. Among our many peripatations, we had, hitherto, avoided northern latitudes, not even having ventured to St. Petersburg; but now we conceived the idea of visiting Iceland, and joining (should opportunity offer) in a search for the North-west passage.

Accordingly, about a month after, we took berth aboard an American brig, at Yarmouth, bound for the coast of Greenland, but intending to touch at Iceland on the way. Our voyage was prosperous, and some time in March we landed at Reykjavik, on the Fero Fiord. Before leaving England, we had procured letters of introduction to the Prefector of the District in which the capital was situated, who received us with great hospitality, and begged us to remain with him during our sojourn in the country. This invitation was accepted, and we soon became domesticated in the household of our host, who was a character but rarely found, save in those remote regions, where the rigors of the climate foster the home-bred virtues, and strengthen the ties of association.

"The Prefector's name was Jorgenson. His family consisted of a son—an uncouth lad—and a most lovely niece, Christina. To the latter belonged the fair complexion of the women of the North, but her eyes were full, dark, and lustrous as those which bewilder the stranger on the *Murallas* of Cadiz or Barcelona. As my tale, however, is not one of love, I would only observe, incidentally, that to the charms of this beautiful creature my friend seemed disposed to succumb, so that when, after six weeks' residence in Reykjavik, Jorgenson proposed that we should abandon our sports of seal-spearing and bear-stalking, for a visit to the interior of the Island, Merton received the proposition with anything but favor.

"It was not until Christina could be persuaded to grace the expedition with her presence, that he displayed the slightest desire to examine the curiosities of the mid-land Provinces. The incidents of our journey were not remarkable. Rocky plains and stunted plants, precipitous hills, and wild, impetuous rivulets, that gushed from their summits with the velocity of dreams, formed the general characteristics of the country through which we passed. On the evening of the tenth day after our departure from the sea-board, we spread our tents upon the borders of one of the noblest streams that ever rolled from the mountains to the ocean. The name of this river was the Skaptar Yokul. It glided through wide meadows, fringed with a scanty turf. Here we established our temporary home. Fishing and hunting consumed our time—rather, I should say, my time, and that of the majority of our comrades—for Merton never joined us.

"We had now been many days on the banks of the Skaptar Yokul. Our Stewart, the eldest of the party, declared that he had never known a season in Iceland so advanced and favorable for vegetation. The blades of "melur," or wild oats, were springing rapidly from the earth; the low shrubbery was again budding forth into greenness; and from quiet nooks, where the snow, like remnants of a tattered robe, still lingered, berries of red, and blue, and purple, just rounding into ripeness, peered forth in the genial sunshine of spring.

"The river, freed from its last burden of ice, was rolling rapidly and melodiously through the fields. The song of birds stirred the air; and far off, over the sloping banks, cropping the herbage, and tossing their leamed frontlets to the sky, large herds of reindeer roamed leisurely to and fro, now pausing at some elevated spot, to contemplate our encampment, and now browsing onward, quietly as before. Occasionally, one of these magnificent animals, prompted by special curiosity, left the main company, and approaching the river side, reconnoitered our position with mathematical accuracy, and then withdrew. It was a picturesque scene, and to me, at least, novel in the extreme. But one dark feature loomed up from the landscape, and that impressed me with a strange sense of dread. There was something of horrible presentiment connected with this feeling; I could not explain it, for what human imagination could have conceived the terrors that the elements, even then were laboring to engender. The object of which I speak was a volcano, called like the river, the Skaptar Yokul. It consisted of twenty conical peaks, of no great height, red in color, and forming a circle around a central elevation, crowned with snow. While the atmosphere elsewhere was remarkably lucid and serene, a dense, unnatural mist hovered over the desolation of the mountain, shifting with the wind, and growing, as I thought, more gloomy and portentous every hour. I endeavored to turn my attention from what the natives declared to be a very common phenomenon; but an oppressive anxiety, a hoding awe, impelled my eyes again and again to those awful peaks, and that shadowy, mysterious, thickening cloud. 'My friend,' said I, to the Stewart, who was near at hand, 'what means that veil over the Yokul? I have watched it each day during the week, and each

day it has spread and darkened, until now, at evening, when the sun sets behind it, you can hardly recognize his disk, it appears so lurid and bloody.'

"The man laughed aloud. 'Why, you strangers,' he replied, 'are timid as children; I have been fifty years on this Island, and many and many a time have I seen our mountains circled with fire and smoke, until the light of day was dim; and I have known the ground rock under me like a sea, and the air grow stifling, and the wind pass away, and thunder bellow beneath the earth louder and wilder than ever boomed from the heavens. This was terrible—but vapor on the top of a mountain! pshaw! It has been there, sir, from the beginning of the world.'

"Without venturing to offend the speaker's national pride, by the suggestion that his Island was probably created at a much later date than the rest of the globe, I merely demurred to his conclusion concerning my want of nerve, and pursued my walk along the borders of the stream alone. Rambling along, I met Merton and Christina. Never had I beheld the latter so lovely. The glow of health on her cheek; the soft meaning in her eye; the disordered locks that caught and retained the sunbeams; the elastic step, and the lithe, active, buoyant figure; in a word, the *toute ensemble* of gracious beauty and exalting hope—this was an embodiment of all that is most attractive to youthful sentiment and passion! With how unexpressed a fondness my friend regarded her! Transitory hope, and gladness of an hour—Eros on the verge of the shades! How I look back and wonder at the ineffable calm, the unsuspecting happiness of that deep affection, so soon to become—; but I anticipate, though God knows I could willingly spare you the remainder of these details. The pair greeted me gaily, and walked on! I felt no disposition to join them; but as they loitered along the green slope towards our tents, I turned, with unaccountable interest, to survey their motions. Merton stopped for a moment, and plucking some weed or flower from the path, handed it to his companion. I saw her place it in her bosom, and then the lovers drew closer together, and their converse seemed more subdued and absorbing. I turned from them, and proceeded on my way. Suddenly, and before I was aware of the distance I had traversed, I stumbled over some fragments of basaltic formation, and, looking up, there stood the mountain—that dreadful Skaptar Yokul! I absolutely shuddered with horror. 'What could be the meaning of this?' was an inward query, that in vain demanded a response. The oracles of the judgment were dumb; but that strange conviction of impending ill—that warning of some faculty beyond the scrutiny of reason, which has given birth to the doctrine of presentiments, almost overpowered me. Reason cannot combat such a sentiment, for I believe reason to be subordinate to it. Oh! these shadowy, inexplicable promptings, so little revered, so fearfully true? Regarding them, men have burst from the arms of wife and children, and perished on the highway; youths have perished on the sea; women, fair and innocent, have wedded themselves to infamy and lust; statesmen have fallen from the cabinet to the scaffold; priests have been assassinated at the altar; and miseries, in fine, without number, have followed the neglect of this fearful monitor! Had I thought of these things when I stood at the base of the Icelandic volcano; had some good angel seconded that warning, instinct, which whispers at the threshold of our being, a dark memory, an awful experience, would have been shunned.

"I could no more tear myself from the vicinity of the mountain, than I had been able previously, when it lowered at a distance, to turn my eyes upon the more pleasing characteristics of the scene. The twenty precipitous, rugged hills, and the snowy cone in the middle, possessed a basilisk fascination I would have given much to be rid of. At length, a kind of ratiocination, I was pleased to term philosophy, came to my aid. My fears, having nothing tangible on which to ground themselves, I argued, *a priori*, that they must be absurd. With this conviction, I stifled the imaginations that troubled me, the judgment retaining its equanimity, as each received its quietus. It was a hollow peace, however, and by no means triumphant. I returned to the camp, and at the supper table that night, was desperately gay. I felt like the member of a forlorn hope, carousing for the last time, before an encounter, in which the chances of destruction averaged about one to fifty. I could not restrain my excitement. Had I partaken of the punch which our Stewart never failed to prepare with his own hands, this might have been accounted for, but I remember the testy Bacchalian was mortally offended at my declining to join him in his evening potations. Mattering something about the lamentable condition of morals in Europe, where men in respectable society were so shockingly temperate as to retire *sans a night cap*, the grisly old grumbler seated himself on a barrel in the corner, and washed down his wrath with the contents of a bowl that Eric Scambler would have stared at. The seat that he had chosen, was, fortunately, near his couch, for

after two hours of meditation and drinking, (which latter operation embraced four-fifths of the time) he probably thought the 'night cap' sufficiently adjusted, and tumbled, precipitately into bed. Our entire party, except myself, were now sunk in repose. Silence rested on the encampment, the deep rush of the river alone breaking the stillness. I fancied there was something unusual in the sound. The dull monotony of the waves was unvaried, but it seemed as if their voice was deeper, and their flow more turbid.

"What struck me, too, as strange, was, that the temperature in the tent, which always grew many degrees colder after nightfall, continued as during the day. Soon the heat increased—it became intolerable.

"So startling a phenomenon needed confirmation. Was it not the fever in my own blood? A pocket thermometer, belonging to Merton, hung near. I examined it by the smouldering embers of the fire. It was true! My sensations had not deceived me. The quick-silver trembled at a point denoting an atmospheric condition which belonged to the Tropics, and to the Tropics only in the meridian of summer.

"I felt the blood tingle towards my heart, and I grew faint from this indescribable suspense of agony. I stood a moment, gazing vacantly at the instrument, the paling fire, and the dim, uncertain outlines of the coarse canopy above. Then I said, to myself, 'I am ill—my brain wanders—it is a phantasy!'

"Several of our companions had been seized, of late, with fever and delirium. Exposure legitimately engendered them. Were that the case, it was best I also should sleep,—and yet, what meant the heated atmosphere? The thermometer did not lie; and surely, surely, this boded mischief. A storm, perhaps, impended. I had heard the Islanders say, that at certain seasons storms were common here. Was the present the proper period? I could not tell. At all events, speculation was useless. Why not leave the tent, and at once resolve these doubts? Probably I should find every thing—the encampment, the river, the meadows, even the accursed Skaptar Yokul, precisely as I had left them. I knew that they remained unchanged; only the moon, as I perceived, by a slight glimmer through the tent, had risen, and was shining without. I wondered if a cloud still lingered upon the mountain—whether it had increased—what shape it had assumed—and how it looked in the moonlight. With a sudden resolution, I rose, and advanced a step or two towards the door. The cloth flapped sullenly across the entrance. Ashamed of my weakness, but impotent as a child in the grasp of a nameless terror, I started back and listened. It was only the wind. Oh! now, beyond doubt, I was delirious; I would expose myself to these foolish alarms no more; so, without doffing my garments, I lay down to repose. Singular to say, notwithstanding the extraordinary excitement of the nerves, I did not long continue awake. Sleep, profound and dreamless, locked my senses in a rigidity of oblivion, such as follows an overdose of opium. It may have been minutes or hours, I know not, when a stifling sensation, oppressive as a night-mare, recalled me to consciousness. I rose on my pallet, and instantly became aware of a disagreeable odour of sulphur. Smoke, densely packed, as from a cannonade, pervaded the apartment. From its unwholesome inhalation, my breath came short and quick, my veins were swollen painfully, and a profuse perspiration covered the whole body. Springing up, I again consulted the thermometer. Could I trust my eye-sight? It had actually risen to one hundred and fifty degrees.

"At this moment a sound indescribably deep, and sullen, accompanied by a shudder of the ground beneath me, rose ominously as if from the very centre of the earth. Then, after an instant's death-like stillness, there burst forth a peal—a succession of peals of thunder—in which the echoes of the world's greatest battle would have been lost—swallowed up—annihilated.

"With a bound I dashed aside the dark covering of the tent, and gazed out into the night. God of mercy! what a spectacle was there! The fearful solution of the haunting doubt—flashed on me like flames from a charnel. We were in the midst of an eruption—an eruption from the Skaptar Yokul! Never to mortal eyes had been revealed before a mightier sublimity of horrors! The cloud that at sunset was a mere blot in the distance, had now widened through space, drifting in eddies along the heavens, and momentarily obscuring the moon, that gleamed dimly beyond the shroud. The air reeked with an insufferable admixture of gases, vapour and panice; and the ashes showered around, fell densely, and with unparalleled velocity. But the object more awful than aught else—an object of paralyzing grandeur, was a volume of liquid fire that swept towards the late peaceful channels of the river. Gleaming and swelling as it progressed, I perceived that the tide already overtopped the banks, and that soon the level meadow supporting our encampment, would be completely over-flooded.

"To rush shrieking among my comrades, to intimate hurriedly the danger—to unloose from the adjoining tent, (which had served for a stable,) the first horses I could secure—to drag Merton and Christina, stupefied by the suddenness of the announcement, to a position where we could mount, and brave together the terrors that beset us; to plunge the spurs madly into the flanks of my steed, and lead the way—if possible—to some point of safety, appeared the work of an age, although in reality accomplished with the miraculous celerity of desperation. As we advanced, the imminence of our peril became more and more apparent. We were traversing a valley between two extensive ridges, and it was evident that if the waters of the river, which, swayed by the convulsions of the earthquake, were rising in boiling eddies above the embankments, should reach the summit we had left, the inter spaces would—almost immediately—be devastated by the flood. But there was no time for thought, and we bore recklessly on. To trouble our difficulties, the moon soon withdrew even the uncertain light she had afforded us, and darkness almost total encompassed our path. Still trusting to the remarkable instinct of our horses, we speeded onward—onward—like the wind. I calculated that we had progressed some miles, and that the crisis of our trial was over—when the broken, flinty ground we were passing, curved suddenly upward into a hill. As we reached the top, (what a thrill of despair shot through us then!)—hissing and sparkling, a sea of molten fire—for the union of gases, phosphorus and lava seemed to have set the tide ablaze—writhed and trailed below, and splitting against every obstruction in its course, dashed into jets of flame, like a monster serpent, spitting venom and blood.

"Our true situation became at once apparent. Trusting to the sagacity of the animals we rode—themselves half wild with affright—we had made a complete circuit in the darkness, and were re approaching the very plain upon which our encampment had stood. The ghastly glare from those infernal waves, displayed to us each other's features. Seldom have such countenances been beheld this side of the grave! At length, Merton spoke. His mother would not have known that voice. It was strained, husky, savage—almost inhuman in its agony of supplication. 'Fly! fly! for the love of Heaven, fly! do you not see that had she the strength of fifty of her sex, it *would* fail her soon,' and he pointed to the sinking form of Christina, whom, half dead from exhaustion, he had taken on the saddle before him, and was endeavoring to support in her precarious seat. Replying not, but motioning him again to follow, we sped down the descent and made for the uplands, which I knew lay a mile and a half due North. For several hundred yards we were compelled to keep on a line with the river, as affording the only tenable ground in the neighborhood. I had observed the day previous, that a deep morass bordered our path upon the right. To avoid this, without venturing too near the river was an object I tasked every faculty, physical and mental, to accomplish. We had just cleared the narrow ridge I have described—Merton and his charge being in the rear—when a tumultuous crash in the direction of the stream, caused me to look back to ascertain what additional danger threatened us. A single glance informed me that escape was hopeless. The lofty rampart of sand and rocks, that hitherto formed a barrier against the element, had completely given way.

"Falling from the height, a cataract of fire, and bearing directly on our road with a velocity doubled by the elevation of its egress, the gleaming waters burst forward to engulf us.—There was a piercing cry, and the fall of a heavy body behind me. The horse that carried my companions, goaded to frenzy, had snapped the rein and hurled his riders to the earth. He trampled by me like a tempest. I snatched at the bridle as he passed, but might as well have tried to grasp a sun beam. At this instant, a current of wind parted the veil of smoke and ashes that had obscured the light, and the moon shone on the unimaginable horrors of the scene. My own steed now grew ungovernable. Alarmed by the other's flight, he dashed furiously on his track. My brain spun with the madness of the motion, and the soil glided beneath us with the rapidity of thought. A grey object, lowering beyond me, caught my eye. It was a *size* some forty feet above the level of the field—a granite mound strewn with fragments of a ruined temple. I threw myself from my horse—heeded not a severe concussion that retarded the act—clambered half way up the gorge, and then turned to witness the fate of the unfortunate beings from whom I had been separated. Across the intervening space a double radiance was cast—radiance from the Heavens—and a sickly, death-like glare from the onward rushing torrents. Merton, to all appearance uninjured by his fall, had lifted Christina in his arms, and still hastened desperately forward; but the raging billows were almost upon them; and the hand of the Eternal alone could have rescued the devoted pair. As I gazed, Merton evidently became aware that further efforts were vain. He paused abruptly, and knelt with his precious burden upon the sod. I could see them as distinctly

as if I, too, had been standing on the spot.—With his back turned to the destruction—as if to shield his view from his beloved—my gallant friend imprinted one last kiss upon her lips and then drew from his breast a large golden crucifix that he always bore about his person. It flashed, like a divine glory, amid that unearthly desolation. Pallid as the whitest marble that ever glistened from the sculptor's chisel; beautiful, ineffably beautiful, Christina opened her eyes upon the symbol of *life in death*. The raven hair was cast back, the inanimate form revived, and a trembling hand clasped the cross to her lips. The action devanaged her robes, and from the bodice that girded that young, innocent, loving heart, something like a *boquet of flowers* dropped upon the ground; and now the shadow of the gigantic flood flickered over them. It progressed, deepened, part—until—until—oh! God, that I should speak it!—the consuming torrents whelmed the victims in their lurid eddies, and swept two of the fairest, and noblest of our race from the records of mankind forever."

"Old Rip Van Winkle,"
FROM FRANCIS L. HAWKS' MECKLENBURG ORATION DELIVERED IN NEW YORK.
I pray you pardon me, for having so long trespassed upon your indulgent patience. I am lecturing out of my proper place in the course, and have not had time to make my lecture short; let me hasten to the moral of my story. Ye are my countrymen, gathered from all parts of our broad land. Probably the blood of some brave soldier from each one of the glorious old Thirteen, that, with Washington to lead, went through fire to baptize a nation in their blood and to name it FREE, is represented here tonight. There is circling here through our veins the blood of New York, of Jersey and Pennsylvania, brave little Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia; and the blood of men from all these one made a common pool on more than one hard fought field. No sound was then heard of section! feeling, saying I fight for Massachusetts, and I for Virginia, I for Connecticut, and California, I for Jersey, and I for Georgia. No, the cry was, We fight for the freedom of all—we want no freedom which does not cover all—we will have no freedom but for all—and have it for all, with God's good help, we will, or leave our bones to bleach on the fields of our country. Ah, it is glorious to sit down and turn over the pages of those stirring times, until the heart throbs and the eye waters, and we rise to the full appreciation of the dignity, the sublimity of that purest, most unselfish revolution, recorded in the world's history. Ah! that is the process by which to bring out the best feeling—intensely American. Look back, look back, my countrymen! Oh, how our brave old fathers clung together.—Boston was in trouble in 1774. North Carolina expressed her sympathy, and at a cost of \$800 sterling, sent to her a vessel loaded with provisions. The town from which it went had but six hundred inhabitants, and the whole colony but one hundred and fifty thousand.—Again, hear them after the acts of Parliament leveled against Boston. They speak in their Provincial Congress: "Resolved, That the inhabitants of Massachusetts Province have distinguished themselves in a manly support of the rights of America in general, and that the cause in which they now suffer is the cause of every honest American who deserves the blessings which the constitution hold forth to him. That the grievances under which the town of Boston labors at present are the effect of a resentment leveled at them, for having stood foremost in an opposition to measures which must eventually have involved all British America in a state of abject dependence and servitude.—These be noble words. Again, hear these same men of Mecklenburg, (of whom I have said so much,) in one of their meetings of 1775; 'The cause of Boston is the cause of all: our destinies are indissolubly connected with those of our Eastern fellow-citizens, and we must either submit to all the impositions which an unprincipled Parliament may impose, or support our brethren who are doomed to sustain the first shock of that power, which if successful there, will ultimately overwhelm all in the common calamity.' These are brotherly tones, and think you the Boston men of that day did not appreciate them? Why Massachusetts had her sons down in Carolinas, and the men understood and loved each other. Let Josiah Quincy, the young patriot of Boston, tell the story, for he was the man who could tell it. He was at the house of Cornelius Harnett, the man who drew the resolution in the Provincial Congress, calling on the Continental body for a Declaration of Independence; the man whom Quincy described to his countrymen as 'the Samuel Adams of North Carolina.' He says, 'Robt. Howe, Harnett, and I, made the social triumvirate of the evening.' They settled then the plan of 'continental correspondence,' and Quincy went home to tell his countrymen that North Carolina, and indeed all the South, would join Massachusetts in her resistance. The North and the South then felt as brethren; and now, ye sons of the North—ye men with the blood of the dead soldiers and heroes of New