

CLASS SONG.

BY GEO. K. BARRETT.

We stand upon a green plateau,
Where wide the prospect opens;
We gaze far down the way below,
On winding paths and sunny slopes.
But what appears so fair to-day,
We found a rough and rugged way,
And weary did toil and strive
To bear the Cross of '85.

If steep and rugged was the ground,
And far the goal for which we tried,
Yet blithe the comradeship we found,
And strong and true each trusted guide.
They watched our footsteps first begin,
Till now with every task well done,
With fears dispelled, and hopes alive,
We hold the Crown of '85.

Beyond, above, the lofty height
Lures us to still onward go,
Where others, kindled by the sight,
Have passed the ways we do not know.
And may the path hold but pure joys,
As rich rewards, as few alloys.
As those through which we used to strive
To gain the Height of '85.

If trumpet call shall loudly sound
In life's high noon the honored name
Of one who at this board is found,
And hold it proudly up to fame,
How then our hearts will list the call
And thrill with memories dear to all,
Of one from whom we will derive
The crowning Prize of '85.

Not all who, pilgrim staff in hand,
Endured with me the mount to climb
Are numbered in our joyous band
At this our graduation time.
Alas! some had not strength to come;
Some duty called; the gods loved some
Whom memory still keeps alive
Among the Class of '85.

In Lifetime's prime, though blessed with joys,
We'll live our happy school days o'er,
And travel in our girls and boys
The well-beloved paths once more;
And when adown Life's hill we go,
Our hearts with early warmth shall glow,
And nothing from our minds shall drive
Love of the Class of '85.

MEMBERS OF THE BAR.

BY MORRIS REDWING.

Night was fast approaching, and I was anxious to find shelter before the storm broke that had been threatening now for nearly an hour.

The distant growl of thunder had increased to a loud peal, and the far-off glow of the lightning was now one almost continuous glow. It would not be long ere the storm broke in mad fury, and with it the night would be doubly dark.

My horse was jaded from a long drive, my buggy wheels spattered with mud, and myself in anything but a pleasant state of mind. This seemed to be the worst country I had ever encountered.

As the agent of Williams & Jones, I had come to this out-of-the-way region to look after their interests in a suit that was pending in the Circuit Court of one of the northern counties.

Forty miles over barren oak plains, and through pine and hemlock woods, with the buggy jolting and bounding over roots and stones, through mud and water a good part of the distance, was not calculated to render one good-natured, to say the least.

Jones, junior member of the firm, had been on the ground for a week, and it was a dispatch from him that brought me on this journey.

"Your testimony is absolutely essential to the success of our claims," were the exact words intimated by Mr. Jones, and so I had set out at once, hiring my horse at the railway station nearest the county seat for which I was aiming. Many thousands of dollars were involved in the suit, and I realized the importance of my arriving on the ground in due season.

It was a long, lonely road from the station, and I began to fear that I might have lost my way, when the sight of smoke and the gray of a roof loomed in sight. I urged my horse forward, and drew rein in front of a dingy-looking house in the center of a small clearing.

I noticed a faded signboard bearing the name "Cottage Inn" upon it.

Great drops of rain began to fall, and a terrific peal of thunder shook the very earth. This was accompanied by a red gleam that was simply blinding.

I glanced down the road at the black wall of swaying trees, and then leaped from my seat to the ground.

A man came to the door at my call, a grizzled, unprepossessing fellow, who said he would put out my horse.

"Better git inside quick, stranger; it's goin' ter rain like great guns."

I needed no second invitation, but strode into the open door, and found myself in a narrow, low-ceiled room, across a portion of one side of which extended a dingy bar. A jug and a few black bottles sat on a shelf next the wall, and the end of the bar next the end of the room was occupied by a bucket of water, the long handle of a tin dipper showing itself above the side of the vessel.

I sat down on a stool and glared out into the falling rain. The thunder crashes came thick and fast, and one continuous glow of red, blue, and white electricity shot through the gathering shadows without. It was a terrible night, and I felt thankful for the shelter that the old wayside tavern afforded.

In a little time the man who had taken my horse to the stable came in and shook the water in a shower from his shaggy great-coat.

"Mighty bad night, stranger," articulated the man. "You hadn't an idee of goin' furder to-night?"

"When I left this morning I had. How far is it to Pine Creek?"

"Eh? Be you goin' there? Wal, it's a matter of six miles. I wouldn't advise you to go on to night."

"I shall not, if this storm continues."

"It's like'y to. Have some supper?"

I was fatigued, and felt in need of something strengthening, so I answered in the affirmative.

Lighting a lamp first, my host then shuffled into the next room, and I heard him giving orders to a woman about supper for a hungry traveler. When the man came back he removed his coat and hung it up behind the bar, then he seated himself and proceeded in an attempt to look me out of countenance.

"You said you was goin' to Pine Creek," he questioned, in a hoarse drawl. "Mebbe you've got business ter court?"

"Maybe I have."

"I was up thar ter-day. Big case comes off ter-morrer. Johnson agin Williams & Jones. Mebbe you wasn't goin' up on that suit?"

The grizzled head leaned nearer to me, and a queer look, full of curious questioning, filled the little gray eyes. I felt annoyed at the fellow's impudence.

A crash of thunder silenced a quick report from my lips, and second thought pre-

vented my giving vent to my true feelings at all.

"I am a witness in the case of Johnson against Williams & Jones," I said, in a pleasant way, in spite of my feelings. "I desired very much to get through to-night."

"You can easy make the Creek afore court sets in the mornin'," said the landlord. "What's the odds whether you stay here or there to-night? You'll be fresher to stop here, I reckon."

I nodded, without reply. The host rose, after another close scrutiny of my face, and shuffled into the next room. I was left to myself for a time. I was not favorably impressed with the proprietor of "Cottage Inn," and only the necessities of the case would have induced me to remain.

In a little time supper was announced, and I went into the next room, where a frowsy-headed woman of middle age poured tea and waited on the table. I seemed to be the only guest. The man of the house, anxious that I should not suffer from loneliness, however, came in soon, and entertained me with a stream of talk about hunting that was of a sufficiently interesting nature to accomplish the desired object. When I returned to the front room again the storm had abated, and the prospect was brilliant for resuming my journey.

"Wouldn't undertake to go to-night on no conditions," said Mr. Banks, for such was the name he had given. "Another shower's likely to come up, and mebbe the creek's full to overflowin'. You'd be in bad fix entirely if you should git caught in the woods sich a night, with the bridge over Pine Creek gone. Take my advice and wait till mornin', Cap."

It was sensible advice, surely. Court would not meet until nine at the earliest. I could rise at daybreak and get to Pine Creek two hours before court commenced, which would be all the time necessary for consultation with Mr. Jones. After debating the subject for some time, I concluded to pass the night at "Cottage Inn."

"We'll make it as pleasant as possible," said mine host.

An hour later I was conducted up a narrow, rickety stairs to a straw bed in the loft. A dingy room it was, with low rafters looking like skeleton omens extending upward from the low walls. I was tired, not entirely used to roughing it, and as soon as Mr. Banks had disappeared from sight down the rickety stairs I sought the low couch of straw, removing only my coat, and was soon in the land of dreams. Confused dreams they were, too. All sorts of sounds visited my ears, and the tramp of many feet was quite confusing.

"Come, Cap, wake up! wake up!" Some one was shaking me rudely by the shoulder, and the glow of a light filled and dazed my eyes.

"Is it morning?" I queried, involuntarily coming at once to a sitting posture.

"No; but you're wanted below," said Mr. Banks, whose grizzled visage peered into my face, a tallow candle held aloft in one grimy hand.

"Wanted! for what?" in a dazed way.

"Some members of the bar hev come, and they want to see Jake Brown awful bad."

"Well, that's my name," I muttered; "but I think they might have deferred their meeting until morning."

"So I said; but twain't no use arguin' the pint, and so I come to you. If you won't go down I—"

"Of course, I'll go."

I sprang up, donned my coat, and proceeded at once to follow the proprietor of the wayside inn to the room below.

Three men were there, and each rose the moment I entered the room. Two of the men were young and wore good clothes and shining plug hats; the third one was roughly clad and held a whip by the butt, which he swung about in a way that betokened long association with the lines. "A born teamster," was my mental conclusion at the first glance.

"This is Mr. Brown, I suppose?"

One of the men with shining hat extended his hand.

"That is my name," I answered.

"Jacob Brown, of the firm of Williams & Jones?"

"The same."

"Then you are the man we seek. Mr. Jones sent us for you. We, Mr. Kames and myself, are members of the Pine Creek bar, and employed by Williams & Jones in the case of Johnson versus Williams et al."

The man held his hat in hand and bowed low, plucking at his mustache and smiling blandly.

"Mr. Jones expected me to-night?" I questioned.

"He did, and is in a grand stew to think the suit is likely to go against him for lack of your evidence. Court was in session this evening, and opens again at eight in the morning. These pioneer judges dispatch business, I tell you. Mr. Jones is very anxious to see you to-night. The storm has abated, and you can just as well go on as not. I'll give you a seat in my buggy, so your horse can rest until tomorrow, when Mr. Jones will send a boy for him."

Mr. Clement was a smooth-tongued fellow, but I could not but wonder that my employer should send two lawyers after me instead of the teamster alone. I mentioned the strangeness of the circumstance.

Mr. Clement laughed rather amusedly. "We wasn't sure of meeting you at all, but Jack here was to go on if we did not find you at the inn. We wanted a little fresh air, which is delicious since the storm. A good moon renders the night just splendiferous."

Mr. Kames also put in a word, and I finally consented to accompany these two distinguished members of the bar to Pine Creek.

There was a moon, as Clement had said, but when we penetrated the pine woods it scarcely served to light the way.

We occupied a double-seated buggy.

Silence, save for the crack of the driver's whip and his chirp to the horses, reigned during the jolting drive. The road was new to me, and I was full of my own reveries, so that I indulged in conversation only when addressed by one of the members of the bar.

An hour passed, and then the "whoa" of the driver brought the vehicle to a halt.

The darkness was intense. The air was damp, and a distant rumble of thunder announced the gathering of another storm. I felt a cold chill creep down my spine.

"What is the trouble?"

"We stop here." On the instant a strange aroma filled my nostrils. I felt a hand pass to my face, and realized that something dreadful was about to happen. I made a desperate struggle, but a vain one. Strong hands held me fast, and a deadly weakness stole over me. I seemed to be floating on a per-

fumed sea, with the distant rhythm of fairy bells ringing in my ears.

"He won't make no fuss," said a gruff voice, jarringly.

"He goes off to sleep like a daisy."

There came a jarring laugh, followed by intense joking, the darkness of insensibility. Everything was blank until I opened my eyes hours later, to find myself lying on the damp ground in a narrow apartment, apparently a cellar.

I struggled to a sitting posture and gazed about. Four damp walls met my gaze in the dim light. Darting pains shot through my brain, and I felt ill indeed. I soon remembered the past, and fancy pictured the smiling faces of the two members of the bar as I had seen them last at the old tavern.

With some difficulty I gained my feet, and staggered to the wall. The slime and damp chilled me. I shrank back and fixed my eyes on the few rays of light that stole in through a narrow aperture under the oak floor above.

I was in a cellar, I felt quite sure, and began to realize that a base trick had been played upon me, a trick that I could now understand. The members of the bar had doubtless been employed by Johnson to keep the most important witness from the court-room until the great suit should be decided.

Perhaps I was to be murdered or driven from the country with the threat of death. I ground my teeth when I took in the outrage in all its bearings.

"I'll outwit these scoundrels yet," I muttered, going to the little opening and trying to peer outside. I was not tall enough, but grasping the top plank of the wall I drew myself up and peered forth an opening too narrow to admit of escape unless enlarged.

I realized that time was precious. The trial was on to-day and might come to a conclusion without my presence. If it should prove to be the last day of the suit, my absence might result in ruin to my employer. Such thoughts rendered me desperate. I must escape. With the fury of desperation I drew myself up once more to the top of the wall, and attempted to enlarge the opening through which the light entered, with my hand.

One effort and then I drew my hand away, lacerated and bleeding. Rough stones imbedded in the earth surrounded the narrow opening. I fell back to the bottom of the cellar with a groan. For a time I was completely unnerved at the outcome of my venture. At length I cried aloud for help. It was a forlorn hope that some one might be passing and come to the rescue. Vain hope! I was hoarse from the exertion, and gave over the task.

Directly over the center of the cellar, some two feet above my head, was a small trap door in the floor. This I made several ineffectual attempts to raise. I labored under great disadvantage, since I could only reach the top by springing upward and striking it with my hand. The solid concussion led me to believe that the trap was weighted down.

I was indeed a prisoner without hope of escape. Sinking down at last in one corner of the narrow cellar, I meditated long and seriously upon the situation. I had been basely deceived by those slippery villains who pretended to be members of the bar; that they were not what they professed to be was now a self-evident fact. If I ever made my escape I would revenge myself on the smooth-tongued scoundrels, I inwardly vowed.

Hours passed. Time after time I essayed to break from the bondage of that accursed cellar, to no purpose. With each renewal of effort came added weakness, and as my strength failed me, a feeling of despair entered my heart. Was it possible that these demons in Johnson's employ would leave me here to starve?

While thinking upon this, a sound fell on my ear that startled me as nothing had ever done in my life before.

I listened, then sprang to the middle of the cellar, with a shudder of horror, while beads of perspiration oozed forth from every pore of my body.

I listened. The sound was not repeated, but on gazing back at the spot I had lately occupied, I caught the gleam of two bloody eyes. Then a glimmer of shining scolies, and I knew that I was face to face with a horrible death. Starvation would have been terrible, but to die under the fangs of a venomous serpent was more so.

The heavy eyes held a horrible gleam as the head rose and pushed itself forward over the edge of the wall into the cellar. Instinctively I glanced about for some weapon of defense; nothing, not even a pebble was in sight—only my loose hands to contend with the wrath of a rattlesnake.

Reader, put yourself in my place at that moment, and imagine if you can the horrible nature of my feelings. You can not do it, nor approximate to it. I dared not move or utter a cry. There we were, face to face, the rattlesnake and I. I never want again to pass through such an experience. I kept my eye fixed on the serpent, not daring to look away, until it seemed as though I was fascinated, as I had read of birds becoming, under the gaze of a serpent.

The eyes of the serpent grew into monstrous size—great round orbs, full of mingled colors and scintillating gleams. The yellow and green predominated, filled the whole atmosphere in fact. Dizziness and a strange ringing filled my brain. Gradually I yielded to that horrible fascination, and began to move toward the serpent—going to my doom.

Would nothing break the spell?

Something did break it. At the moment when all my senses seemed lost in a terrible fascination, a sharp report filled the outer air, followed by a scurrying around, and a slender animal darted under the floor, and the next instant fell to the damp floor of the cellar in the coils of the rattlesnake. With a shudder and a gasp I came to myself. My presence of mind returned to me, and I glanced at the struggling objects on the floor—a rabbit in the embrace of a rattlesnake. The poison of the serpent would soon finish the poor hare; but I realized that this was my opportunity, and I at once proceeded to improve it.

I soon succeeded in setting my heel upon the head of the serpent, crushing it into the gravelly soil. I breathed easier when the venomous reptile ceased to squirm.

"Dad blast the luck, anyhow?"

I was interrupted in my work of destroying the serpent by the sound of a voice, and glancing at the little opening above the cellar wall I caught the gleam of a pair of eyes—human eyes this time—and the glow of an honest face.

"The rabbit darted under here. Go in, Brisk, an' fetch 'im out."

The face disappeared, and on the instant the sharp yell of a dog greeted my ear. The four-footed brute thrust his nose into the aperture and barked, but did not venture

to molest me. I lifted up my voice then and made my presence known.

"Dad blast it, who's in thar?"

"I'm in the cellar," I shouted, "and can't get out. Will you help me?"</