

## IN THE SADDLE, ON THE PLAINS.\*

## III.—LEAVENWORTH.—MULE-DRIVERS.

THE last marauder disappeared in the forest as the Emerald neared the Prairie Flower. The din of the combat had reached the transport as she rounded the bend, and before she came in sight Captain Powell and those who were expecting the relief heard the welcome sounds, the scream of the steam-whistle, and the quick roll of a drum calling her troops to arms. She bristled with bayonets ready for the fray. The master of the Emerald, leaning from a window of the pilot-house, sang out lustily,

"Captain John, is it all over?"

Captain Ben Parker of the Emerald was an old friend of the commander of the Prairie Flower.

"All over, Ben, thanks to you; come aboard and try my oldest Bourbon."

In a moment the steamers were made fast. The soldiers returned to their unfinished repast. Upon the bank near the edge of the wood the crews assembled to bury the dead. The night was without a star. No solemn rites marked the interment of the lifeless forms in their rude graves. Only the low hoot of the owl, disturbed by the glare of the torch, made dismal requiem; and the bat flew by with fickle and unclean wing. The dusky forms of the burial party, the ghastly features of the dead, the beat of the waves upon the beach, the heavy sighs of the wind through the bending pine-tops, and the dismal toll of the steamers' bells, swaying together in a sort of rude chime, complete the funeral scene. As the crews return to the steamers the moon rises from the river and lights up the lonely darkness. Soon the engines heave again, and the steamers are under way. Captain Vincent sits alone upon the promenade-deck. The wound of the Adjutant has been dressed, and McCann watches by his couch.

A light step approaching Captain Vincent causes him to rise and offer his chair.

"Miss Romilly."

Her features wore an almost transparent paleness that was startling.

"No," she replied, declining, with a quick, graceful wave of the hand, the proffered chair. "Pardon me, Captain Vincent, but, we were alarmed in regard to the Adjutant. Is he—is it dangerous?"

"No, Miss Romilly. The wound, though serious, is certainly not likely to prove fatal," answered Rollin tenderly.

"Then he will not die,—he will recover, you think?"

"Surely. The surgeon says that he will be out again in a day or two."

Miss Romilly paused for a moment, as if hesitating whether to allow nature to assert itself over conventionalities, as in true natures, on occasions of deep feeling, it always must. Then extending her hand, she said,

"I am very, very grateful to you—and I am so glad to know that he will recover. Doubtless he has a mother or sisters and friends to whom his loss would be irreparable, for he has many noble qualities. Will you grant me another favor?"—looking him full in the face with a smile, for she was doubtful whether all her eloquence had availed to conceal her meaning.

"Certainly," he answered, bowing; "and most grateful I am to hear you speak thus highly of my friend."

"Please do not say to the Adjutant that I have made this inquiry."

"I promise you I will not, if you insist."

"Thank you; good-night."

She held out her warm, round, pretty little hand.

Vincent, bowing low, had nearly

\* Continued from September Number.