

THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN HI GOOD.

BY DAN DELANEY.

All of the early settlers of Butte and Tehama counties will remember the name of Harmon Good, or, as he was familiarly known, "Hi Good," the Indian hunter.

But little is known of his early history by the people of this State, but many here were familiar with his manhood, and have a lively recollection of his daring deeds. His noble and self-sacrificing defense of the lives of the people in Butte and Tehama counties, and the protection he afforded their property against the ravages and depredations of savage Indians, will form a bright page in the history of these counties, and will be read with interest by all who are capable of admiring good and noble traits of character in man, or who can appreciate gallant bearing and unshrinking courage.

Harmon Good was born in the State of Ohio, and was a descendant of an ancient and honorable family. In appearance he was a most remarkable man. He was tall and muscular, with black piercing eyes, long shining black hair, regular and exceedingly handsome features, and a carriage so erect and commanding as to impress the belief that he was born to lead. When the author of this sketch first knew him he was about nineteen years old, full of vigor and energy, and in all matters touching the interests of the section in which he lived taking a decided and distinguished leadership. No one approached him without discovering his peculiar fitness to guide and direct, and all acquiesced in his leadership. The companions of his Indian fights and hunting excursions attest the fact that a more daring or trusty captain could not be found.

In the year 1857 there existed a band of savage Indians in the neighborhood of Good's ranch in Tehama county, who were making frequent raids upon the section. Finding a number of them one day engaged in stealing his corn, and having no weapons, he charged upon them with stones and put them to flight.

A few days after, he in company with myself and two others, went to the adjacent mountains in pursuit of a large bear that was disturbing the herds and flocks of the neighborhood. We found the den from distinct signs. It covered about three acres of ground, and was situated at the base of a tall and overhanging bluff, and surrounded with a dense thicket. Good asked of his companions who would venture to enter the den with him. But one could be found whose courage was equal to the task. Robert Anderson, now living in the county, bade him lead and he would follow. After two hours of absence, and of anxiety to those who were waiting without, employed in scouring the thicket and searching the den, Good and Anderson returned to us, not having found the bear. The evidence of bravery was as great as if they had captured the bear.

In the Spring of 1858 a family living on Antelope creek, Tehama county, was murdered, and considerable stock driven away by the Indians. Good, with five others, started in pursuit. After thirty-six hours' tramp the company came upon the trail, and for some considerable length of time followed the same. They discovered at dark, by

the gleam of the camp firelight, their resting place. At dawn of day the small force surrounded the encampment. Good fired the first shot, and with savage yell rushed within the camp, his trusty rifle dealing death at every volley. The rash daring of the man struck terror to the savages, and so confused them that they could not fight with any judgment or success. Not one of the Indian hunters was touched, whilst every dusky devil that had occupied the camp was a ghastly corpse.

In 1861, the Indians attacked one Thomas Allen near Keifer's Mill, Butte county, and killed him, and within one mile of the same place and on the same day they murdered two of Mr. Hancock's daughters, fourteen and sixteen years old, and captured and carried off their son, nine years old. Captain Good, on receiving news of the massacre, immediately raised a company of six men, and started in pursuit. Following some forty or fifty miles, they found the boy most brutally murdered and his body covered with stones. Captain Good returned in person to the valley, secured a coffin, and went back and brought the corpse to Chico. Ten men, with Good as their leader, again started in pursuit. After fifteen days' travel, by day and night, an Indian camp was discovered. Waiting for the nightfall, the company quietly surrounded the camp, and when the morning broke the fight began. The savage yell of Capt. Good at each crack of his rifle, drowned the shrieks of the dying. Twenty Indians were killed and seventeen captured. Capt. Good brought his prisoners to his home, and there kept guard of them, feeding them at his own expense, until he was able to send them off to the Reservation.

In the Summer of 1863 the Indians killed, near to Dogtown, two of Mr. Louis's sons, aged respectively seven and eleven years, and took away with them a little girl of about nine years of age. Making quick flight, they pressed the tender child to travel forty miles in one day, but notwithstanding the fatigue of such a march, she effected her escape through the night, and made good her entrance to the town of Chico. That girl was a heroine. Good was again the avenger. He never ceased until he slew the last Indian connected with the horrible tragedy.

In the Fall of 1861, Mrs. Moore, an elderly lady about seventy years old, and mother of Mr. Thomas Moore, at present living near Chico, was killed by the Indians on Singer creek, near to Oak Grove, Butte county. Good, with his trusty Indian hunters, pursued for a number of days, and killed eight of them, and found in their camp many things stolen from the residence of Mrs. Moore.

In 1863, a party of Indians stole from the ranch of A. J. Carter on Deer creek, four horses, and set fire to the barn. Robert Anderson, one of Good's companions, discovered the fire, and at once divining the cause, went to Good's ranch to inform him. The two followed the Indians to a deep cut, and there surprising them they killed three of them.

In the year 1865 the Indians stole and drove off from Good's ranch a number of cattle. Missing the cattle, Good took two men and went after them. They found them drying the beef they had killed. Not many lived to enjoy the fruits of their labor. It was

a desperate fight. Twenty-seven Red skins—all well armed with guns, some of them Spencer's rifles—against one man and two boys. In this encounter Capt. Good was wounded in the thigh. Disregarding his wound, he still plied his rifle, and every bullet discharged from its muzzle dealt death to some dusky victim. His companions were Charles Boreman, twenty years old, and a boy named George W. Carter. Boreman, discovering the growing weakness of Good, proposed a retreat. His reply was, "Give it to them, give it to them, boys," and continued himself to fire more rapidly than ever, resting his gun upon his knee, upon which he had sunk of sheer weakness from loss of blood. The fight was not given up until the foe had fled in disorder, leaving upon the field many a dead one. Capt. Good was conveyed home, and for weeks was disabled by his wound.

In 1866, as Good was returning home from a visit to Deer Creek Meadows, he was surprised, without weapons, by a band of Indians in Steep Hollow and forced to retreat, abandoning a lame horse he was leading. Hastening to the valley, he summoned three of his followers, and chase was given. Ten victims bit the dust, and Good returned with his own horse and another one, and with several guns and considerable ammunition as trophies.

Capt. Good had studied the arts of Indian warfare, and was skilled in all its intricacies. He was as fierce and unrelenting in fight as the savage foe, neither asking nor giving quarter. Once upon the trail and there was no rest. All the day was spent in pursuit, and when the night came, by the light of the moon, or in the darkness of the night, he would follow on, his keen judgment and quick sight discovering any sign of the enemy's presence. He has gone into caverns under cover of night, and discovered the number of his foes, and when the morning light disturbed an Indian's slumber, he but awoke to enjoy a deeper sleep.

His yell was as familiar to the Indians as their own war whoop, and whenever heard struck terror to the heart. They believed he bore a charmed life—that no bullet sped from rifle could strike him. When danger was near, he needed no warning, he was always the first to see it, and ever and always he sought the hottest of the fray. He was always ready to respond to the call for help, and was in "harness" when others were preparing.

The Mill creek Indians were a wild predatory and bad tribe. They had raised the tomahawk, and "War to the death" against the settlers was their watchword. There was nothing noble in their nature, and only under great advantages did they dare attack. Helpless women and children were their prey, and no appeal for mercy met a response in their hearts. They spared none, but murdered all. Capt. Good and his brave followers waged a war of extermination against them, and he

lived to see a large band of them melt into almost nonentity. Of all the numerous tribe of Mill Creek Indians but six are left—four males and two females; and they, like the wandering Jew, have no fixed abiding place. Never secure in any locality, they continually roam from place to place, over a distance of hundreds of miles.

Notwithstanding the bold and warlike nature of Capt. Good, few men possessed more of the milk of human kind-

ness than he. Among those of his own race he was mild, pleasant and courteous. Prompt in the discharge of all duties, as a man and citizen he possessed the confidence and respect of all who knew him. He was odd and eccentric. Odd in his dress, which, though scrupulously neat, was composed of many colors, differing from the prevailing fashions, and well adapted to the showing of his well developed and symmetrical proportion; odd in his associations, preferring as companions those whose boldness of character were like to his own, fond of adventure, and possessed of the bravery to stand "toe to toe" with the enemy; odd in his selection of a home, locating it where nature assumed her simplest character, amid hill and plain, free from culture, unvarnished and unimproved, existing in native simplicity and grandeur.

In the year 1865, the stage coach running upon the Dogtown road was robbed of a large sum of money. The robbers sought shelter near to Captain Good's camp. Having heard of the exploit, Good in company with Sandy Young and Sam Carey commenced the search for the missing treasure and the escaped villains. Following their trail for more than one day, they found the three desperadoes, resting from their travel upon the summit of a mountain, "well heeled," and provided with an abundance of scrip. They had in their possession two heavy shot guns, one rifle and four Colt's revolvers. Good's company came upon them unawares. Without hesitation, Capt. Good advanced and asked if they were hunters, and received the answer that they were hunting. Declaring his object to be the same, he entered into familiar conversation, confident from appearances, that he had found his game. A proper opportunity occurring, he commanded his force "to bear down upon the foe," and when Sandy and Sam presented full in the face of the robbers, those rifle muzzles, they looked to them like twelve-pounders well directed. Sur-rendering without a murmur, Good searched their pouches, where he found greenbacks and gold dust in abundance. The leader of the band sought safety in flight, but the unerring shot from Good's rifle soon brought him to halt, and wounded and dying he lay upon the sod. The other robbers were placed in charge of the authority, and the money returned to Wells, Fargo & Co., from whom it was stolen. Capt. Good accepted no reward, but defraying expenses from his own means, he acted only from a sense of justice to offended law, and from a love of adventure, whose charms divested the rash attempt of all fear or care for consequences.

In the spring of 1869 the Indians robbed some sheep herders, and killed some cattle, on or near to Deer Creek. Capt. Good, with two followers, were soon in hot pursuit. On the evening of the sixth day they overtook the thieves, and as usual, surrounded the camp. They killed several and took two prisoners, two mahals. These females were held as hostages at Good's camp for weeks, guarded by the Captain's Indian boy, whom he had raised, and who, for years, acted as his herder, and boy of all business. No evidence of treachery had ever shown itself, but such was the seeming devotion of the boy to Good, in his person, and faithful discharge of all duties, that Capt. Good reposed in him implicit confidence. Yet this villainous, treacherous Indian was true to his savage instincts, and murdered his kind and indulgent master. Capt. Good had required the Indians who claimed the squaws in custody, to bring in all the guns and ammunition of the tribe, and when such service was performed he promised to deliver up the wives to their legitimate husbands. This brought the Indians frequently to the house, and frequent communication with the Indian boy, corrupted him. Promises after promises were made by the treacherous devils to bring in arms and capitulate for peace, but never complied with. Still Capt. Good held the hostages. The Indians sought, as a last resort of treachery, his

protection against hostile foes, and begged the privilege to camp near the house, where no wild Indian dare venture without permission. Intending to kill him, upon one occasion they early in the morning commenced a noise of battle as if attacked by a numerous foe. Capt. Good was too wary to be taken by surprise, and would not venture out. Finding they had failed in their designs, and being confident that the renowned hunter had conceived their intentions, and fearing consequences which would surely come, the tribe decamped. Capt. Good finding the coast clear, made a trip to the mountains, reconnoitering and returning home in the evening, when, within three hundred yards of the house, he was shot and killed. Investigation made by Sandy Young, and other friends, established the fact, beyond the peradventure of a doubt, that the Indian boy had proved a traitor, and committed the horrid murder. That Indian boy is missing, no trace of him may be found, but we opine there are those living who know where his putrid corpse lies mouldering, to the day of judgment.

Thus died one of God's noble men. Years of bitter warfare, in which was involved the evil temper and designs of the Indian nature, at length accomplished, the revenge so much desired, and so long sought. It was obtained, at a terrible sacrifice, the death of more than a hundred warriors, the total annihilation of a whole tribe, or if but six have escaped, they wander in utter insecurity, outcasts, and refugees, fleeing the face of the white man, and certain when seen, to meet the fate of those who have gone before them, for in all the country the oath of extinction has been recorded, and will surely, sooner or later, be accomplished.

To the memory of Capt. Good all pay respect. He was a tower of strength to the whole country. Feared by the savage, he used his power and prowess to ward the danger of massacre, and destruction of property from the community in which he lived. When near by, helpless women and children layed down in security, and prayed for the safety of the daring chieftain, who risked his life continually in their behalf. Let his memory be graven upon the hearts of his countrymen, and suffer his noble, daring deeds to be written upon the page of history as monuments of glory, and when, in after ages, the reader shall learn of his exploits, his noble attributes of character, and the great good he accomplished in his day, may he be actuated by the same noble impulses, and strive to emulate his glorious example.

From Chief Enterprise

E. P. Jones