

"The first syllabis that thou did mute
Was *pa, da, lyn*, upon the lute;
Then played I twenty springis perqueir,
Whilk was great plesour for to hear."

And Sir Walter singularly remarks that "any old woman in Scotland will bear witness that *pa, da, lyn*,

are the first efforts of a child to say, "Where's David Lindesay?" But it is evident that this is a mistake, since David Lindesay was, in fact, present, and the child was addressing him, and by *pa, da, lyn*, meant "*Play, David Lindesay*," a request with which he immediately complied, as he says, "Then played I," etc.

ON THE BORDER.

BY CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.

ESTHER, O Esther, say where are we riding?
Turn, for your head is not withe-bound like mine;
The grass of the prairie seems gliding, green gliding
Away like long serpents beyond the straight line
The horse's hoofs keep; is his head to the westward?
I see but his feet. Oh, listen, and hear
The very grass growing, the very air glowing,
For John may be riding hard, hard in our rear—

After us, after us, swift as the wind is
Over the plains.—Yes—the children had gone
Away to a neighbor's—the wealth of the Indies
I'd give just to know they are safe!—They have
drawn
This withe-ing so tight that my wrists are all bleed-
ing—

'Tis nothing; don't turn, but keep listening, dear.
Is naught coming after? That horrible laughter—
The red-skins are laughing! O Esther, the fear

Is numbing my heart—for you see that fierce old one,
The chief on the right with the scalps at his belt,
Such a look he just gave us! I felt the swift cold run
All over my body—though icebergs might melt
Beneath this red sun, the sun of the prairies.

Don't cry, dear; the red-skins won't stand it. Thank
God,
My baby! I cried so when poor baby died—oh,
Now I am glad he is under the sod,

In his green little grave in the garden. The others
Had gone to a neighbor's.—Oh, what will John say
When he finds the house empty, no voice but poor
mother's—

Poor bedridden mother—to answer? Oh, pray—
Pray, Esther, pray, as we ride, that he may not
Come after *alone* in his rage; for if one—
One of us, Esther, must die, it were best for
The children—oh, yes, dear—it should not be John.

But may be he'll rally the neighbors—I pray it;
They're five, and I'd stake them as easy as not
'Gainst fifty Comanches! And then, though I say it,
There's no aim like John's. But, dear heart! I for-
got—

They'll use us for cover—they'll put us between them
To keep off the bullets—our bodies for shield—
E'en that than their revels is better, though—; devils!
Yes, devils of red-skins! 'Twas never revealed

Why God made the Injuns; a wild-cat is kinder,
A grizzly more human.—Say, dear, do you think
The children are safe?—My eyes have grown blinder,
I'm tied so, head downward; it's over the brink
Of a red gulf I hang—but don't mind me; keep dropping
Those small bits of cloth when the redskins don't
watch;

All gone? Then my hair here—keep dropping it where,
dear,
You think on the tall grass its curled ends might catch,

And hang; for John knows it—knows every hair of it.
Poor, dear, old John—how proud did I feel
When he said it was pretty! I took such good care of it
After, and now the poor curls may reveal
That we have been here. Can you catch at the grasses?
If we could but bend them! The prairie's so wide—
The horses leap over broad spaces.—They cover
Our track, dear. They're stopping—they've seen us!
they hide

All signs of our passing; their swift, crafty fingers
Bend back our bent grasses! O God! is there no
Hope for us, hope for us?—How the day lingers!—
Seems though the sun was unwilling to go,
And leave us here galloping over the prairie
Alone with the devilish Comanches! My heart
Is breaking, dear, breaking—Is that the ground shaking
Behind us, or only my pulses?—They start,

They wheel to the south—I feel the horse turning—
That old chief is startled—I see him look back—
Why, dear, there's life in you yet—you are burning—
One look, for God's sake, only one! It's the track—
The *track*, that's the thing—can they find it, or keep it?
The prairie's so blinding—You see them? What? On
The left, the oak-opening? *There?* But the hope may
bring
But swifter death—God! we're saved!—John! O
John!