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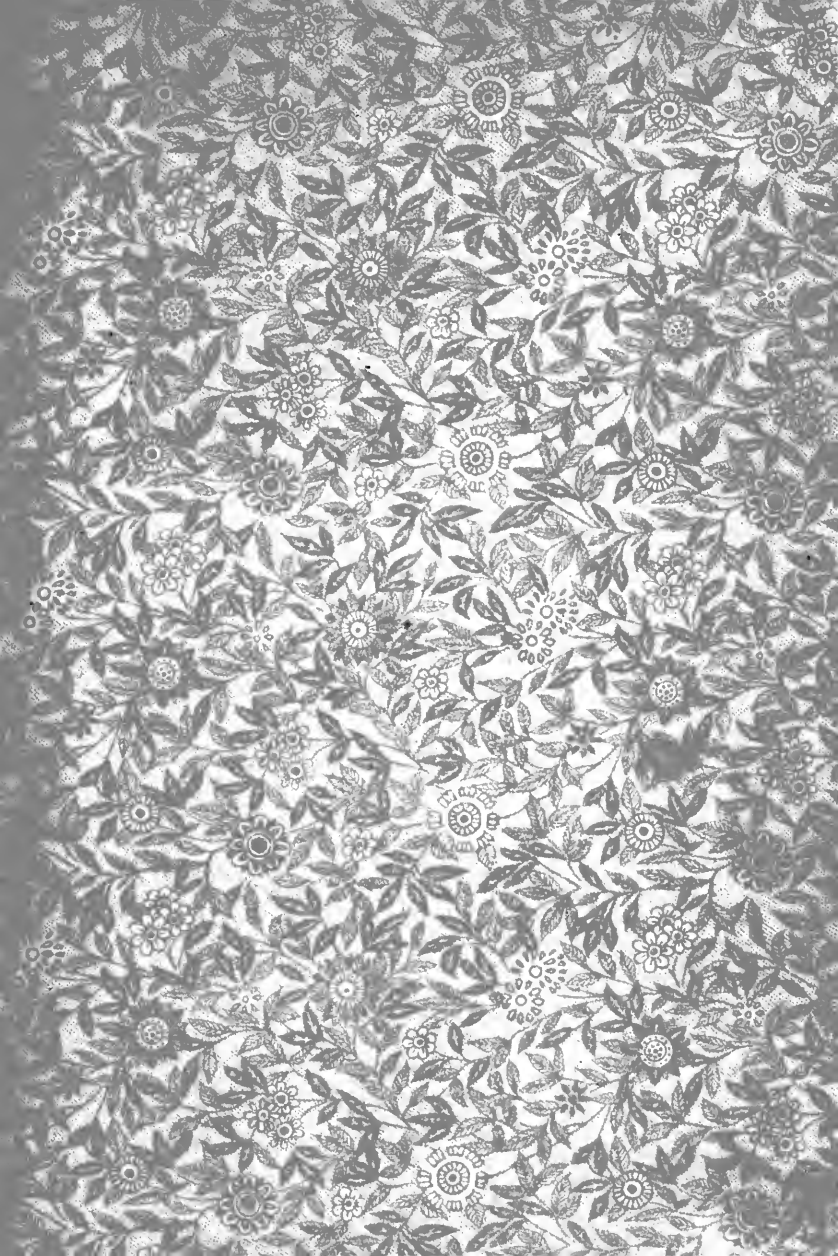
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*EDITED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT*

BY  
EDGAR HENRY

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“OURS IS A NEVER CEASING STRUGGLE OF TWO RIVAL CONFEDERACIES.”—*John Adams.*

“WE HAVE NEVER BEEN ONE PEOPLE SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION.”—*Nathaniel Hawthorne.*

“NO ONE SHALL, IN MY PRESENCE, CALL JEFFERSON DAVIS A TRAITOR WITHOUT MEETING A STERN AND DECIDED DENIAL.”—*L. Q. C. Lamar.*

“IN THAT TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION [CARRYING THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION] ABRAHAM LINCOLN SHALL NOT MOVE AS THE RIGHTFUL PRESIDENT BUT JEFFERSON DAVIS, THE SO-CALLED TRAITOR, LEADER OF A SO-CALLED LOST CAUSE.”—*Henry R. Jackson.*

“THE NEW SOUTH IS SIMPLY A NATURAL OUTGROWTH OF THE OLD.”—*Southern Newspaper.*

“THE FALL OF INSTITUTIONS LEAVES HUMAN NATURE STILL WHAT THOSE INSTITUTIONS HAVE MADE IT.”—*Picton's Life of Cromwell.*

“THE MOST POPULAR REMEDY FER SUM UV THE WUST KINDS UV DISEASE, IS TU JEST SWARE THER AIN'T ANYTHIN' THE MATTER.”—*Fosh Billings.*

## PREFATORY NOTE.

IN preparing for publication the manuscript of one who played so important a part in recent events, it has seemed best to add nothing to and take little from what was found written therein. It is only when the self-depreciating modesty of the patient sufferer, who seemed anxious only lest he should seem to claim merit where none was due, appeared to have obscured with laborious self-excuse the relation he really sustained to the great movement which he directed, that it has been deemed admissible somewhat to abridge his narrative.

Perhaps if the work had been written under less painful conditions a fuller record of the events to which it refers might have been given. For the present of course this is unnecessary. Those events are so recent as to be matters of common knowledge; and it is probable that history will so illumine the succession of incidents which constituted the marvelous epoch of which he was the central figure, that the Grand Master's disquisitions will become, as he designed them to be, merely explanatory analysis of the influences which shaped his character and prepared the forces which he employed. While arrogating to himself no merit for the results attained, he did not shirk responsibility for error. For this reason he avoided, so far as possible, all

individual reference to those who hindered or promoted the designs he set on foot. Men he judged leniently, if at all; the forces behind them he analyzed with unsparing severity. Of those who upheld the right he counted the humblest as worthy as the highest, and so passed no comparative judgments. Of those whom it was needful to designate he wrote only as the product of peculiar conditions.

His narrative might have gained something in dramatic intensity if he had realized the curiosity which the future will feel as to the hopes and fears which must have alternated in his breast during the eventful period when the result hung in such even balance. This is a sentiment, however, which, in common with many great natures, he seemed utterly unable to appreciate. What he did, or thought, or felt, seemed always to him a thing of indifference in comparison with the causes which impelled him to act and the influences that made possible specific results.

In accordance with his desire, no public display was made at his interment. Thousands stood silent and tearful about the open grave upon the sunny hillside, and throughout the new nation he had created without the shedding of blood, a grateful people gathered in their several places of worship to mourn a leader whom all loved and whom none had ever feared or distrusted. His wish was still law. No trumpet blared, no cannon roared, and no banner drooped above his bier. The Order he had founded vanished at his request. Its bright emblem,

draped in perpetual mourning, was made by statute the subject of primogenital inheritance, or failing that, of specific appointment by the last descendant of that noble host who sustained him with unfaltering confidence in his patriotic work.

His wish that no monument should ever be erected to his memory, and no municipal or charitable foundation bear his name, will undoubtedly be respected, but the unmarked grave lying in the shadow of the mountains will never cease to be the Mecca of those who love liberty, justice and peace. In his life he taught that Right is stronger than the Sword, and gold fit only to be the instrument of good. In his death he has proved that humility wins a fame more durable than any monument.

This much of explanation and apology seemed due from one who has undertaken the task of preparing for public perusal the story of his life as told by himself.

E. H.



# EIGHTY-NINE.

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## CHAPTER I.

I who write these pages am Ryal Owen, the only son of Godson Owen, late of Ryalmont, in the sovereign State of Georgia, whose faithful servant he was, and for whose rights he rendered up his life. They would have been dedicated to his memory, had he not, by a blameless life and heroic death, achieved a fame too illustrious to be diminished or enhanced by any act of mine. If only I may be adjudged worthy to have inherited his name and to have received the benediction of his confidence, I shall be content.

The end is near. I do not know whether life will last until my task shall be completed. I do not call it my work, for that is done already. I am one of those whose lives have ended while they still lived. The current of life flows by me. I was of it yesterday. To-day I see the rush and swirl of its dark waters, note its eddies, guess its force, but do not feel its power. There only remains for me to let the world know why I lived—what I hoped and what I endeavored. What I did and how, it knows al-

ready, or thinks it does, and would not believe me should I question its knowledge. This is my task—a labor self-imposed, not to gain praise or avoid blame, but that I may not seem to claim what is due to others or allow another to suffer obloquy which I alone should bear.

I shall not seek to tell the story of great events; nor even of my part in them—only my estimate of their causes and of the forces that impelled me to participate in them. Yet it is a task from which I shrink, both because of its difficulty and the fear that I shall not be able to make plain to others what is clear to me. My life seems to have been made up of so many elements, to have known so many influences, to have realized such unexpected results, that I fear to attempt to unravel its impulses. Not that I have done so much. In truth, as I lie here where life began, waiting for life to end, it seems as if I had done nothing; only been a dreamer, a looker-on at great events. I perceive, too, that the little I have done has not been of my own will, but by another's, or by the fiat of a destiny that made me its creature by shaping my nature and environment. Now that I near the infinite, I question, indeed, whether I have done anything, whether I have not been a mere instrument with which fate wrought. It matters not, however, whether much or little has been achieved, whether by my own volition or by the spur of destiny; to whom credit is due and to whom blame attaches; what is done is done—what was to be is accomplished.

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## CHAPTER II.

The setting sun shines now upon me through the narrow panes of the same window in the humble lodge at Ryalmont, through which it looked when it first kissed my baby face. Five generations of my forebears have first seen the light within these narrow walls; poor, unnoted men—all save one whose fame was too bright to be clouded by disaster—and honest God-fearing women. In the five and forty years since that day the sun that shines through the cleft in the mountains to the westward has seen wondrous changes on the earth—none more wonderful than those that have happened in the land on which its setting rays now fall.

It is of these that I must write—of these and of myself. Yet not of these so much as of the forces that lay behind them, nor of myself so much as of those antecedent lives whose tenor shaped my destiny. I have no quarrel with the present, save that it has been overkind to me. That it has given me credit for more than is my due should not, however, make me willing to perpetuate injustice.

Gladly would I claim credit for all that has occurred, for I believe that the future holds only confirmation of its beneficence. But justice—justice to those with whom I wrought, to a father's memory, a mother's love, the honor

of one dearer still and, above all, justice to a people's life—demands that I proclaim the truth. I see clearly now that what has come to pass, apparently by my instigation, would have occurred had I never existed. I was not the cause but the instrument—not the discoverer of truth but its voice. Doubtless my work would have been better done if entrusted to a stronger hand.

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It is not history that I would write, only that which goes to make up history. I shall attempt no narrative of what has recently taken place, but only note some vestiges which may enable other pens to trace the causes that lay hidden underneath the surface. My part is but to call attention to the unseen forces that raised up the mighty crests which men deemed stolen tides of fate and show them to be in fact only the ebb and flow of human progress. It is not history; only a light to guide the historian when he tries to walk backward through the mists of time and learn the truth of the day in which I lived. What I may write may not even be the truth. Few speak the truth; and fewer still think it in their hearts. In life and in death mere facts obscure our vision. What seems to us good we denominate right; what pleases us we call truth. Facts I will relate as I saw them; causes as I apprehend them.

Of facts I need detail but few. In these times the world's busy chroniclers glean incessantly the harvest field

of incident. What happens to-day is the world's possession to-morrow. They who follow in the track of armies know better than they who fight the tale of their achievements. Already the story of what so recently occurred has been told over and over again by those much better able than I to delineate the sequence of events. It is only what I felt and thought, what I alone knew of motive and purpose, that remains for me to declare. Fate has set her panorama before the world's eyes. I cannot add to or take from the figures on her canvas. At the best I can but throw a light on some of them which may show their true relations.

### CHAPTER III.

The real story of great events is rarely told. The glamour of what is accomplished conceals the underlying causes from the remote historian, while he who writes of matters occurring in his own time is apt to be blinded by partisanship or the impulse of self-defence. What we term history, indeed, is a record, often false, usually unjust, and always incomplete. To one it gives more than his meed of praise ; to another, a too abundant share of blame. It judges men, not by motive or impulse, not by the compelling force that lies behind them, but by their achievements—the result of what they *seem* to have done. For after all it is but seeming. Men do not cause events to come to pass. The atoms do not move the mass ; the mass projects the atoms to the surface, rather. Peoples create

leaders. Those who are called leaders are, indeed, but index fingers pointing toward the popular heart. It is the weak who make the strong ; the strong who are, in fact, the weak. A people's woe inspires one to attempt a remedy. He is termed a chief. He *is* a servant, a creature, perhaps a victim. If he succeed he is extolled ; if he fail he is accursed. It was not Moses who made the Hebrews a nation, but the woes of Israel that made the peerless law-giver. The smart of wrong has ever been the seed of right ; the suffering of the many the spur that has impelled the few. He who foretells evil may be accounted a prophet, but he is likely to be also a martyr. He who informs a people of their wrongs may plant the seed of revolution ; but only he whom the tidal wave of approval sweeps out of obscurity can ever become a deliverer. He who speaks the truth too soon wins only ignominy. He who thriftily waits till popular clamor compels him to act may achieve renown.

Individuals do not determine the character of civilization. They who seem to lead are but the more distinctive products of a common impulse. They are oftener thrust forward by forces which lie behind, unknown, almost undreamed of, than the shapers of their own or others' destiny. Peoples are no more free agents than individuals. Fate shapes its own instruments.

In monarchies the man may move the nation ; the story of a King's reign may be the true history of a people ;

a scepter may shape an epoch. In what are termed free governments, individuals are not the controlling motive power. In them the citizen is only significant, as he represents more or less completely some phase of popular thought or feeling. There ambition, even, must run in prescribed grooves. No popular leader achieves his own success; he simply rises or falls with the flow or ebb of the tide which bears him on its crest. The history of political events in a Republic is, therefore, hardly more reliable, as a veritable account of national growth, than the narrative of its battles and sieges. All these are only results—mere indications of more important truths. History is said to be a chronicle of events. As a fact, it is but a register of results—a calendar of consequences. What it omits is always more important than what it tells. What is done it records with more or less of truth. Why it was done the world is left to guess. Yet the cause is infinitely more important than the fact. Why the battle was lost is of vastly more moment than the fact that it was won; why it was fought at all, more important than either. Events are transitory; causes immortal.

\* \* \* \*

I do not know how it may be in the material world, but evolution is the inflexible law of mind. To-day is the natural product of yesterday. The dead, consciously or

unconsciously, lay their behests upon the living. The past is but the matrix from which the future takes its form. Each life is the outcome of a myriad lives—each generation the resultant of a thousand generations. Where yesterday ends and to-day begins who shall say ?

Nations are not born of man's will nor civilization shaped by human wit. Statesmen, warriors, aye, even patriots, are but pigmies. They do not make or fashion or prescribe, they only serve the will and power that is behind them—the myriad-eyed and myriad-handed but single-hearted people ! The past ? a pulse—a fate ! What is it—who shall tell ? IT spake and I obeyed !

## CHAPTER IV.

I was a lad at the outbreak of the War for Separation. My father wore his uniform for the first time on my fifteenth birthday. It was unquestionably the most becoming of modern military costumes, and there were few men whose appearance it did not improve. He was not tall, but his form was slender and a model of grace. The soft gray habit, with its close velvet collar adorned with the modest marks of rank, set off his fine proportions better than anything I had ever seen. Or was it the glamour of coming conflict and the boy's innate love of martial glory and its gilded trappings that affected my vision ?

He was to start the next day for what was not yet the seat of war, only of preparation. His departure had been hastened by unexpected orders. These things made memorable the birthday, which, without them, would no doubt have been forgotten. The years that had preceded it had not been numerous enough to bring regret, and those which were to come were apparently not so few as to excite apprehension. My father's transformation could no more be forgotten, however, than his departure on the morrow. To make the occasion still more notable, the intended commemoration of the anniversary was abandoned

and I was allowed to accompany my father on a farewell journey to Ryalmont, where we had resided until a few years before and where his aged mother still lived.

We went on horseback. Going and returning made a good half-day's journey. My father was a grave, earnest man, just come to his prime. He wore a wide-brimmed, dark felt hat, which shaded his thoughtful countenance and matched well with a full brown beard that fell upon his breast, which he was wont to stroke absently when absorbed in thought. The horse he rode had been recently purchased with especial reference to the service on which he was about to enter. He was a dark chestnut of somewhat notable characteristics—hardly above the medium height, somewhat too long for absolute symmetry, but round-bodied and compactly built, showing great ease of movement and giving promise of remarkable endurance. On account of his sloping shoulders, deep chest, heavy thighs and long springy hocks, he produced the impression of being what is known among horsemen as short-legged, an impression due, in his case, at least, to unusual muscular development. I am not sure that he was what is technically known as “thoroughbred,” but his bony head, thin nostril, sharp, quick-moving ear and full, fearless eye told of many strains of royal blood mingling in his veins. His faults of form were no doubt due in part to the exceptional nutritiveness of that marvelous blue grass of the region of which he was a native. The same influence had also trans-



formed these seeming defects into positive excellencies, when the character of the service required of him was taken into consideration, as was afterwards attested by many a weary march and many a bloody day which tried the mettle and endurance of horse and rider to the utmost.

I suppose this horse would not have made so vivid and lasting an impression on my mind but for the circumstances under which I observed him and the exciting events with which he was afterwards so intimately associated. The fact that he had been selected by my father on account of special fitness for the service for which he was designed, of itself was enough to endow him with peculiar interest in my eyes. It was no light commendation of a horse's qualities that my father had chosen him for his own use at any time. Even among our equestrian people he was noted, not merely for skillful horsemanship, but for that instinctive love and appreciation of the animal which makes a glance of the eye worth more as an estimate of quality than the most careful scrutiny of one not so endowed. This, too, was in a sense a trial trip. The rider was becoming acquainted with the horse, the owner was testing his purchase, the master was verifying his judgment, and I was watching, almost worshipping, both the master with his new uniform, the horse with his new trappings,—seen in the bright, mysterious halo of anticipated glory illuminating the future against which they were projected.

In the company of such a father and such a horse is it

any wonder that every moment of that day and every incident of that ride were photographed indelibly upon my memory? I can see them now if I but close my eyes. The horse with his long, easy stride, alert, attentive to the rider's will, with his quick changes of gait and untiring readiness; the rider's watchfulness and satisfaction. But if horse and rider had been altogether different I doubt if the awkward lad who rode beside them would have felt any less of admiration. The lurid light of the coming conflict naturally magnified, if, indeed, it did not distort all things seen against its glow. There had been so little of the pride and pomp of war among our people, in my time at least, that soldier and hero were synonymous in popular apprehension; and he would have been a mean-spirited boy indeed to whom a father in uniform would not have seemed almost a god. At my earnest solicitation I was permitted that day to give the horse a new name instead of the insignificant one he had borne hitherto. Thereafter he was called "Secession."

\* \*

I may say without being thought to boast, that my father was no ordinary man. That he should seem larger to me than to others is only natural, but no one will question, I believe, his right to be accounted a man of unusual qualities.

He had sprung from a rugged farmer stock. The plantation we were to visit was his sole ancestral inheritance. It lay among the hills half a score of miles from the city and nigh a thousand feet above it. He was going there to say farewell to his mother, an erect, stern-faced woman, whose gray hair was still abundant and whose dark eye and strong regular features were yet regal in their power to command. My father was her only son—the child of her widowhood, named because of posthumous birth, Godson—the dream of her life and the pride of her age. From the cabin door to the front rank of his profession she had followed him with unceasing watchfulness. Able to do but little for his advancement, she had done very wisely what she could. Little given to flattery, she had not been sparing of censure whenever she saw him swerving from the path she had marked out for him. In every crisis of his life she had been ready to commend resolution and denounce hesitancy. As a boy she never allowed his desire to flag. As a man she never permitted his effort to go unrewarded by her approval. He had risen steadily since he left the hearthstone. He was not rich. His efforts had not been given so much to getting wealth as to getting strength. Student, teacher, lawyer—that was the path this country boy had trod, winning each step by thoroughness in the one last taken. The lust for gold had not yet taken hold upon our life, and this lawyer, scarcely arrived at his prime, with his modest plantation just out-

side the city, a score of slaves and his well-stocked library, was accounted one of the most successful men in the state.

\* \* \*

Why was he leaving all this to become a soldier? I remember this question came to my mind as we rode out from under the shade of the grove of oaks that crowned the little knob on which was our home. My mother, a fair-faced woman, with a wealth of golden hair falling over a white morning-gown, my little baby sister toddling by her side, stood on the porch waving us farewell. The query haunted my mind as we clattered through the city's streets, across the narrow valley and took the winding country road to Ryalmont.

The habit of self-reliance which his mother had so carefully cultivated had accustomed my father to think for himself on all subjects. This had kept him out of the swirl of party politics. A man who thinks for himself and does not hesitate to express his opinions may found a party or lead one, but he is not often a serviceable subaltern in its ranks. My father had passed the period of subservient following, and the time had but just come for him to take the lead. It was only when the question of peace or war, or more exactly, of two republics or one, presented itself, that men came to understand his

power. I remember my own surprise at the speech he made when the matter first came before the people. It was at a great mass-meeting which has become memorable in the history of Southern independence. There were many eloquent speakers. The others touched only the surface, he went to the core. It seemed to have been the one thought of his life. I was to learn afterward how deeply he had studied it, how far-reaching were his conclusions and how intense was his conviction.

I must admit, however, that my father was not what is termed a popular man. His hold upon the masses, though very distinct and positive, partook very little of the character of a personal following. It was the sincerity of his purpose and the earnestness of his conviction, rather than his personal qualities, that gave him power over men—his thought rather than his individuality. I have said that he was of a grave and serious nature. Another would perhaps have called him taciturn. He lived much alone, not that he wished to exclude others from his life, but because it seemed difficult for him to unbosom himself to them. From infancy almost I had been the companion of his daily rides and was accustomed to his abstracted moods. I knew he was fond of having me with him, yet he conversed but little with me. Unlike most lovers of the horse, he seldom used his voice to govern or control the beast he rode. His grip would tighten on the rein, his knees clasp the shoulder close, his jaw

grow firm and his face become alert in case of any failure of the animal to perform his will, but no sound would escape his lips. He was not deemed a companionable man. Though not without a sense of humor, he was little given to jesting, and held no rank at all among the story-tellers for which our Southern bar is so justly renowned. He made few enemies, but those he had were as unrelenting as himself. He rarely gave offence and never failed to resent insult. As a result of these qualities he was respected by all, trusted by every one, and comprehended by few.

It was the general impression that the struggle of his early life had done much to produce the reserve which characterized his maturer years. What truth there may have been in this hypothesis I cannot say. There is no doubt that under the old regime, when slavery constituted a peculiar aristocracy, the difficulties in the way of a young man of the poorer, or non-slaveholding, classes, who aspired to success in the professions, were very great. Perhaps that is the reason there were so many notable examples of that kind. A man who had the pith to overcome such difficulties at the outset was very sure to make his mark afterward. I think the South has, among her great names, more instances of men who have risen from the very lowest levels of society to the highest rank in politics and the professions, than can be found in the apparently more democratic and unstratified society of the North. This fact, indeed, constitutes one of the great,

almost insoluble differences between the sections. The great men of the South often founded families, but very few, outside of Virginia, at least, bore names that had been at all notable before they made them illustrious. Even in Virginia it remains true that her four greatest names began and ended with the one man who made each immortal. Washington, Jefferson, Marshall and "Stone-wall" Jackson are unquestionably the first names, even of the boastful "Mother of Presidents," and the most illustrious men the South has ever produced. Each sprang from obscurity, and with the death of each the name he bore lapsed into insignificance.

Another of the seemingly inscrutable things connected with our Southern life is the fact that these very men have been the most uncompromising advocates of that peculiar state of society which would seem to have placed almost insuperable obstacles in their path. I have heard others relate what my father had to meet and overcome. From his lips I scarcely heard a word upon the subject, but I know that he attributed his success mainly to the training he received in overcoming these difficulties. He believed our Southern life and society to be not only distinctive but eminently healthful. He recognized with peculiar clearness its defects, but thought them quite overshadowed by its excellencies. Boy as I was, I could not help thinking of these things and feeling especial pride in a father who by sheer force of manhood had won his way from the hum-

blest station to be a leader of the very life that had thrown such obstacles in his pathway.

But while I exulted I still wondered.



## CHAPTER V.

It was a beautiful day in May. Leaving the town we crossed the bridge over the sparkling river and skirted the cornfields on the bottom at a swinging pace. For a time my father was engaged in watching the performance of his horse, now putting him at some obstacle, and then requiring him to change his gait upon a given signal; guiding him sometimes with his hand and then with his knee; dropping the reins upon his neck, bending downward from his saddle—in short, submitting him to all those tests the practiced horseman applies to a new purchase which he backs for the first time beyond the range of prying eyes. When at length we struck into the shady woods-road that winds up the sharp slope to Ryalmont he halted for me to overtake him, the last half mile having been made at a speed quite beyond the capacity of the mare I rode, which, though a thoroughbred, had seen too many days to be matched with such a horse in his prime. My father had thrown a leg over the saddle-bow and was sitting sidewise upon his horse, which showed no signs of fatigue or excitement when I came up. It was a favorite position with him and was always indicative of satisfaction. It is said that the soldiers under his command used afterwards to declare that they knew

the battle was going well when they saw him sitting side-wise in his saddle.

“He will do,” said my father, grasping a handful of the horse’s mane and giving it an approving jerk. Without change in his position we rode on, walking our horses under the over-arching trees. As if divining what had been my thought, my father began to speak of the new movement and his own relations to it. It seemed as if he were anxious to commit his thoughts to the keeping of another, and found in me the only convenient receptacle. Aside from their peculiar character, what I witnessed that day would have sufficed to fix his words indelibly upon my memory.

What especially impressed me at the time was the difference between his ideas and the views usually attributed to those with whom he acted. He seemed to think slavery an accident : an opportunity rather than a cause. Towards the North he appeared to entertain no rancor and, indeed, was somewhat bitter in his allusions to those who fomented hate. He said it was not a conflict of passion or the result of oppression, but a movement of necessity. Civilization, he said, had generated in this country two distinct and contrasted yet similar and related types. They had long been growing assunder and now the time had come when they must fall apart. He said the real question at issue was not what the constitution meant or the fathers intended ; but what the future demanded. I

had heard the constitutional question discussed so often that I was startled, boy as I was, to hear him declare it immaterial. He, no doubt, noted my look of surprise and explained that the time had passed when the fathers were entitled of right to bind the sons forever. "Our law," he said, "had wisely restricted the power of bequest to two lives, and the course of legislation and jurisprudence was toward a still further limitation of posthumous restraint. Private contracts were declared inviolable by the States, but the general government has undoubted authority to abrogate them in certain cases. The doctrine of this immutability of the social, the political contract was of feudal and monarchical origin. Allegiance, the tie which bound the subject to the throne—which attached the individual to the sovereign—was considered indissoluble except by treaty stipulation until American democracy established it as a doctrine of international law that the individual might disown the sovereignty of birth and attach himself to another in the domain of which he may reside, which disavowal shall remain, and new allegiance shall attach, for the benefit of the individual and of the State, thereafter, without regard to the place of domicile.

"All these things," said he, "tend in one direction. In spite of any constitutional provision or requirement, a people have the right not merely to choose their own form of government, but to determine its quality, character, constituents and alliances. The one million of freemen

who constituted the people of the South eighty years ago--the ancestors by three removes of the men to-day--had no right to bind at will the eight millions of freemen who now occupy her soil and their descendants forever.

“The war for American Independence was based upon a right inhering in every people to separate themselves from another on the ground of injustice and oppression. This has come to be known in international law as the right of revolution. It consists of two elements: the right to resist oppression and the right to determine what constitutes oppression. Our people do themselves and our Northern neighbors, both, great wrong to put their defence, or justification rather, on this ground. It is not true, my son, that we have suffered any such wrongs at the hands of the Northern people or the government of the United States as would justify revolution. It may be doubted if we have suffered any at all. The right to withdraw from the Union was not specifically reserved in the Constitution. That is certain. And it is at least doubtful whether it was intended and understood by any considerable portion of those concerned in the consolidation of the independent States into a distinct nationality, to have been so reserved inferentially. Our cause rests upon higher, stronger and holier grounds. What we allege is not oppression but incompatibility. We say that these two peoples can never be one. In name they may be united; in nature they must continue diverse. Every hour since they

were thought to have become more closely joined they have in spirit grown essentially more remote. The 'more perfect union,' which our fathers thought they were creating by the Constitution, has only given shelter to divergent growths which are now much farther apart than they were on that day. Events which none foresaw have made the united nation distinctly dual.

“Our contention, properly stated, is that eight millions of freemen, occupying a distinct territory, have an inherent right at any time to choose their own form of government and their own political affiliations—not because of any constitutional provision, nor on account of any actual or supposed historical relation they once sustained to each other, but because they are a distinct people and substantially agreed upon this subject.

“So, too, the people of the North—they call themselves now the Nation, and have the right to use its name and organization, though the nationality is really destroyed by the secession of the Southern States—they have, I say, an indefeasible and indubitable right to prevent our leaving the Union, if they can. Our action is not rebellion nor is theirs subjugation. We simply assert that, in our opinion, the interests of the South demand a separate government. They declare their conviction that the interest of the North, and in their view, of the whole nation, demand the continuance of the present relations. So far as

they are concerned it is a question of policy. With us it a matter of right as well.

“Both are unquestionably correct in their conclusions of fact. The South would be immensely benefitted by political autonomy. The North would, in almost like degree, be injured financially by the separation. The South abounds in products of universal demand—cotton, tobacco, lumber, ores. We have immense undeveloped resources. Our territory yields almost everything required for human comfort and civilized existence. Of minerals, we have coal and iron in abundance; gold, silver and copper in considerable quantities; corn, wheat, oats, hay and cattle enough to supply our need and give a surplus for export; wool, sugar and rice enough for ourselves, with an excess of two of them when developed; cotton and tobacco enough to supply one-third of the world’s demand above our own consumption. Besides this, lumber and fruits; and, in addition to it all, the finest water-power in the world. In our State alone the available force of the water, which now runs unhindered to the sea, equals the entire mill-power of New England. Separation means to us development. It means self-support, extension and variety of industrial fabric. We should spin our own cotton, raise our own corn and wear our own clothes. The world’s capital and energy would flow to our shores simply because we offered the largest opportunity.

“To the North it means distinct and positive loss.

We are, under existing conditions, an ever open market for their wares and products. We buy their coal, their iron, their clothing. Aside from what is consumed at home, we constitute their only considerable market except for food products. With free and aspiring labor they cannot compete with the dependent and controllable labor of the Old World in open market. Circumstances have given them a market here at the South in which they can have no competition even from ourselves.

“They will fight for this, my son, fight to retain their profit and advantage. They have a right to do so. They will have the sympathies of the world with them too. They not only fight for a universally accepted theory—the right to compel allegiance—but an incident of the struggle, which some of our people are foolishly seeking to make its chief feature, will give them a sympathy they only half deserve. It will be said that they fight to free the slave and we fight to keep him still in bondage. In one sense it will be true, in another false. Slavery is an occasion rather than a cause of the conflict that impends. It, no doubt, did much to produce divergence of life and civilization, but its extirpation would not produce unity or homogeneity. There will be war because there are two peoples. However it may end, there will be two peoples still.

“Remember these things, my son,” said my father, as we reached the crest of a hill from which the old home-place could be seen, “remember them as your father’s

views of the great questions which confront the present. I have given them my best thought and shall give to what I deem the right my best endeavor. I may not live to see the end. Upon you or your children, in all probability, will fall the final determination of these questions. Many of our people look for victory. I do not. We are eight millions of freemen against nineteen millions. We must establish a government as well as defeat an enemy. Our mechanical resources are undeveloped; theirs are the completest ever known. We have all things to create; they have more than enough of everything needful. The war will be long because we are two great peoples. It will be bloody because we are brave and come of a stock of unrivalled fortitude.

“I think we shall be defeated. I cannot see how it can be otherwise. But that will not be the end, my son. The underlying principles and the essential facts will remain. The South will still remain the South and the North will be the North still. The South will invite capital and show great progress. It will grow stronger to achieve, but must still remain essentially distinct. The slave may be freed, but the negro will remain. The North cannot assimilate us, and the South has no tendency towards the peculiar Northern civilization. The two peoples will naturally gravitate farther and farther apart. This will grow stronger to assert because of its essential solidarity; that will grow weaker to resist because of its discordant



elements. Some time the issue will have to be tried over again. If it should be in your day, it may help you to do your duty to know what was your father's conviction."

He swung himself back into the saddle, and we struck a quicker pace as he ceased speaking. A soft breeze came down the valley we had entered and the scent of the wild grape blossoms, which hung in feathery clusters over the shaded road, came to our nostrils. The bees filled the air with their droning and the birds furnished that varied accompaniment which one who is busy with his thoughts seldom notes yet never forgets. I remember the croon of the rain crow, the far-away song of the thrush, the clamor of the mocker and the jeer of the cat-bird, as we dashed on beneath the leafy canopy that hung above the mountain road. As we drew near the home-place, my father seemed restive and uneasy. He talked of many things, but chiefly of his childhood—always coming back to that at last—and in a manner more rambling and disconnected than I had ever known him to display. I thought him agitated at the idea of parting from his mother. It occurred to me then that he had worn his uniform in order that she might remember him as he would look while with the army. It seemed very kind of him to do so, and I spoke of it as a very considerate act. My father started as if my words had been a sting. His lip quivered and his cheek flushed.

“Ah, yes,” he said, with something like a sneer, “It was kind—very kind.”

I was astonished. We rode forward a while in silence, then he said gently ;

“No, my son, I did not wear this uniform to give your grandmother pleasure, but to show her that I am a man.”

An instant after he added still more softly :

“I brought you also to bear witness to that fact.”

## CHAPTER VI.

Ryalmont had been the family seat of the Owens for generations. It was named from Royal Owen—pronounced Ryal by the country people—who located the tract and obtained a grant for it long before the parchment title was of any value unless backed by a stout heart and a keen eye. It was at first called Ryal's Mount. My father linked the two and christened it Ryalmont.

It was a sightly place which the sturdy hunter chose for his abode. A level table shot out from the mountain side as if the summit of an outlying spur had been cut sheer off, leaving the truncated base buttressed against sharp cliffs on either hand, while back of it stretched a narrow and difficult pass—a mere notch in the mountain wall through which fell a babbling stream. The torrent turned sharp to the northward where it issued from the gorge, leaving the knob on which the house stood, effectually to mask the entrance, and after a long detour, swept back again to its very foot upon the eastward, and worked its way thence through the lower hills to the river half a dozen miles away. By its side ran the highway along which we had come, winding around the hill a hundred yards from the house and perhaps twice as many feet below it. A spring burst out, half way down the hillside, and ran through

a dripping wooden spout to a trough at the roadside. Nestling under the side of the hill, by which it was hidden from the house above, was a snug little cabin in which dwelt Jack, the colored overseer and care-taker of the plantation.

It was said that our ancestor chose this location for the heavy log house which he erected, not on account of its relation to the thousand acres of hill and valley, mountain and meadow, it overlooked—to which he laid claim as first settler and for which he paid the extravagant price of one shilling an acre—but because of its outlook over the valley and the easy access it offered to the wooded glen in the rear, known afterwards as Ryal's Pass. In those days, it was said that every trail that crossed the valley passed somewhere within sight of Ryal's Mount, and that any one who entered Ryal's Pass a half hour in advance of his pursuer, was safe from the most hostile following. The Pass was a narrow defile that wound in and out a devious but not difficult way, until it ended in a dark and narrow glen on the other side of the mountain half a dozen miles away. Because of its tortuous character it had never been used as a highway, and was still almost as wild as when Ryal Owen made it a place of refuge from the savage foe. A bridle path led into it, and once or twice my father had taken me through its mazes to the peaceful valley beyond. Its outlet was a narrow and forbidding cañon almost beneath the frowning heights of a now celebrated peak, on the other side of which runs the great thoroughfare it seems especially

designed to guard. My namesake's judgment of the strategic value of the Pass has received in recent times marked confirmation. During the War for Separation the enemy, who tried in vain to force the pillared gate, came in with ease by this unguarded stile. Though its walls were precipitous at either end and the way narrow and circuitous, the grades were easy near the summit, and there were some open glades where the deer loved to lie in the sunshine. But it nowhere spread out into valleys and had no branches that led to such. Because of this the trail, though passable, was so little used that few people knew of its existence. It was a favorite haunt of my boyhood, and Jack, who was fond of wandering in the mountains, knew every foot of the way.

The plantation had changed but little from Ryal Owen's day until my father's time. The freedom of estimate that characterized the early surveys had left abundant room for the shrinkage caused by providing homes for the few female branches which had adorned the family tree, and the landmarks by which it was defined were too notable to permit the squatter to plead ignorance of its limits. Perhaps my father would have left it very much as he found it, if accident had not joined with inclination to effect its transformation. Though his tastes were rural, he was not an agriculturist. The tillage of the soil for gain had no charms for him. Trees and fruits he loved. Flowers, especially those hardy sorts that win and

hold their own place in nature, asking no aid from man, except to plant the seed or set the root, suited his taste and pleased his eye. For formal gardens, close-clipped hedges and carefully tended borders, he had little fancy. Roses that could fight with brambles, shrubs that held the soil against all comers, it mattered not how savage, and vines that found the sunlight, no matter how high they might have to climb or how dense the shadow they might have to penetrate—these were his favorites. Ryalmont stood on one of those curiously irregular isothermal lines which wind along our mountain sides, where the frost never kills and the heat never blights. Instead of cotton, therefore, he planted trees, and if his crops were seldom good, his fruit was soon the envy of the whole country.

He married the daughter of a prosperous planter on the Oconee, who brought to the humble mountain home as part of her dowry, a few families of slaves. Two of these left their mark on Ryalmont. One of them was known as Christopher. Physically, the line that separated him from the white race was imperceptible even to the most practiced eye. He was supposed to have been very closely related to the thrifty planter whose daughter he served, and I have frequently heard my mother refer to him as exhibiting the characteristic traits of the family. This man had the inherent capacity for management which so often appears in the mixed bloods of the plantation. To him the cultivation of the earth was simply a means of

profit. The instinct of accretion was so strong in his nature that the act of heaping up, even for another's enjoyment, was a pleasure to him. As fate had denied him the right to acquire for himself, he sought happiness in accumulating for those he served ; and served all the more faithfully, let me say, because he saw that they wore the same fetters as himself, being bound by like inexorable conditions—that the lives of both were controlled by an inevitable destiny. To this man was due the improvement of Ryalmont as an estate. He cut off the rich, narrow bottoms ; cleared the best of the hillsides ; built fences and cabins, transforming the great wooded tract into half a score of little farms, each yielding enough for its occupant and some surplus for the master. Such a style of agriculture, however, was not suited to the genius of slavery, and Christopher was not content until the Grove was purchased, where his instinct for administration had fuller play. For this negro my father had a great esteem, but the favorite among my mother's slaves was Jack.

The house at Ryalmont was the one blot upon its picturesque beauty. It was undeniably uncouth and altogether unfit to be the residence of the prosperous lawyer and his fair young bride. The trees held it in their sheltering embrace ; the vines clambered over its rude porches and hid the great stone chimneys outside the gables ; apples and acorns fell upon its moss-grown shingle roof, raced with each other down the sharp declivity and lodged in little

leaf-lined eddies on the hill-side below ; but however romantic its environment, the house was made of logs and the chinking, which the ceiling hid within, still showed from without. It was rude, inconvenient, and none too spacious for the requirements of the new household. The slaves who came to the up-country with the bride, regarded it with contempt, and talked with curious pride of the glories of the mansion on the live-oak hummock in the midst of "Ole Mahster's" broad plantation. This fired the mother's pride and her wrath burned hot against the dark-skinned intruders. The young wife grieved silently, yet the fact soon became apparent that the house at Ryalmont must be remodeled, a new one built, or the household divided. My father could not bring himself to tear it down ; as yet he shrank from leaving the ancestral hearth ; and to adjoin the glaring new to the somber old seemed to him an incongruity which he could by no means permit.

The solution was found in Jack. Through his cooperation Ryalmont was re-formed and transformed without losing any of its essential characteristics. Jack was one of those strange freaks of slavery which sometimes startled by a sudden revelation of its injustice those who were the most deeply convinced of its necessity. He was a man hardly above the average height, but so slenderly formed as to produce the impression that he was unusually tall. A long neck, narrow sloping shoulders, and a pinched face with retreating chin and overhanging brows, increased this



illusion. His skin was dark ; not the jetty blackness of the pure-blooded African, but an intense velvety brown which seemed to have been cast in subtle mockery as a mask for the purely Caucasian features and unmistakable Anglo-American figure. Despite his apparent delicacy of form he possessed great strength and peculiar dexterity of hand. He was something more than a Jack-of-all-trades, doing well whatever was needed on the plantation. Not only was his hand skillful with all kinds of tools, but his eye was accurate and his invention ready. The fate that made him a slave was harsh and terrible. There was a rumor that he could not only read, but was better informed as to some of the arts he practiced, than many of the white craftsmen of the region. To him was due the suggestion that made Ryalmont, for a time at least, unique among the homes of the State. I had often heard the story, and it came to my mind with peculiar vividness that day because of the events that were crowding upon us. I remember wondering, after we came in sight of the house, what would be Jack's view of the matter my father had discussed upon the way.

A drawing carefully made upon a pine board lying on Jack's work-bench gave the first hint of a transformation so notable that even the hand of war spared its beauty. The means were simple. The log house remained, only the roof was modernized, the pitch increased and its eaves made to project farther. The walls were covered close with

small sticks, cut in midsummer so as to dry with the bark on and sawed evenly through the middle. These were arranged in artistic forms and gave a simple finish in perfect harmony with the quaint interior and rustic surroundings. Jack had never been in Switzerland or Norway, but his work was inferior neither in stability nor artistic quality to the best that either can produce.

So well pleased was my father with the idea, that an extension was built upon the plan of the original structure; only, instead of hewn logs, carefully sawed timbers were laid edge to edge, matched accurately with the saw, lined with the choicest of pine hearts, fitted with precision, and finished on the outside by the same system of riven saplings. So the house at Ryalmont became a curious compound of the chalet, the cabin and the planter's spacious home, of which a slave was the real architect.

Since our removal to the Grove my grandmother lived here alone but for a "hireling"—a white woman, who was half companion and half servant. Jack's wife, Vicey, was the cook. I think she kept both these slaves less for her own convenience than for their pleasure. They were by no means unnecessary, however. The Owens were always hospitable and my grandmother was a notable housewife. So Ryalmont had open doors and a well-laden board where rich and poor met on terms of equality rarely found except in "up-country" southern homes.

## CHAPTER VII.

The day was well advanced when we arrived at the old homestead. Hidden away beneath the trees, the house was hardly visible from the road. A narrow path, bordered on each side by a ribbon of white quartz pebbles, ran around the hillside in and out among the shrubbery from the rustic gate up to the worn granite slab that Ryal Owen made the doorstep of his house. The hill was literally embowered with verdure. Orchard and grove commingled on the summit. Flowers and vines ran riot on the slope. The fertile soil and balmy climate had done more than man for its adornment. Nature had not only supplemented but in many cases supplanted and improved on art. The ivy fought with the honeysuckle for foothold on wall and tree. Wisterias interlocked with climbing roses in a deadly grapple around many a rugged trunk. The grapevines that grew along the pathway were in bloom, freighting the air with fragrance. A lusty herbemont had somehow managed to throw a tendril into an apple tree that stood above the spring, and from this had swung over into a giant oak, which shaded the eastern end of the house. Along this aerial bridge a huge wisteria had followed in swift pursuit. Its soft wavy foliage and rich purple blossoms formed a royal arch beneath which one

must pass to enter the cottage. To the right of the path was a dark cedar out of the branches of which a cat-bird screamed with angry surprise at our intrusion, while he hopped from branch to branch, eyeing us with characteristic audacity as we approached. The little white May-apples were already ripening and lay along the path, fallen from a tree that stood near the top of the slope. My father climbed the path, apparently heedless of all these things ; I followed, noting them with boyish interest. The summer sun beat fiercely down. There was a drowsy hum, a sort of audible silence in the air. The bees were droning lazily about, and the birds flew silently by as if the effort of song were too much for them to undertake.

My grandmother sat upon the porch just within the line of shade made by the vines that clambered up the front. Her knitting had fallen to the floor, and her hands were clasped upon a book in her lap. She watched us as we approached, but without a hint of recognition.

“ How d’ye, Ma ! ” said my father, as his foot touched the stepping stone before the door. My grandmother started as from a dream.

“ Is that you, Godson ? I seed ye comin’ up the path, but couldn’t make ye out, no more’n ef I’d never known ye. Must be my sight’s a failin’. I don’t more’n half know ye now. What in the name of sense hev ye got on, anyhow ? ”

She scanned him from top to toe.

“ No wonder I didn’t know ye. Do tell a body what ye’re masqueradin’ ’round in sech a rig ez that fer, son ?”

“ This is my uniform, mother,” my father replied, a hot flush rising to his brow.

“ Uniform ? What sort of a uniform, child ? You hain’t turned play acter at your age, hev ye ?”

“ No, mother,” he answered. “ this is serious earnest. This is my uniform as a Confederate officer.”

“ Your what ! Oh Godson, Godson ! Ye don’t mean to say you’ve gone an’ jined yourself body an’ soul to that cussed idol ? You are not gwine to fight agin’ the Union an’ spill innocent blood in sech a cause ?”

She clasped her hands tightly, and her face shone with woefulness as she waited for an answer.

“ I have done as my conscience dictated, mother,” my father answered solemnly.

He still stood upon the broad granite stone that had been placed before the porch by his grandfather when the house was built, more than a hundred years before. Perhaps she thought of this, as she said in tones that had lost the huskiness of age and sounded tense and clear :

“ Do ye remember, Godson, that yer grandfayther fought an’ bled fer the country you’re gwine ter t’ar up ?

“ He fought for his country and people, and I must fight for mine,” he replied.

“ An’ you stand on the rock he placed thar with his own hands and tell me that ?”

My father looked down at the well-worn slab and, reverently removing his hat, stood with bared head in the sunlight as he raised his eyes and said:

“ Upon this stone, as an altar hallowed by a patriot’s hands, I devote myself to the cause which he maintained, and on this act I ask your blessing, mother.”

He placed one knee upon the edge of the porch and bowed his head towards her as he ceased speaking.

Her face flushed. She gazed at him with intense longing, and then put out her hands, trembling with excitement, as if she would thrust him away.

“ It ain’t any use, Godson, tryin’ to reason with ye— never was. I can’t give ye my blessin’ in this business. It ain’t right, an’ I can’t do it. Ye’re jest offerin’ yerself fer destruction. Hear what the Word o’ God says about it. I was jest readin’ it afore ye come, and wishin’ yer eyes would light on that very chapter an’ verse agin it waur too late. Ye’re jest invitin’ evil an’ a sentencin’ yer children to shame an’ sufferin’. Jest listen at it, now.”

She drew her glasses down from her forehead and found her place in the volume on her lap as she spoke. My father raised his head and watched her face as she read, following the lines with a trembling finger. I took off my hat and stood a hushed and wondering witness of this solemn scene. My grandmother read from the book of Daniel :

*“ So the King of the North shall come and cast up a mount and take the most fenced cities ; and the arms of the*

*South shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand.*

*“ But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him ; and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.”*

“ It’s all thar, writ out in prophesy so plain that the wayfarin’ man can read. The sword of the Lord ain’t gwine to be with ye, son, an’ ye can’t never prevail without it. Ye’ll jest fill the land with blood an’ sorrow and cover yerself with shame. That’s what ye’ll do. Ye know it ain’t liberty nor right ye’re gwine ter fight for. It’s slavery an’ wrong. I ain’t speakin’ about the niggers ; though ef they’ve got any rights, God knows they’ve been robbed worse’n any people on earth ever was afore. I don’t see how you can bear to have the weight of their souls on your’n nohow, let alone fightin’ for a chance to hold ’em. That’s all it is when you come to sum it up. Ye’re jest a goin’ to fight fer the greatest cuss that’s come upon the country from the beginning. It’s held pore men down an’ puffed rich men up. Ye’re gwine to bring tears an’ blood an’ war on the whole lan’, so that a few can git rich offen work that ain’t their own, an’ pore men be drug down to the level of the niggers. That’s what ye’re gwine to do. An’ ye want me to bless ye in that ? I shan’t never do it — never ! Ye may kueel thar till the steppin’-stone rots

under ye, an' I shan't never give ye my blessin' while ye wear that uniform !”

She had risen as she spoke. The book had fallen open at her feet. Her voice had grown loud and shrill. Her eyes flashed, and her long grey hair, which had become loosened from its iron comb, fell down on the snowy kerchief that encased her shoulders.

“ I see it all,” she cried, her figure erect and her eyes looking into the distance as if the future lay unrolled before them. “ I see it all—woe, woe—fire and blood and the abomination of desolation ! Armies crowd the road yander. They march through the corn fields. There is blood upon their faces—blood upon their hands. The thunder that rolls is the roar of battle. They tromple down the craps. They ravage and destroy. They “ possess the goodly land.” Women and chill'en flee. The hearthstone is heaped with the ashes of the roof-tree. The light upon their faces is that of a burnin' city that shines over the hills beyan'. I see it all. Dead men lie around the spring. Beyond is turmoil and uproar and defeat. “ The King of the North ” has come, an' you're a stan'in' up agin him, my son, but ye shall not prevail. It is written—the Lord hath spoken it. It is the doom ye've invited yerself—the fruit of yer own folly ! Oh, woe, woe ! I see the right—I know the right ; yet I will pray—I must pray—for the wrong. Vain, vain ! It don't matter who prays—it don't matter who fights : the God that seeth the end even from the begin-



ning, the God that is the Lord, He hath writ an' He will do!

“ I can't curse ye, for ye're my own flesh an' blood ; but I will curse them that made ye drunk with pride an' are now usin' ye to support the wrong. I'd ruther a thousand times have seen ye in yer coffin than a wearin' that uniform. I can't bless ye—I can't ! Don't kneel thar any more—don't ! Yes, stop ; I can't bless you, Godson, but I'll rech my hand over yer head as the prophet did of old an' bless yer boy—because he's yours !”

She stretched out both her hands and laid them on my head before I realized her purpose.

“ Oh, Lord God that hearest the poor as well as the rich, the weak as well as the strong, bless this one that will be left behind by him that is goin' away. May he love peace and shuu war. Keep his fayther in the hour of danger, in the day of battle ; make him to know the right, and if in aught he fail in thy sight, may this child of his loins, in his day an' time, right the wrong an' cl'ar his fayther's name from stain. Amen.”

My father's voice echoed the word. Rising to his feet, he stood a moment looking into her face, then extending his hand he said :

“ Good-bye, mother.”

“ No, Godson.” she answered, taking his hand, “ I can't bless yer coat nor yer cause, but the good Book says, ‘ Feed thine inimy,’ an I shouldn't feel right if I let ye ride home without dinner. Don't ye see the lad's jest a

faintin with hunger—on his birthday, too? I was jest a thinkin' of it afore I seed ye comin', an' a wonderin' if he'd think of his old granny up among the hills, to-day. Ye may come in—ef ye'll change yer coat," she added, with a smile.

"You wouldn't have your son become a turn-coat, would you, Ma?" he asked, with grave humor.

"No," she answered quickly, "nor a Tory, nuther."

"Oh! I'm not a Tory, Ma; I'm just the reverse—I'm a Rebel."

"It don't make no matter what ye call yerself, God-son; I don't never 'low any kin of mine ter come under this ruf with anythin' on ther backs thet means any sort of opposition to the ole Union thet the Owens an' the Bal-fours both fout fer only three ginerations gone by!"

She turned away with a laugh that suggested tears and entered the house. We sat down upon the porch, and presently Sally Hacket, the hireling that waited on my grandmother, brought my father a coat. He removed his uniform with a quiet smile and put it on. A moment after my grandmother returned and, bending over him, kissed his forehead.

We passed a pleasant day together at Ryalmont. When the shock of the first surprise had worn away, my grandmother spoke quietly of what might happen during his absence. Her language was not entirely accurate according to the rules of the schools, neither was it that

labored burlesque of form and sense which some of our modern writers have put into the mouths of our country people for the entertainment of the self-complacent North. I wandered about over the old place, but my father hardly left his mother's side a moment.

As we started to go, toward evening, she called him back and said :

“ I can't bless you in what ye are gwine to do, Godson, but I will pray every day an' every hour that the Lord will hev ye in his keepin', though I shall never see ye again. Good-bye !”

She wrung his hand and kissed him ; then sat down, threw her apron over her head, and wept. When we had passed out of sight of the house, Sally met us with the uniform coat, which he had forgotten.

## CHAPTER VIII.

When we reached the hill-top, where the last sight of the house could be obtained, my father drew rein and looked back long and earnestly at the home of his childhood. When at length he turned and rode on, he was silent for a long time. Then he said :

“ My son, you have witnessed a strange sight. What I am I owe to my mother’s influence. Her example has been the inspiration of my life. To-day, for the first time in my life, I have gone counter to her wish. You heard her words. You saw her agony. May you never know what it is to cause such grief ! I expected no less, yet I could not do otherwise. You heard her presage of disaster. She is both right and wrong, in this prevision. To forecast the future, so far as human events are concerned, is to give a true reading of the vernier of the present, corrected by knowledge of the past.

“ She sees with unflinching accuracy, so far as her vision extends. She thinks it revelation. She cannot give the steps by which she arrives at her conclusion. She only feels the facts. Sorrow, humiliation, disaster—that is all she sees. If my vision were bounded by the same limitations, I should feel as she does. But I see beyond, or think I do. God forgive me if I am wrong !”

We rode on a little way in silence. Then he continued:

“ But I am not wrong. I cannot be wrong. I have been over the ground too many times. I know I am not prejudiced by any motive tainted with self-advantage. I would not engage in war to gain a kingdom or to win the highest place upon the roll of fame. I have a profound contempt for any fame that is not based upon the betterment, or the attempted betterment, of mankind.

“ Your grandmother thinks I have enlisted in the cause of the Confederacy for the sake of slavery. She little knows how fully I agree with her in regard to that institution. I wish it had never existed in America. Nay, my son, slaveholder as I am, I could wish it might at once be swept out of existence, if only the enslaved race might disappear with it. That is the real trouble. Betwixt slavery and liberty there is not much choice for them. Indeed, I am inclined to think that slavery is altogether preferable for them until they have gained in numbers and intelligence, so as to make liberty a secure estate for both them and those who must dwell with them. This is our problem, my son. God has thrust its solution upon us and we must work it out. To the people of the North it seems a simple matter. If the slaves were free, they think there would be an end of slavery. It is a mistake. The problem would then be only half stated, not by any means half solved. Between slavery and freedom there is but the twinkling of an eye. Between the slave and the freeman

there must be generations—perhaps centuries. If the negro could be removed to-morrow, the patriots of the South would far better endure the loss than see a drop of blood shed in defence of slavery. But this is impossible; and unless it can be done, the South must hold the control of this question, and all questions connected with it, in her own hands. No doubt freedom must come to the slave some time. For the benefit of the white man it cannot come too soon. But when it does come, what shall be done with the negro? That is the question the South must answer—the question she has been divinely fitted and prepared to answer.”

Then, after another silence :

“ Perhaps she is right—your grandmother, I mean. I believe our attempt will fail. The war will be long and bloody, but the enemy will be victorious. The very ground where we stand may be stained with blood. The tide of battle may flow by the old homestead. And when it is all over, the South will be subjugated—conquered—overcome—but not changed !

“ My work will have been done, though. I shall not live to see that day—I do not wish to see it. But the seed will have been sown. Some other hand must reap the harvest—consummate the task of deliverance from our unequal yokefellow. Perhaps it will even be a peaceful work, too. God grant it may ! There will be blood enough shed—brothers’ blood, too—in the struggle that now impends. It may be that the war which comes

will open the eyes of all our people so that they will see the truth, and what arms shall fail to effect, wisdom and peace may achieve. It may indeed be true that the wise old mother made no mistake when she passed me by and laid on your head the benison of peace."

It was after nightfall when Secession and the doughty thorough-bred mare I rode jogged easily through the city's dimly-lighted streets. As we drew near the Grove, my father slackened his rein, and, laying his hand upon my shoulder, said in a soft, tremulous tone :

"My son, let what you have seen and heard to-day, as Hamlet says, "be tenable in your silence." The time will come when you will better comprehend its import. At present, no good can come from speaking of what few would understand. We have to take the world as it is and make the best we can of it. I am going into the conflict. I may never return. I have a feeling that I shall not. If I fall, I will leave you at least a name untainted with dishonor and perhaps an unfinished task. You are coming very soon to manhood. Such times as these ripen hearts wonderfully fast. Your mother, sister and grandmother will all lean on you for support, should I fall. I wish you to promise, therefore, that you will never forget this duty—that however long the conflict may continue, you will never leave them to enter the army."

He dropped his hand to mine and held it in his strong,

warm grasp for a moment, after I had said, in a voice choked with tears, "I will."

Then we rode on to the Grove and met a little company who had come to celebrate my birthday. The new birth had come upon the anniversary of the old. The change the day had wrought had been so great that I hardly relished the simple pleasures I had looked forward to with such keen anticipation. In the morning I had been a boy. At night I had become a man.



## CHAPTER IX.

My grandmother was a Balfour ; my mother an Elspre. To one acquainted with the region nothing more need be said. The Elspres claimed Huguenot descent, were rich, proud and enterprising. The Balfours, as my grandmother was wont to say, were "pore and proud from far back." Though the hearts of both were bound up in my father, they had little else in common.

They represented the extremes of social forces—the rich, proud woman of the low-country and the "pore," proud woman of the hills. Their love drew them together, but they remained distinctive types. The rich gentlewoman had something close akin to dread of the stern-faced mother who had broken away from the traditions of her class and forced her son up through the intervening strata to the highest social level. They represented the two great elements of Southern life—the aristocracy, builded on slavery, and the non-slaveholding masses. Numerically considered, these elements were as one to fifteen. They were united by attributes which madé them unmistakable components of a common whole, yet separated by impulses and characteristics so dissimilar as to awaken constant wonder in the mind of the observer that they did not fall apart. They were held together by a force

at once attractive and repellant in its action. The presence of another and unassimilable race tended to unify, while its enslavement tended to divide. The key to the mystery of Southern life lay in the fact that the attractive force was vastly more potent than the repellant one. In truth, the more numerous class dominated even then our social and political fortunes, yet the smaller one was credited with all the power, and was accepted by the world, and perhaps by ourselves, as the controlling element and dominant type of our life.

The "poor-white" of the South has always been a mystery to the people of the North. To them the numerically small proportion of our people who were the owners of slaves constituted the only significant element of Southern life. The others were simply their down trodden and despised dependents, too ignorant to know how they were oppressed and too debased to care whether they enjoyed their rights or not. Looking at the matter with that thorough apprehension of Northern thought which the events of my life have given, I am not surprised that this view should have been taken. It was unquestionably a curious gradation of society that resulted from the development of our Southern civilization. To us the term "poor-white" or "white-trash," marked only the line between slaveholder and non-slaveholder. It was a term of obloquy, simply because there was an inherent antagonism between the two classes. Like a party name, while it might be used

to convey a sneer, it did not necessarily import personal unworthiness. In the mouth of the negro it became a taunt, and on the lips of those to whom it was applied an expression of morbid defiance. Softened to "poor folks," it indeed conveyed a somewhat different idea. "Poor but respectable" was then its significance, without any of that degrading flavor of patronage which attaches to the phrase among other peoples.

Of course, there were almost infinite gradations. The term covered all between the planter's mansion and the squatter's hovel. They differed in degree, but were all affected by certain fundamental conditions. They were separated from the slave-holder by the fact of his mastership, and from the negro by the facts of race and servitude.

Their poverty did not imply want or discontent. They had what the land yielded to their own labor, and they worked much or little as they chose. The soil in the mountain coves was rich and quick; the climate genial. A little yielded enough, and they were not prodigal of toil. The woods were full of game, and the streams abounded in fish. A little "sang" \* furnished enough of luxury. The land was theirs, or was supposed to be. The boundaries might be somewhat indistinct, the corners uncertain and their title dependent on the bar of limitation. If witnessed by deed or grant, the customary "more or less" might be its most significant phrase. To them to be "pore" meant simply

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\* Ginseng.

to be independent. Somehow the word seems to me, even yet, to have a different significance when given the long, drawling "o," and soft liquid "r," of the country people. They counted it a certificate of merit, which showed that they had always been self-supporting and implied that they were honest. They lived at home ; had enough for themselves and the customary hospitality of the region, which does not depend on sumptuousness nor derive any of its flavor by comparison. The poorest shared his poverty with friend or stranger without thought of apology, and he would be a bold man who dared show any lack of appetite. If our rich were haughty, our poor were independent.

The Balfours were "pore-whites." The nearest any of them had come to fame was the ancestral baker who signed "the solemn league and covenant" in order to increase the sale of his "Glasgow buns." The nearest approach one of them had made to wealth was perhaps the doughty zealot whom Cromwell compelled to ride to battle with what was thought to be a stolen tankard about his neck. He fought so well that the questionable pewter was something near half-filled with pistol bullets when the King's forces were scattered at Naseby. Cromwell, so runs the family tradition, struck by this indubitable evidence of Divine approval, allowed him to wear the battered cup as a decoration, filled it full of silver coin in atonement for the false charge and made him a sergeant in his regiment of horse.

These things may be apocryphal, but it is certain that Davy Balfour came to the new colony which Oglethorpe had founded expressly for "the poor who were indebted to the rich and distressed Protestants everywhere," one of the most thoroughly-fitted of all its denizens to claim the immunities of that Cave of Adullam, which, by a curious fate, has become the keystone of a nationality. No man in all "the Savannah country," as it was then called, gave more unmistakable evidence of poverty or bore a clearer testimony before the session. His descendants, to use the country phrase, "held their own" remarkably well, so far, at least, as worldly gear was concerned. The Balfours were many and poor in the hill-country. They were also proud—especially proud of their poverty.

He of the pewter tankard, "Ole Davy," who cursed the great Whitefield in the presence of assembled thousands, for persuading the Council of Administration to admit slavery within the colony which had been chartered especially as a refuge for "deserving white laborers," and "Davy the Second," who was the strongest man and most noted bully in the mountains in his day—these were the noted names of the Balfour pedigree. Truly they do not seem much to be proud of, yet my grandmother was very proud of them. Her husband was usually known as "Easy Owen," a corruption, she always insisted, of his name Israel, but more probably a bit of primitive nomenclature based on his character, to which might well be attributed the

fact that he lived peacefully and happily with high-strung Elsie Balfour, during the few years of life he was permitted to enjoy after his marriage.

With his death came my grandmother's time of trial. No child had been born of the marriage, and it was more than six months afterwards when a son came to cheer her loneliness. Because of these circumstances he was named Godson. Perhaps the lonely woman hoped that he would bring her also deliverance from the persecutions which had already begun.

Her husband having died intestate, my grandmother had by law only the dower right of a widow in his estate. Without direct heirs, the title of Ryalmont must descend to the collateral heirs of her husband ; and these had already taken steps to assert their claim before the birth of my father. No doubt the simple-hearted young widow thought the birth of the child would end the controversy. I can imagine her surprise and rage when she learned that instead of abandoning their claims, the heirs chose to contest the legitimacy of the child.

No stain of this sort had ever fallen on a Balfour, and the whole community rallied to her side while she mustered her energies to repel the charge. It was a notable contest. The records of our Supreme Court bear testimony to its fierceness. When it was ended the widow's allowance was gone and the right of dower encumbered ; but the Balfour pride was vindicated and my father, in his cradle,

was dedicated to the profession to which he was indebted for the name he bore. To achieve this end she accounted no sacrifice too great, no exertion too severe. Her life thenceforth became not one of actual want, but of unremitting care and constant self-denial.

I had always been a favorite with her and to me she was a patron saint whom it was heresy to doubt. I had lived with her almost as much as with my parents and was known among the servants as "Miss Elsie's Boy." Yet I knew that she loved me chiefly because I was her son's son, and the veneration with which I regarded my father was in no small degree due to the mother-love that never wearied of the story of his life. From the moment that her hand rested on my head in that fiery benediction, which sounded like a curse, however, I was conscious of a change. From that time she always spoke of my father, not exactly as one dead, but as one whose life-work had ended. She seemed to think that the future held nothing for him that was in harmony with his past. He had strayed from the path her ambition had marked out, and her hope had passed over to me with her benediction. It was not a very lively hope. The future held little brightness to her view. She only prayed that I might do something—she had little care what it might be—to redeem the name of her son from the ignomy she believed would attend his course. For her son was still her idol—an idol to whom the sweetest memories were offered in unceasing worship, but before whose shrine the censer of hope no longer hung.

## CHAPTER X.

My grandmother used sometimes to add to her alliterative self-description the term Presbyterian. Applied to her individually it had no especial significance. Regarding her as one of a class, it represents a most essential element of the inherent difference between the two sections of the great republic. The religious life of the North was built on Puritanic lines ; that of the South on a Presbyterian model. I do not speak of either as a distinct sect but as a religious force. Puritanism as a form of belief has absolutely disappeared from Northern life, while at the South the simple faith of Knox, though by far outnumbered by other sects, has retained its hold upon the ideal and colored the whole religious thought.

Not only has Northern unbelief and irreligious speculation never been able to secure a foothold at the South, but the religious atmosphere is essentially distinct from that of the North. It is this fact, far more than any political divergence, which has long since separated the various sects into distinct bodies, known in common parlance, at least, as Northern and Southern Churches. This separation has usually been attributed to Slavery, but it is far more a matter of sentiment than of dogma.



The simple truth is that the religious life of each section is colored by its social and intellectual characteristics. That of the North is manifested by a restless, eager missionary zeal, which ransacks the uttermost parts of the earth in search of charitable labor and proselyting opportunity. It approves itself by its works, and is less concerned about securing salvation for the individual than in promoting the common good. It is little given to self-scrutiny, but never rests in its watch-care over others. It is commercial in its character and methods. It prides itself on the enterprise it displays and measures its own sincerity not by any interior standard, but by the visible results of its activity. It is given to improved methods, economies and statistics. It estimates the value of a missionary field by the average cost of conversion, and prides itself upon the skill with which it induces even the irreligious to contribute to its enterprises. Its influence is centrifugal ; its field, the whole orb of the earth ; and its mission—to set others right. This was the distinctive principle of Puritanism. It was essentially aggressive and prescriptive. It concerned itself with others' thoughts, opinions and conduct. It sought to enforce conformity with its own ideas. It planted the seed of pious intermeddling and made Paul Pry its model of religious excellence.

The religious ideal of the South is in striking contrast with this. It is the spirit of the kirk rather than of the conventicle. It is introspective rather than circumspetive;

defensive rather than aggressive in character. Individual salvation, rather than the evangelization of the world, is its prime objective. It has boundless kindness, but it is not given to exhaustive search for evil. It cherishes no ill-will for its neighbor, but leaves him to manage his own affairs. If he choose the better part, well and good ; if he does not, the responsibility is his own. So the North sends forth an army of missionaries. The South with difficulty provides its own churches. The one is lavish of money ; the other of prayers. There is no essential difference of dogma ; but the poles hardly indicate greater divergence of sentiment. The one is no doubt the broader in its sympathies ; the other the more intense in its convictions. Love of humanity is the mainspring of the one ; personal salvation of the other.

While, therefore, my grandmother boasted herself a Presbyterian, the most distinctive feature of her religious faith was its essential harmony with the life about her. What she disapproved she utterly abominated and condemned, but she did not feel it her duty to wage war against it in others. Curiously enough and incomprehensible as it may seem, the one thing she hated most was slavery. Jack, who lived at Ryalmont, was practically free. He looked after the plantation and was assiduous in his care for the comfort of "the ole Missus," but what Jack did for her she counted only as his voluntary act. That she even tolerated his presence was a remarkable thing, for with the

seeming inconsistency of her class, the object of her bitterest animosity next to the institution of slavery, was the slave himself—the negro. This is the real key to what seems to superficial observers an unsoluble mystery. Southern life is distinctive, homogeneous and jealous of interference with its details, simply because the African dwells among us. But for this fact the line betwixt North and South had never been drawn, and until it no longer exists, that line can never be obliterated. The underlying distinction is that upon one side the Anglo-Saxon dwells alone, while on the other side a black face peers querulously if not threateningly into every white one. This has shaped our civilization hitherto, and must control our destiny hereafter.

## CHAPTER XI.

It is needless to relate what followed. One word tells it all to him that knows the story, and to him who does not there are not words enough to reveal its woe. War! The culmination of horrors and climax of folly! The fire in which the hero is tested! The crucible in which the dross of prejudice is melted away and the fine gold of truth gathered into shining ingots! As a fact, the most insignificant in the world's life; as a force, the most trivial; as a result, the most notable.

Where men fought, and how and who they were that won, and who they were that lost, it is folly to consider. Why they fought, to attain what end or prevent what design and with what result—these are the questions humanity asks and history ought to answer. Beyond that, war means nothing. Men were brave or cowardly, true or false; they survived or perished. That is all. There may be a background of honor for the victors and of woe for the vanquished; of suffering and self-sacrifice; of personal heroism and collective triumph—but these are nothing. Men live and die. In itself life means nothing to the present and death means nothing to the future. *Why* men live and *for what* they die—these are the only substantial truths of

life. Gallant deeds are but the torch that shows the hero's soul. Like pestilence and crime, war teaches only by the study of its causes. Good comes from it only as it shows the bitterness of evil. The dead it leaves, the wounds, the woe, the agony—what are they but stripes by which its lessons are enforced? Yet how sweet its triumphs, how enchanting its glories! How bitter its woes, yet how beneficent its results!

War came. My father fought. I watched over our home circle. There was a year of exultation. The glory of anticipated triumph lighted the horizon. My mother's eyes shone with expectancy. My grandmother even began to relent. The two households had become one since my father's departure. We said it was for my grandmother's sake; I think it was for our own. The Grove was lonely after my father left us, and it seemed as if we were nearer him at Ryalmont. My mother loved the mountain-home almost as much as my grandmother. So we came here and waited. The year closed, and the end had not come. My father wrote to me on my next birthday that a great battle was expected soon, and many thought the war would then be over. He did not give his own opinion.

Then came a twelvemonth of intermingled hope and fear. The mother would not doubt. The grandmother had ceased to hope. My father—but the record of his career is too well known to need a reference to its incidents.

In the winter my mother and little sister went to him in the quarters where the army lay. We still lived at Ryalmont. The war was all at the east or the far west. Here in the mountains of Georgia we were safe. As the year ended it came a little nearer, but we did not fear. I had grown to be a man and managed the plantation at the Grove, with the aid of Christopher, in a manner to meet my mother's approval. She thought me like her father, and often spoke of me as an Elspre. But my grandmother thought me a Balfour. She was aging swiftly under the sad burden of these last days. She looked upon me as the head of the house, passing by my father as if he were dead. On this birthday there was a great battle and my father did not write his usual letter for that anniversary until some days afterwards. He told of "Stonewall" Jackson's death, and declared that the hope of our cause perished with him. It is a curious fact that we gained no more victories. The great chief could still fight battles, but without his great lieutenant he seemed unable to destroy armies.

Soldiers were needed as the struggle grew more doubtful. I begged my father to give me back my pledge and let me come and fight by his side—under his eye. Again and again I sought to be released from this first irksome bond which a swift-ripening manhood had cast about my aspiration. Again and again I implored him to grant me the poor privilege—nay, the glorious privilege, I deemed

it—of defending my native land from invasion. But he would not yield. Of course, I could not abandon those he had given me in charge, even if I had been willing to break my word. So I sat with folded hands and waited while the tide of war drew near. I hoped the mandate of the law would override my promise and compel me to perform the service I yearned to undertake, but the “twenty slaves” upon the home plantation barred the law’s demand. For every score that wrought, it was deemed necessary that there should be one to direct and control, by doing which it was thought he served the country better than if he were in the field.

My father answered my appeals with that calm wisdom which to youth seems always the height of folly. He told me that the darker the outlook, the more inevitable the prospect of disaster, the more essential it was that I should perform the duty he had allotted to me. He reminded me that if I were not a soldier in fact, I had been assigned to a specific duty, to the performance of which life and honor were pledged. If I should fail in this, he must resign his place and return to attend to it himself. To his commands were added the entreaties of those left in my charge. I do not think it was so much the need of my assistance or protection that inspired my mother’s prayers, as the desire that her son might be kept from peril. Perhaps a premonition of approaching widowhood enhanced her anxiety. My grandmother, besides leaning upon me as she had never

done upon my father, age and weakness making her more dependent, was anxious above all things to keep me uncontaminated by service for the Confederacy. She had long ceased to avow her disapproval of the war, since she could not openly oppose it without seeming to cast discredit upon her son, which she would rather have died than do. But she had an intense desire that I should not actively engage in the struggle. I do not think she regarded it as so great a wrong, but she deemed the enterprise predestined to failure. The prophet's use of the terms North and South had fixed it in her mind that it was to this conflict that his words referred. No argument or explanation could change conviction. The words came to her lips almost unconsciously whenever the subject was mentioned, and she used to repeat them with sad, solemn emphasis as if they were the knell of all her hope.

“ ‘The King of the North shall come! *Shall* come, saith the Lord, shall—*come!* ’ ”

Then she would scan the northern sky as if she expected to see the ensigns of the foe upon the mountain crests, always concluding with a careful scrutiny of the mouth of Ryal's Pass.

“ ‘There's whar they'll come,’ she would say, “right through that gorge whar Ry'l Owen hid from the Injins, when they do come to ‘*possess the goodly land.*’ ”

Her grey hairs and solemn, assured manner made her words very impressive.



It was hard for my mother to bear up against such depressing influences, but she was a brave woman, despite her simple domesticity, and never added a feather's weight to another's burden by speaking of her own. By these influences I was kept, doing the little that was entrusted to me, but chafing always because it was so little while such great deeds were waiting for willing hands.

Then the fourth year came. How shall I write of those dark days? No tale of heroism can lighten their horror! A torn and bleeding country! The tide of battle sweeping by our very doors! My grandmother's sanguinary forecast realized! Herself a victim of war's ruthless savagery and I—her best-beloved, who had received the blessing that should have rested on the head of her son—I the unwitting instrument of her death! No, no! Let me not say it—let me not think it! If the battle's awful voice chanted her requiem let me hope that He whose words her dying eyes perused ordered her end in peace!

The agony of this terrible time comes to me through the intervening years with a vividness that beads my brow with woful drops. Have patience with my weakness, gentle reader, and let me turn away from the horrors of war for a little while, to consider one of its lessons. Perchance I may thereby gain strength to relate the ghastly facts that are forever photographed upon my memory.

That year no birthday letter came. The man of destiny had appeared—the relentless butcher to whom noth-

ing was of any moment save the task which fate had set him to perform—and genius and valor were alike vain before his resistless will. From that time until the end, the roar of battle was too continuous to give breathing time for sentiment. I was afterwards to learn how heavily the thought of the future rested on my father's heart in these tumultuous days.

## CHAPTER XII.

To the North, the unanimity with which the Southern people espoused the cause of the Confederacy is even yet an insoluble mystery. Hardly more than half a million of them were actual owners of slaves. Perhaps two millions more may be said to have had an interest, near or remote, actual or contingent, in this sort of property. According to the theory of the struggle which has been accepted by the North, that it was solely a war for the perpetuation of slavery, two-thirds of our people engaged in a conflict in the result of which they had no interest, unless perhaps an adverse one. To account for this fact, the North have invented the curious theory that the common people of the South were, because of their ignorance, either driven or led whithersoever the slave-holding element desired. There could not be a more palpable falsification of a very simple truth. The whites of the South were practically a unit in regard to two things:—First, the right of a people to elect not only their own form of government but also their own national affiliations, and, second, the necessity of perpetuating slavery as an institution. In this latter respect they have always been regarded by the

North as acting so inconsistently with what was termed their "interests" that the theory of phenomenal ignorance and absolute subservience has been invented to account for it.

The key to the error may, perhaps, be found in the word "interest." To the North it means always dollars and cents. Their idea of human nature is, that it is controlled entirely by economic motives. Their own hostility to slavery was largely due to their antipathy for, and dread of competition with, unpaid labor. Their favorite theory was that the white man of the South would be "better off"—that is, would be able to earn more money and improve his financial condition more easily—if slavery did not exist, and no little part of their attention was given to demonstrating this fact by comparative statistics showing the growth and wealth of contrasted states.

Strange as it may seem, this was no new doctrine to the Southern mind. If our common people were not so apt in figures as their Yankee brethren, they knew all about slavery, and had acquired their knowledge not by theory but from experience. Instead of being ignorant they were, in this respect, a thousand times better informed than their Northern compeers. If the white majority of the South had no proprietary interest in the slave, each and every one of them had a distinct and individual interest in the negro, which no argument could remove and no sophistry obscure.

The "pore-white," whether educated or ignorant, hated slavery. He understood perfectly well that the institution was his economic enemy. On the other hand, however, he hated the negro as a race—a class, a social force—even more. In one sense he recognized the injustice of slavery; but the argument of the Northern abolitionist, based as it was on the idea of injustice to the negro, fell on deaf ears when addressed to him. He had no "interest" in the negro individually or collectively, and no regard for his rights. Indeed, the hostility of the non-slaveholding class to slavery was based very largely on the fact that it protected and perpetuated the negro race among us.

"If there hadn't been no slavery, there wouldn't have been no niggers," was my grandmother's dogmatic assertion. "It's the nigger that makes all the trouble in the country. Ye see," she used to declare, "every nigger jest spiles two white men—one he crowds out till he can't git nothing to do an' the other he puffs up till he *won't* do nothing and so ain't no 'count."

A better statement of the evil effects of slavery on the white man was never formulated. The Northern doctrinaires, who fulminated on the subject for half a century, saw but one side of this influence and that not half so clearly as it impressed itself on the mind of the poor-white of the South. He went beyond even the Abolitionist in his detestation of slavery, not because it was slavery nor because of its injustice to the slave, but because it was

an injustice to himself. Not merely in a pecuniary form did he feel the sting of this great wrong, but in a sense a thousand times more bitter and malign. He felt that it had introduced, nourished and protected an alien and unassimilable element into our civilization—an element that ate the bread his hands should have been permitted to earn. Slavery had imported the African and established him upon our shores. Relieved of the burdens of life and nourished with a care that a direct interest in his physical welfare stimulated, he had increased in numbers with a rapidity unequalled in history. Even with the odds of immigration against him, he had greatly outstripped the whites in comparative growth in all the older states of the South. Separated from the whites by the impassable gulf of distinctive race and color, the slaves became a force which, allied with the power of capital invested in them, threatened not only the pecuniary interest of the non-slaveholding class, but even its liberties and its existence.

Like all fictitious rights, slavery crept into our Southern republics under the plea of subserving the public welfare. The New World offered an apparently inexhaustible field of labor. The very fertility which gave promise of rich returns enhanced the antecedent toil on which its prosperity was conditioned. The slaves at the outset were few; the environments of our life primeval. No one dreamed that labor would become a drug and opportunity a thing so rare, that men would be compelled to beg the

privilege of using hand or brain in self-support. They were brought in to fell the forest, to clear the soil and do the work there were not white hands enough to perform. They were expected to be the purveyors and subserver of our new civilization and then to die—to disappear as so many peoples have before the face of our boastful modern beneficence and all-embracing charity.

The general prosperity was to be promoted by increasing the area in cultivation and permitting the white man to devote his energies to more profitable and congenial occupations. Under this specious claim slavery obtained a status that enabled it finally to defy the law. When it came to prove itself a curse rather than a blessing to the people, not only the plea of vested right, but a threat of public peril, was preferred in its behalf. The legal recognition it had with difficulty secured under the claim, not of right but of public advantage, was now urged as an indeterminable license by which investments in slaves were made forever sacred from impairment by public enactment.

The six hundred thousand slaveholders of the South would have been impotent enough against her seven millions of free men but for this citadel of legal privilege and the five billions of dollars invested in slave property. The power of the institution lay in the community of interest which united this privileged class and enabled it to defy the power of government except when coupled with the

act of restitution. The position was a strong one, and has many parallels in the history of civilization.

“Let slavery be established,” was its primal plea, “and the public prosperity will be enhanced. Slavery is not a right but a privilege to be granted for the public advantage.”

The privilege having been granted by specific act in several of the colonies and by tacit permission in others, the class having a specific interest thus obtained cried out at once :

“This is our vested right. The public welfare has nothing to do with our privilege. We have the right to do as we will with our own and nothing must be done to impair our advantage over our fellows. Ours has become a class interest the value of which the public is bound to protect. However perilous slavery may be to the common weal, we are innocent investors in a business recognized by law and therefore forever sacred from legal interference.”

This is the universal history of legal privilege. At first it professes to consider only the public welfare ; then it pleads license or prescriptive right in defiance of public good.

Whenever special opportunity, exceptional power or special immunity are granted to individuals or classes in vague or indeterminate form, they are certain to become bonds which can only be broken by long and eventful struggle—perhaps knots which only the sword can sunder.



The contest between the slave power and the individual right of the non-slaveholding white man at the South is a curious chapter in our history. In every state the instinct of the freeman was constantly pressing the privilege of the master. To the Northern mind the advantage seemed always to be on the part of the privileged class. The North thought only of the slave and his relations to freedom. Our people never once considered this. It was only the right and interest of the white man they had in view. Of the slave they only thought as an inimical force. The only purpose of legislating in regard to him was to keep him from injuring others. He was one-third—in certain limited areas, one half—of our population, yet in three-quarters of a century not a single act designed for his betterment or advantage can be found on the statute book of any southern state. We legislated to limit his privileges, to restrict his intelligence, to guard against his master's weak indulgence, to bar the presumption of freedom and prevent the extinction of racial disabilities by admixture of blood; but not one line or sentence or syllable designed to render his estate more tolerable or to facilitate his elevation to a higher plane of development, can be found in our legislation. No such thing occurred to us as desirable. The negro being among us, we were simply impelled to protect the white race against his natural forces.

Yet the power of the slaveholders, as a class, was constantly being circumscribed. Specific privilege was limit-

ed, taxation was more rigorously imposed, the pecuniary qualifications of officers and electors were gradually reduced, government was localized and power distributed. The conflict was a slow, and might have been an unending one, but for the events which occurred. Yet such as it was, it was a fight for liberty—not the “irrepressible conflict” for the *slave's* liberty, of which the North prated so loudly, but a struggle for the fuller liberty and broader opportunity of the white race.

There were three considerations that prevented the non-slaveholding white men of the South from combining for its destruction. None of these arose from any lack of knowledge of established facts or economic principles. Some of them were based on social theories, which may have been false, but have not yet been proved untrue.

The first of these influences was the fact that the slaveholding class, although an aristocracy existing by virtue of legal privilege, was free and flexible in its character. No impassable barrier marked its limits. Any one might come within its confines who was able to own a slave. It was a purchasable patent of nobility which, instead of losing its value as the number of its possessors increased, became all the more valuable with each accession to their ranks. Because of this fact, it may be said that all the more active and aggressive elements of the non-slaveholding class were, in effect, prospective owners of slaves. They hoped either to be able to own slaves themselves or that

their children would do so. It was the object of a reasonable and proper ambition, and, of course, those who possessed it were affected by the same feeling of self-interest that animated the actual masters. They had no motive to limit detrimentally the privilege they aspired to enjoy.

In the same manner and for the same reason the self-supporting people of the North failed to limit and restrain the power of aggregated capital and combined monopoly, by which men were made millionaires a hundred times over by the unlawful gains they wrung from those whose interests were subjected to their control as absolutely as the slave's labor was under the control of the master. Every enterprising man hoped some time to be a millionaire, or at least to see his son become one, through the use of the same agencies. They did not pretend that the means employed were right or proper ones, but they separated business from morals and declared that it was not a question of right and wrong, but a simple matter of "smartness." The man who was "smart" enough to overreach his fellows and put into his own pocket what should rightfully be distributed to others, was free to enter the ranks of the millionaire aristocracy of the North—an aristocracy more rapacious, relentless and oppressive than slavery ever was and a hundred times more detrimental to the interest of the masses. Six hundred thousand men wielded the power of slavery with its five billion dollars of actual investment in defiance of the real interest of seven or eight millions of freemen.

But at the North the aristocracy of legal privilege, which had grown out of a purely mercenary aspiration, was much more alarming. Less than one hundred men—aye, less than ten—controlled with absolute autocratic power the four billions of actual investment and the four billions of absolute “water” which represented the great transportation monopoly. Of the six hundred millions of dollars these men amassed for themselves, nine dollars out of every ten were the fruit of robbery as flagrant as the master’s ravishment of the slave’s toil—robbery, not of a servile race or by mere oppression of the laborer, but robbery of the best and bravest, the most intelligent and most enterprising of that land of boasted intelligence and liberty, robbery of the producer and consumer, robbery of the buyer and seller, of the shipper and receiver, of the farmer of the west and the manufacturer of the east, of every one who burned a pound of coal or ate an ounce of bread—nay, even robbery of their own allies and associates, the stockholders and co-investors who hoped (and by the honor common among thieves were entitled) to share the profits of the privileges which the state had conferred upon them.

These enormous fortunes were accumulated by the open, notorious and acknowledged spoliation of thirty millions of the most intelligent and conscientious freemen the world has ever seen, who were induced, first, to prepare the instrument for their own subjugation and then to protect and strengthen the power thus conferred, because each

hoped, in one way and another, by himself or his offspring, to take advantage of this machinery to lift himself above his fellows. They did not regard the privileges by which Gould, Vanderbilt and their fellows were enabled to accumulate such enormous fortunes, as especially sacred ; but every one thought either that he might somehow be benefitted by the same agencies himself or that perchance he had among his domestic brood the financial magnate of the future, who would wield these very agencies so as to eclipse all past magnificence.

It ought not to have been a hard thing for such a people to understand why the more intelligent and enterprising of the Southern non-slaveholders were not only in favor of slavery but willing to fight for its perpetuation.

The possible baton in his knapsack made the French soldier of Napoleon's wars the most patient of hardship and amenable to discipline that the world has ever known. The possible million in some future steal made the intelligent thirty millions of the north the most docile and subservient of slaves. Their pity for the negro proved to be only sympathy with his lack of opportunity. If he had had a chance to enslave as well as to be enslaved, they would probably never have been animated with such fiery zeal against an institution at least as beneficent in its character and results as their own system of financial buccaneering.

But if the non-slaveholder of the South was linked to

slavery by his aspirations and inclined to battle for the privilege of owning a slave, should he desire to do so, he was even more distinctly arrayed against its extermination both by his fear and by his pride. The line between slavery and freedom was the boundary of race. It is true the slave was in some cases as white as the master, but the presumption of freedom went always with the white skin, and the law in such case required proof to establish the condition of servitude. On the other side of the line all this was reversed. The presumption of bondage attached to the fact of color, and specific proof was required to establish freedom. To make the negro free was to abolish this distinction. "A white man would be no better than a nigger, if the nigger had all a white man's rights" was the universal and conclusive argument against the continuance of federal power in those states, under an administration professedly hostile to slavery.

There was, too, a horror of race admixture which has always been ridiculed by the North because of its seeming inconsistency. It was hardly deemed an immorality for white blood to be mingled with the servile current in the veins of a slave. It may be questioned if a single family of slave owners could be found who had not cousins of very close degree among their slaves. This was so frequent as to occasion no remark except, now and then, in a case of great cruelty being perpetrated upon them. The non-slaveholder took the same lenient view of such relations ;

but any approach to reversing this rule and corrupting white blood with a servile admixture was not to be tolerated—the mere suspicion produced instant and ineffaceable degradation. The idea of legitimizing such relations awakened a storm of wrath that spared neither sex nor race. The master might sell his own flesh and blood without remark, but if he attempted to free and educate them, he awakened at once a universal feeling of resentment. The people of the South have always believed that such legitimized race admixture would be an inevitable result of equal civil and political privilege. As long as there is a distinction of privilege they feel safe ; beyond that limit they fear irremediable corruption of blood.

This feeling has been termed instinct, prejudice, folly. It is claimed to be the fruit of slavery, yet it seems to be inherent in all Anglo-Saxon peoples at least. No negro, known and recognized as such, has ever held a social position in any part of what lately constituted the United States, at all on a par with the whites, or been regarded as a legitimate part of white society. This is just as true of the North as of the South.

The same seems to be true of our English cousins. A left-handed marriage with an Indian woman was once thought a very reasonable preparation for high rank in the East Indian service, but no English woman has stepped across the line of color and afterwards held a recognized place in English society. It is not strange, therefore, that this

singular race apprehension, joined with the other causes mentioned, should have made the South practically a unit in favor of secession. Some of the mountain regions, where there were few slaves and the poor-white's hatred of the institution overcame his fear of race aggression, adhered to the union. As soon as the war ended, however, and this class beheld the result in the emancipation and enfranchisement of the negro, they became the most bitter and violent enemies, not only of that race, but of all who favored its elevation. So malignant had this feeling grown toward the last that I often trembled lest it should break out into massacre before confidence could be restored by the happy termination of recent events.

It is these things which the North is too wise to credit, and too self-confident to understand, that made the white people of the South a unit on the side of the Confederacy, more compact and impenetrable by Northern influence and sentiment than any invaded people not separated by a distinct language ever was before. It is these very influences which kept it "solid" through almost a generation of hardship, oppression and temptation and finally gave it an unparalleled triumph over the enemies who laughed at its sincerity, mocked at its protests and prated of its "interests."



## CHAPTER XIII.

It was these influences that crowded the ranks of the Confederate army with the old and the young, the rich and the poor of the South, until a larger proportion of her free-men were arrayed in her defence than any nation of modern times has ever sent to battle. When the limit had been reached and there were literally no more between the cradle and the grave to answer to her summons—when genius and devotion had done their utmost—the enemy began to prevail. The weight of overwhelming numbers then only pushed back the fainting legions. By the third midsummer after my father's departure the thunder of the enemy's guns broke upon us at Ryalmont. For a year the tide of battle had been drawing nearer and nearer. At every intervening obstacle we had looked, confidently but vainly, for it to be stayed. It had crept inch by inch from the banks of the Ohio, across the Cumberland and the Tennessee, and into the mountains that buttressed the heart of the Confederacy.

For a month our valley had been a part of the seat of war. The slaves, all but the women, children and old men, had been impressed for work on the entrenchments. Back of the army of white men who fought our battles was the army of colored men who prepared the defences of the

Confederacy. Every crest was crowned with its line of works. That which sheltered our army at this time had been erected six months before in prescient anticipation of the very thing that finally occurred.

I had watched the erection of these works with great interest, riding back and forth through the intricacies of Ryal's Pass, to observe their progress. I wondered that no special attention was given to the protection of its outlet, and finally ventured to call the attention of the officer in charge to it. My suggestion met the fate so often accorded the advice of the intermeddler. It was not only disregarded but sneered at as the notion of a country strippling. The officer intimated that I might do to command "twenty niggers"—the number required to exempt from conscription—but had better not try to run the army of Northern Georgia. I was too shame-smitten to resent the insult. More than once, after the enemy had crossed the mountain range beyond, I crept through the neglected pass and watched their camp-fires. It was a curious sensation, looking down from my perch among the laurel-crested crags upon the camp of the invaders.

Among the few slaves who had been left in the valley was Jack. I hardly know how he had escaped imprisonment. He was taken once to work in the government gunshops, but after a few weeks returned without my request. Upon inquiry it was learned that he seemed to have no capacity for such work, having destroyed more than his

labor was worth. Knowing his skill, we were surprised at this, and though he was not punished he was severely rebuked. Upon consultation with the officer in charge I found him fully convinced of Jack's willingness and thoroughly satisfied of his stupidity. He evidently pitied me for having supposed him capable of such work.

"It is something different from hanging a plantation gate," he said, with a patronizing smile.

I was confident that Jack had shirked, but after this did not insist on his return, although with our reduced income the hire he would have received was a thing not unworthy of consideration. Skilled workmen were scarce in the Confederacy, and having the management of our limited resources, I felt that Jack was not acting well in refusing his help at such a crisis, on account of mere homesickness. We did not think of attributing his disinclination to any other cause.

The valley was full of soldiers. The sick and wounded who were brought from the front passed constantly along the road below the house. Though there were no troops stationed in that part of the valley there was a division encamped a short distance below, to guard a pass that led to the southward. This was the situation when fighting began on the other side of the mountain. Despite our alarm, I could not resist the temptation to go through the gap and see what I might of the engagement. Hiding my horse in a thicket, I clambered up the

sharp side of the glen until I reached a position where, screened from observation by the undergrowth, I saw the enemy beaten back again and again from the line of our works. It was dark when I returned. The news of our victory had preceded me. The enemy had been hurled back triumphantly along our entire front. What exultation filled our people's hearts! Bonfires were lighted in the city's streets within sound of the enemy's occasional guns. My mother was jubilant. My grandmother even was hopeful that the end had come.

Jack asked anxiously about the result. His solicitude touched me, and I told him all that I had heard, assuring him that the Yankee army was in full retreat and would be heard of no more in that region. I did not once suspect the good fellow's sincerity. Perhaps if I had not been an Elspre, I should.

The Elspres were Huguenots who had come over to South Carolina at the King's expense in 1679. With them slavery had been a patriarchal institution. It was their boast that an Elspre sometimes bought, but never sold, a slave. There had never been a runaway among their servants, and blows had been so rare that the influence of the family was accounted derogatory to good discipline in the region where they lived. Yet they were thrifty planters and very proud of the efficiency of the force they worked. My mother had the characteristics of her people, and as my father really left the control of her property in her own

hands, the Elspre rule had extended to our family, so that such a thing as lack of confidence in a slave was almost unknown with us.

Jack had been bought by my mother's father because Vacey, my mother's maid, had fallen violently in love with him. When we removed to the Grove, Vacey had remained with her husband and children at Ryalmont. On our return she had resumed her former duties. Between mistress and maid there was a very warm attachment, my mother often remarking that Vacey seemed more like a companion than a servant. She was very fair, of a sweet and gentle disposition, and beloved by us all except my grandmother, who always insisted that she "could not abide a nigger that hadn't color enough to show." As she had been my nurse I was greatly attached to her. Despite her gentleness she had unusual strength of character, and it was a standing jest in the family that one so strong and fair should have become infatuated with Jack, who was accounted weak and petulant as well as insignificant in appearance. But there was no doubt of their sincere attachment for each other, and it could not be denied that the ingenious fellow had surrounded her with comforts not to be found in any other slave cabin in that region. It was no wonder she was devoted to my mother, to whose favor she owed so much.

It was the second night after the battle. The full moon of June was looking into the window yonder, when

there came a tap upon the casement and an anxious voice just raised above a whisper called :

“ Marse Ry’l ! Marse Ry’l ! ”

I sprang up and ran to the window. It was Vicey. She was standing under the apple-tree, which has since grown so that its arms reach clean across the frame. It only touched the side then. She was in the shadow, but the moonlight came through a break in the leafy screen and fell upon her face. I saw it was pale and full of apprehension.

“ The Yankees is coming, Marse Ry’l ! ”

I wonder it did not occur to me as strange that she should make this whispered announcement to me, instead of going to my mother’s room. If I thought of it at all, it was only that she feared to alarm her mistress, for the words brought a terrible revulsion after the exaltation of victory. I think my voice must have trembled as I asked :

“ Where ? ”

“ Through the Pass, Marse Ry’l. ”

“ The Pass, ” at Ryalmont, meant the gap named after my ancestor. The mouth of it lay plain before me, the great jaws, black with shadow, but the smooth plateau on which it opened fair and clear in the white moonlight, cut in a wavering line by the sharp narrow bed of the mountain torrent that had made its way through the debris of a mightier tide which once flowed through the Pass.

I looked in vain for the blue-clad forms that had be-

come familiar to my eyes in the valley beyond. Their absence, however, did not incline me to doubt. I think I had always expected that what might so easily be done would be done, so that the announcement awoke no surprise. Strangely enough, I seemed just then to be oblivious to everything except the fact that my favorite mare, Jessica, was tethered in a glen that led out of the Pass not far from the entrance. She had been hidden there for a long time to avoid theft or impressment for the public service. A somewhat aged carriage horse and a single mule were the only working stock we had been able to keep at Ryalmont. What was not impressed had been stolen, and the presence of the army made recovery impossible. I was anxious to save the mare, which was not only a favorite but a present from my grandfather Elspre. Only Jack knew where she was hidden.

“I must save Jessica,” I said, as I turned away from the window and began to hurry on my clothes.

“You needn’t be troubled ’bout de mar’, Marse Ry’l. She’s here wid de saddle all on.”

“Here? Who brought her?”

“Jack.”

I finished dressing and sprang through the window. Standing beside the girl I could see Jessica tied to an overhanging limb a few steps away. Again my eyes scanned the opening of the Pass.

“What makes you think they are coming, Vacey?” I

asked, beginning for the first time to doubt her words. I held my breath and listened.

“ Jack tole me so,”—doggedly.

“ How did he find out ? ”

“ Don't know. Seed 'em I reckon,”—carelessly.

“ Has he been across ? ”—through the Pass, I meant.

“ S'pose so. Anyhow he said they'd be here long 'bout daylight.”

“ He hurried back to save Jessica and give the alarm, did he ? ”

“ I reckon so, Mahster,” answered Vacey, turning away her head. “ He geared up the wagon, too.”

“ That was thoughtful of him. Jack's a good boy ;”—then emphatically, “ Vacey ! ”

“ Marse Ry'l.” She turned with an involuntary courtesy as she spoke.

“ Jack thought they would be here by daylight, did he ? ”

“ 'Long 'bout that time, sah.’

“ Two hours yet.” I said to myself, glancing at the moon. “ Vacey ? ”

“ Sah ? ”

“ Wake my mother as soon as I am gone.”

“ Yes, sah.”

“ Tell Jack to have everything ready to drive to the Grove.”



“Jack!”—alarm and surprise in her tone. “But Marse Ry’l—”

“I know he don’t want to leave here, but he’ll have to.”

“Ob co’sse—ob co’sse—All right, sah,” hurriedly.

“Tell Jack to take the family to the Grove with their clothes and valuables—nothing else. They will have an hour’s start at least.”

I turned back into the room, buckled on a revolver, slung over my shoulder a carbine my father had sent me, and was back again in a moment. The girl still stood under the tree.

“You understand, Vicey. Wake my mother at once, and be sure they get off in time—They’d better take some provisions, too—a ham or two and a skillet. There’s no knowing what might happen.”

“Yes, sah, but whar you gwine, Marse Ry’l?”

She sprang forward and grasped my arm as I leaped into the saddle.

“I am going to General Johnston,” I replied through my shut teeth. “We will see if the Yankees are going to get through Ryal’s Pass without a fight.”

“Oh Marse Ry’l!” exclaimed the girl in terrified tones, as she clung to my arm, “’Taint no use. ’Taint no use. Jack—”

“It won’t do to send him,” I answered; “I am not

sure they will even believe me. How many did he say there were?"

"Oh, de whole army—de whole army!" she exclaimed, waving her hand in tragic exaggeration.

"Of course," I responded. "It would naturally be a movement in force. But if we can get some cannon on the hill here, they can never make their way out. Have Jack get the folks away quick, Vacey. You and the children go with them. There'll be a big fight right here."

I broke away from her detaining grasp and galloped down the winding carriage-way to the road.

"Oh Marse Ry'l! Marse Ry'l!" I heard her call, in evident distress at my danger, as I rode away.

Her devotion touched me. I thought as I sped along the road to the General's quarters, how self-deceived or hypocritical the Yankees were in pretending that these people desired to be free. I determined to reward Vacey for her faithfulness. If Jack's information should save the army, I wondered if the country would not set him free. It was a curious unreal romance of the slave's devotion and the master's gratitude which my fancy wove as Jessica bore me swiftly along the white road in the still morning moonlight. The mountain rose dark and silent on my left. Through its gloomy recesses the foe were feeling their uncertain way. Off to the right stretched the undulating valley with its hosts of slumbering defenders. Would they wake in time to thwart the enemy's design? I

urged the mare to her utmost speed. The trees that overhung the road flew by like winged messengers of fate. The road with its coat of white, dew-laden dust muffled her hoof-strokes and sped backward beneath her feet like a swift-flowing river.

“Halt!”

A rifle barrel gleamed in the moonlight. I drew rein so quickly that the mare fell back upon her haunches.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Instead of going to the headquarters of the commanding general, accident had brought me to the tent of the impetuous leader of the left wing. A few words served to explain the situation. Instantly orders were issued and staff officers were soon galloping in every direction. A moment afterwards, bugle calls were sounding and regiments mustering in the bright moonlight all over the valley. While I was yet wondering at the perfectness of the organization which in an instant transforms a sleeping host into an alert and efficient army, a squadron of cavalry dashed by on its way to the point of danger, followed a moment after by a battery of artillery, which galloped off in the same direction. Then came the hasty tramp of infantry, and a regiment of Hood's veterans filed past. The alarm had extended over the whole valley, and the men, with the quick instinct of the Southern soldier forecasting the cause of it, talked as they went past of the enemy coming through an unguarded pass on the left.

I desired to return at once, but in the excitement I had been forgotten, and the officer in whose charge I was placed did not feel at liberty to allow me to go. It was half an hour before I received permission. Then the road was crowded with troops of all arms hurrying towards the mouth

of Ryal's Pass. Already firing was heard in the direction of the glen. The information I had given had proved reliable, and redoubled efforts were made to push on the struggling column to meet the threatened attack. Being well acquainted with the region, I pressed forward through by-paths and country-ways, anxious for the fate of Ryalmont.

As I drew near the tumult grew fiercer. The rattle of musketry came closer and closer, and finally seemed to be thrown out into the open plain. The tale it told was not difficult to interpret. The foremost of our forces, advancing into the glen, had encountered the head of the Federal column, and after a short skirmish had been pushed backward by sheer force of numbers, into the half-wooded region at the mouth. When I came in sight of the Pass the day was breaking, and blue-coated hosts were debouching, regiment after regiment, from the mouth of the glen. Our forces were closing in upon them, rapidly pressing the skirmishers back upon the main line, which was already throwing up works to protect the entrance to the valley they had so successfully secured.

As I came upon the crest of a hill just across the valley from Ryalmont, I could see a battery getting into position on the plateau above the house, and caught the gleam of the bayonets of its infantry support in the shrubbery that lined the slope below. As I crossed the intervening space the roar of artillery joined the clatter of musketry. I could hear the shells exploding in the mouth of the Pass, and felt

that they were inflicting serious damage on the crowded columns of the enemy. Then the sound of firing in the valley grew louder, and I knew that the enemy's infantry were charging across the bottom to rid themselves of this annoyance by capturing the plateau of Ryalmont. As I dashed across the road and up the sharp slope to the house, our weak line was driven backward, and the sharp *ping* of minié balls was heard as they struck the rocky hillside or cut the twigs overhead. A glance assured me that the house was deserted, and, tethering my horse in its shelter, I sprang down the slope to the line that was re-forming under the cover of our guns, and, with the carbine I carried, joined in the fray. The fire of our infantry and artillery combined had been too much for the enemy, who had ceased their pursuit, though they still held the line of the creek in our front. They were screened in this position from the fire of our guns by the sharp second banks of the rivulet which made a natural breast-high parapet before them and, hidden from the infantry by the fringe of willows that grew along the banks, while they could not advance, they repulsed without difficulty a counter charge which was made at once, and our men were driven back to the shelter of the crest of Ryalmont. Our artillery commanded the point of debouchment, but a sharp turn in the Pass deprived it of any effective range within. The rising sun threw our gunners into sharp relief, but made the shadow about the mouth of the Pass even darker by comparison. The fire

of our guns was directed towards the enemy in the valley and those who were throwing up works on the opposite crest. For some time no troops had issued from the Pass, and it seemed to me we might be able to overpower the force which had already made its way through, before others could come to their aid. I mentioned this to a veteran officer of the line who sat beside me under the shelter of the shrubbery of Ryalmont.

“Can’t be done,” said he with the utmost nonchalance. “If we had men enough and guns enough we might hold them back, but we can’t afford it. That Pass is like a gateway in a wall too high to climb—one man can hold it shut, against a dozen trying to force it open. I expect they are massing a little way back in the Pass now, ready to come out when they’re wanted. All we can do is to keep them blocked up there long enough to let our army get away, and we may not be able to do even that. The trouble with the Yankees is that there are too many of them. Look there, now!”

As he spoke, there came a flash, another and another, from the black mouth of the Pass, and then an angry, continuous roar. The enemy had placed their guns in battery under cover of the shadow, until they outnumbered ours upon the crest, two to one.

“We may as well get back from here,” said the officer, rising and giving the word to his command. “They will rake this hill as clean as if they used a fine-tooth comb, as

soon as they've done with the artillery, which won't be long at this rate."

Some of our guns were evidently disabled, as our fire was already slackening visibly.

"Know whose house that is?" said the officer, glancing admiringly at the quaint structure as we passed it on our way back.

"Indeed!" he said, with a polite shrug in response to my reply, "I'm sorry for it. Your horse, up there?"

I nodded.

"Better get it away while you can."

"Why?"

"Why? Good God! man, what do you suppose will be left of that house when the Yankees stop firing?"

"I don't know."

"Don't know? Well I'll tell you—two chimneys."

"Why should they destroy it?"

"Oh," said he, gaily, "it's a way they have. Don't you know you can trace the path of that army clean to the Ohio by the chimneys that are left without any houses to hold them up? They make a good mark, you see, and the Yankees are famous gunners. There's no denying that, and I 'spose it's fun to knock a house to pieces a mile away. Besides that, if left standing, it might give shelter to—rats or rebs, and the Yankees are down on both. Here's the artillery," he added as a smoking gun, with a half disabled team and gunners covered with sweat and dust and some



of them splashed with blood, came dashing down the drive. "What did I tell you? They don't mean to leave you even the chimneys."

As he spoke a shell struck the top of one of the chimneys, and an instant after one came crashing through the oak which stood at the gable. Then there was a sharp explosion, the rattle of glass, a neigh of agony from the stricken mare and a long shrill shriek.

My heart stood still with horror. Could it be that the family had remained despite my warning? Where was Jack, and the wagon? I remembered seeing it standing by the roadside as I galloped away. The officer would have detained me, but I broke from his grasp and sprang up the path to the house. The mare hobbled towards me holding up a shattered fore leg with a pathetic whinney. I could not take time even to end her misery.

The door was fastened within. I burst it open and entered. Before the window, which commanded a view of the Pass, sat my grandmother. Her head rested against the high-backed chair and her hand lay upon an open book in her lap. Beside her knelt Vacey, shrieking and shivering with terror. The walls were scarred by pieces of the shell which had entered at the window. The aged face was peaceful as in slumber. Only a line of blood trickling out from under the grey hair told that it was death.

I staggered to a chair and sat gazing on the pale still face. I will not try to picture my agony. Every instant I

expected to share her fate and fervently hoped I might. Before me all the time was the thought of my father's anguish. This was the fruit of my disobedience. I saw it all. When the others fled she had refused to go, trusting, no doubt, to her grey hairs to save her from harm, perhaps not thinking or not knowing what battle means to those within its verge. The faithful slave had remained, remembering her duty while I had forgotten mine. Now that I had come, the terrors of the battle were too much for her, however. She fled and left me with the dead, slain through my neglect.

I do not know how long the battle lasted. I hoped each gun that was fired would end my woe. I sat gazing vacantly at the dead face until the cannon ceased to roar, and only scattering rifle shots were heard on the other side of the house. The tide of battle was ebbing towards the valley. The enemy held Ryal's Pass. My effort had been in vain. I had betrayed my father's trust and had achieved—nothing. I had left my grandmother to die, while I indulged a boyish impulse to attempt some great thing. Before me was the ashen face and beyond it my father's reproachful gaze. Why had not death been merciful!

The tramp of horses crunched along the drive. A bugle-call sounded almost under the window. I heard strange voices but did not heed them. Sabers rattled and spurs jingled. Commands were given in the queer singing tones peculiar to the enemy's artillery officers. A battery

was going into position on the very crest from which ours had been dislodged. I thought how it would command the whole sweep of the valley. The officers dismounted and came towards the house.

“That’s Number Two’s work,” I heard one say in exulting tones. “Knocked the chimney to pieces the first crack. Splendid shot that. Told Sperry to drop it just ten feet, and there ’tis, through the window. Not more than five feet out of the line of the other. Good practice that, eh, Captain?”

“First rate. Why didn’t you keep on?”

“Keep on? We’d have knocked this split-stick cubby-house to flinders in five minutes if the General hadn’t interfered.”

“What made him so particular? They say it belongs to a rebel general. Wonder if he is an old friend?”

“I don’t know about that, but I heard that the nigger who showed us this hole through the mountain, made him promise that neither the house nor anything about it should be disturbed. I suppose that’s why he stopped us and why a guard must be put round it now. If he’s given his word, there won’t be a leaf disturbed if we all die of starvation guarding it.”

“You don’t say? Well, now, that was good of the nigger, wasn’t it? Blamed if I’d have been so careful if any one had kept me in slavery all my life. Poor fellow! It was poor pay he got for it!”

There was no mistaking the voices, even if the words had not revealed the character of the speakers. Those sharp, thin, jerky tones could not be found anywhere in the South. The wave of battle had swept on by me and I was alone with my dead within the Federal lines. This much I knew. It flashed upon my consciousness also that Jack had piloted the Federal forces through Ryal's Pass, and that these men were commending what they called "his faithfulness!"

Despite the horror of my surroundings my blood boiled with indignation. I strode to the open door and said with scornful emphasis:

"Gentlemen, you have praised this treacherous slave's forbearance. Will you come and see how he has recompensed his mistress' kindness?"

They were fine looking men—evidently of some culture, though one would never have suspected it from their intonation. They followed me silently, removing their hats as they saw they were in the presence of death. One of them, a red-bearded giant who wore myopic glasses, bent over the page on which the dead hand rested and read aloud:

*"So the King of the North shall come——"*

The cold hand hid all that followed.

"I hope you paid the rascal well for the blood he has spilled," I said, hotly.

The officer gazed at me with the hard, stony glare of

the short-sighted for a moment. Then putting his hand upon my shoulder he turned me about so that I faced the shattered window. Pointing through it he said, sternly :

“ *That is his reward !* ”

There upon the ground not twenty yards away, lay the form of Jack, his pinched face turned towards us with the grey pallor of death upon it. The morning sunlight fell on the great dark eyes, which seemed even yet to be filled with anxious apprehension.

I was positively glad that the unfaithful slave had met his fate, and felt a certain nearness to the officer, who I thought appreciated my feeling.

“ He did not live long to enjoy the price of his treachery,” I said, almost exultingly.

“ What do you mean by ‘ the price of his treachery ’ ? ” asked the officer.

“ The money he received for betraying his master,” I answered in surprise.

“ He received no money,” was the cool reply.

“ No ? Then why did he do it ? ” My tone must have revealed my incredulity.

“ To give liberty to his race,” was the solemn reply.

“ Well, he got his liberty,” I said, bitterly. I could not avoid the sneer.

“ He was so anxious lest those who had been kind to him should suffer by his act, that he crept up here before the firing was over, and fell a victim to his faithfulness to

those to whom he owed only the debt of servitude. For his people he became a hero; for his mistress' sake a martyr, sir!"

The officer strode away, scornful and indignant. I wondered at the strange infatuation that accounted the unfaithful slave who lay dead without, a hero and a martyr. To me he was a dog who had been fitly punished. They were Northern men—the first, I think, that I had ever met. It flashed across me then, that they knew nothing about the matter of which they spoke. I even smiled at their ignorance. We represented the poles of American civilization, and neither understood the distance that lay between. What the one counted heroic, the other esteemed the climax of baseness and ingratitude.

## CHAPTER XV.

Of what followed there is no need to write. I buried my dead under the trees where her husband had waited so long for her coming. The enemy were very considerate. The grave was dug by alien hands and I was allowed to depart without hindrance. For a time we remained within the enemy's lines, which extended beyond the Grove. When the ashes of the roof-tree lay upon the hearthstone as my grandmother had predicted, we did not think of returning to Ryalmont, but went on through the hostile lines into the camp of our friends, only to become a part of the suffering, terror-stricken crowd of fugitives, driven from the Queen City of the hills by the barbaric ruthlessness of the victorious enemy. I would not dwell upon the sufferings of that terrible time. Then were sown the seeds of disease that ere long left us alone—my mother and myself.

My father uttered no word of reproach for what had happened. Nay, he had even commended my conduct, though I told him all, extenuating nothing. Yet I grew morbid, and wished that I might die. Already I had seen my grandmother's prophesy fulfilled. "The King of the North" *had* come! The Grove lay in ashes!

We had no special reason to complain. We suffered

only the haps of war, and were but a part of the great throng of refugees who fled from the enemy's power, but never thought of surrender. Scarcely had my mother reached the shelter of a house on one of her father's plantations when we saw that also burned by the same ruthless legions who followed on our track. Ah, what desolation they left behind them ! Exposure, want and terror had made my mother a wreck of her former self. The baby-faced sister had grown wild-eyed and puny in the midst of war's alarms. At the best, it seemed that but little of life was left to either. In a vain attempt to protect them from further and grosser outrage, I came near meeting the fate I courted. They said I fought with savage ferocity when the undisciplined horde ravaged our little store and offered insult to those in my charge. It was foolish desperation. A sabre-stroke left me apparently dead, and my folly destroyed the roof to which we had fled for refuge. The great pine forest opened its arms to the terrified household, and a slave performed a last service by bearing me to a place of shelter far within its sighing shadows. He brought also a slender stock of provisions, a remnant of the household stores which had escaped the flames—enough, it was hoped, to serve until relief should come. The next day he set out to carry word of our sad plight to my grandfather. He was the last of those "held to service or labor" in our behalf. His faithfulness had withstood want, peril and frequent opportunity to escape, but he neither delivered the message nor



returned. What became of him we never knew. Whether the hope of freedom was too much for his faithfulness, or he paid for his devotion with his life, we could not tell. Betwixt the enemy with their barbarous marauders and the rough riders who hung upon their flank and rear, life was very uncertain—especially a black man's life.

It was long before I knew what we suffered—how death had come to our circle and starvation had stared us in the face, while my mother nursed me back to life. For a day's journey on either side stretched the devastation that lay in Sherman's track—a devastation afterwards celebrated in rollicking song by the enemy. For us, our tears made no noise, however fast they fell. My mother would not let me die. She had, I think, given up her husband, and in her forecasted widowhood fought madly for my life. We were safe, for a time at least, and my mother devoted herself to the care of her sick child and her unconscious son. For days there was but a morsel for us all, and little hope of relief. She was too weak to go in search of food. She did once drag her feeble limbs to where the nearest house had stood, three miles away, only to find it a heap of ashes. The destroyer's track was wide and desolate. "War," he said, "is barbarism;" and well did this barbarian illustrate his own philosophy. So she prayed and waited for the end.

At length the last dust of meal had been consumed. The next morning she found a rabbit lying on the window-ledge. A cat which had followed us from the burned house

had brought its prey to those threatened with starvation. Every morning for twelve days the same thing occurred. Then relief came, and she ceased to provide us with game. The story is too well known to need affirmation. I only mention it here that my silence may not be construed into denial. My mother has always deemed it a miracle. Perhaps I have not been without the feeling that a life thus strangely preserved may have had some special purpose.

When I woke to consciousness we were but two. The first task they had to perform, who came to our rescue, was to dig a little grave in the soft white sand under the pine needles. So one of our household slept beneath the oaks at Ryalmont, one beneath the shadow of the pines, and two, worn and feeble, waited hopelessly at a kinsman's house beside the Oconee. The other—whose life and fame was all that was left to us of earthly joy—ah! where was he in those last days of tumult and disaster?

We heard of him but seldom during those weary months. Perhaps we ought not to have done so, but we kept from him the story of our woes. Only the bare fact of his bereavements ever came to his knowledge. His brilliant career was the one consolation of our lives. In the wearisome weeks that elapsed before I could leave my bed, the story of his gallant deeds was the sole anesthetic of my pain. I remember my mother telling it over and over again as she used to sing cradle songs to me in childhood. She had carried the little worn bundle of his

letters in her bosom through all our perils. They were the most precious things she possessed.

I was but half-restored when the end came. It had been long expected. My father's last letter had left no room for hope. Then there was silence—and we waited with beating hearts for the result. The rumor of surrender—that epoch to which all the subsequent events of the South properly relate, because it marks the beginning of its new life—had already passed from quivering heart to heart like an electric flash. We waited only for confirmation of our forebodings. Gloom, uncertainty, terror and grief were strangely commingled in every breast.

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In the fourth spring after that which witnessed its birth, the fair new nation died. The starry cross that had waved triumphant over a hundred battle-fields, had danced above the waters of every sea, and kissed the breezes of every clime, was trailed in the dust wet with tears and grimy with the smoke of conflict, and folded away by fair hands embalmed in sweet incense and holy memories.

Eight millions of freemen had bidden defiance to three times their number in the holy cause of liberty, staking all for the right of self-government—and failed! Hope gave way to humiliation; determination to despair. No pen can picture the universal woe. The past was swallowed

up in oblivion. Its beauty, its brightness, its glory were swept away. Even its heroism was branded with infamy. The sources of its prosperity were dried up. Those who had been the subjects of its will were to be the shapers of its destiny. Instead of boastful leaders, the people of the South could be regarded in the future, at the best, as only bastard children of the Republic. It mattered not how long they might remain under her sway; how faithfully they might guard her interests or serve under her banner, the stain of rebellion and the taint of failure must rest forever on them. If it had been in truth a civil war—one whose dissensions interpermeated a whole people and were not confined to one section or class—this would not have been the case. Then the necessities of good neighborship and the difficulty of preserving the distinction, would, in time, have effaced the brand of treason. But when the line of fracture is clear and distinct—on the one side, loyalty to the old government all but universal, and on the other, devotion to the new almost without exception—in such a case, from the very nature of humanity, the shame is made perpetual, the taint of disloyalty can never lose its force, and never cease to be imputed when the blood flows hot and passion fires the heart. The children's children must bear the humiliation of the father's shame. So a proud people, stripped of consolation in the past, and covered with humiliation in the present, looked forward to the future

without hope and with only a sullen, distrustful defiance mingled with their despair.

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Not in a thousand years—if indeed in all history—has the result of any war touched the individual lives of a whole nation so closely as did this the life of every one of the Southern people. Not more radical was the change of relation when Israel was driven away into captivity. No individual of any class was left unaffected by the outcome. Those who had been the richest of the rich, as a rule, were now the poorest of the poor. Class and privilege were abolished. Only race and consanguinity remained. The barrier betwixt the master and the “poor white” was thrown down, and all stood together on the lower level. If there were any odds, they were now with those who had formerly carried weight in the race of life. The people who had been so closely united by the singular necessities of the past were now inseparably welded in the white heat of disaster. Hereafter there could be but two classes. Between them ran the line of color—the insuperable barrier of fate!

When the billows of disaster swept over the South, her most hopeful children felt that all was lost. We were fools at whose folly fate already mocked! Our past had made us weak in one thing—mechanical creation. In this the enemy were exceptionally strong, and because of this they con-

quered. The struggle taught us what we needed to gain and why we did not succeed. It showed us our weakness and our strength. It only prepared us for a triumph which, had it come at that time, would have been forever fatal to our hopes. Had the South won, with slavery still an actual and controlling force, its career as an independent nation must have been brief. In any age the institution is the sure precursor of peril. Indicative of wealth, it is never an adjunct of power. In our day the tide of civilization sets so strongly against the principle that no nation could build upon it as a corner-stone with any hope of permanence. Defeat, therefore, revealed at once the weakness of our enemy and the evil which hopelessly weighed down our aspirations. It rid us of a fatal burden and showed us how we might ultimately succeed.

\* \* \* \*

Fate had still one more terrible blow in store for us. My grandfather had learned of our calamity in time to rescue us from starvation and remove us to a more comfortable but humble dwelling on one of his plantations. He had little hope, if any, of our cause, but of my father's gallantry and genius he could scarce find words to express his admiration. Whatever the end might be, it could only bring him fame. In all the battles he had received no wound, neither he nor his good horse. He was sure to come out

whole, and in the future would make good the mistakes of the past. Thus spoke the hopeful aristocrat of the plebian son-in-law in whom all his pride was centered. He assured us that he had saved a store of cotton, securely hidden in almost impenetrable swamps, so that when peace came we would still have "enough to go a long way when we should have no niggers to feed." He had cleverly prevised the result, and with the shrewdness of his people had provided against want.

His cheerfulness was not without effect upon our broken spirits. As the spring advanced our hopes revived with the opening blossoms. For the first time my mother began to pray for peace. Patiently, hopefully, uncomplainingly she had borne all, praying only that the right might triumph—the right her husband had taught her to believe must ultimately prevail and for which he had offered all. But faith and hope—almost desire for victory—were dead, and now she only prayed that the end might come and he be spared to return to her arms.

An enemy's hand struck the final blow. For weeks we had heard nothing from the outer world. We felt sure the end had come; but when, and how, and where?—of these we knew nothing. The blow had fallen in the darkness and we knew not what had been the scath it wrought.

One day a band of troopers, riding jaded horses but full of rollicking jestfulness, came by. They said the war was over and they were in search of a fugitive president.

Their conduct gave proof of their sincerity. They neither pillaged nor insulted. When they rode away they left a newspaper published in New York. I shall never forget how strange its imprimatur looked. I had not seen a sheet bearing that impression for more than three years. It told the story of Appomattox and the few days that preceded it. Among other things it related how, on the last day that there was any hope for the Confederate cause, one who commanded a division, which, though worn and decimated, still marched with closed ranks and soldierly bearing, was asked by his great leader to make one more charge, to gain time for the army to escape the clutches of the foe that hung on its flanks. Even this hostile sheet told with a burst of hearty admiration how the officer had saluted his commander and ridden away as gaily as if to assured victory, leading his depleted command like a thunderbolt against the enemy and falling, with a shout of triumph on his lips, as the crowded ranks gave way before his impetuous charge. He bore my father's family name. We knew that there were three commanders of that name in the army of Northern Virginia. As if from fear that hope might yet live in the bereaved hearts, the name of his horse was given, and the fact carefully noted that man and horse had passed safely through all those four years of strife only to fall together on the last contested field—a field made ever glorious by his gallantry. The horse's name was "Secession!"

Even in our sorrow the praise of the foe—a grudging,



mercenary and unappreciative foe, as we thought them to be—was very sweet. I have never forgotten its sweetness, and would not wrong by the shadow of a thought those who laid so fragrant a chaplet on my father's bier. The shock was too much for my weakened system and a relapse followed. When I grew stronger my mother took me back to Ryalmont. I think she felt nearer to her dead there than anywhere else. A pall hung over the whole land, shutting out the future but preserving the dead hopes and racking memories of the past. Fortunately, however, with nations as with individuals, duty and necessity come to deaden the woes of the past and impel to the achievements of the future.

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Unlike most wars of modern times, this one brought universal poverty with our defeat. The world has never appreciated the sacrifices which the Southern people made for liberty. Perhaps it never will. They staked their all for the cause of self-government. Men risked fortune, life and honor. Women gave up luxury and abandoned splendor without regret. Of gold and silver the Confederacy had little. Not half a dozen coins exist that bear its imprint. But her children gave all that they had, and then coined their hopes and their hearts, taking in exchange her promise to pay, even under the shadow of the Federal flag. All this, of course, was swept away. Individuals,

corporations, municipalities, states—all were left bankrupt. If they afterward repudiated the debts of the past, it was not until the whole economical structure on which they were based was swept away by war.

Slavery, which was the bank in which the Southern man deposited his surplus, had disappeared, and with it the earnings of two centuries. Five billions of dollars, the accumulations of a people enterprising and economical to a degree that few nations have ever equaled, were thus swept out of existence. Land was the only representative of value remaining, save mere personal possessions, and on these war had fed for a quadrenniate. From being in one sense, perhaps, the richest people in the world, the South, in the twinkling of an eye, became the poorest.

Even to that poverty came a cry for charity which could not go unheeded. The slave, now made free, besought his impoverished master to supply tomorrow's bread. The master heard, and out of his vanishing stores gave to the chattel he had lost, enough to supply his wants. It was a proud moment—a beautiful picture! A people stripped of wealth, reduced almost to penury, sharing the little that remained with the slaves the enemy had made free! Of course, the enemy fed some of them; then vaunted their charity and boasted of the food and clothing which they gave to the famishing freedman—surplus food and cast-off clothing! But the South, on whom the greater burden fell, made no moan, uttered no cry, sylla-

bled no boast. Her children were starving ; her granaries and smokehouses empty ; her kitchens ravaged by vandal hordes. For four years the products of the earth had been garnered by war. Four harvests had been lost, and their proceeds swallowed up by the insatiate, bloodstained earth. Luxury had been so long forgotten that its commonest forms were strangers to households once rejoicing in abundance. Yet in their poverty, humiliation and despair, they shared the little that was left with the bondman who had served them. Compared with the bounty of which the North boasted, this unnoted charity was as the ocean to the rivulet. I would not seem to boast even of my own countrymen, but it is time the truth was told. It brought its own reward, too. The struggle for self-support and this charity which common humanity made compulsory—the support of the former slave—was the best possible preparation our people could have had for the career of self-development upon which they have since entered.

No wonder the excitement and agony of this woful time was too much for my weakened frame. I remember struggling against insensibility for my poor mother's sake. They say my need of nursing crowded her woe into the background and saved her from being overwhelmed. It seemed cowardly and mean at this supreme crisis of fate to leave the burden on her shoulders ; but I was too weak to resist the encroachments of disease, and felt the shadows gathering around me with a dim sense of relief that

I was not to witness the ills which the future must inevitably bring. I was glad that my father had not lived to see the humiliation of our people, and rejoiced that little Madge had not survived to suffer degradation. I grieved only for my mother, and that pityingly, rather than with any idea of relieving her sorrow or lightening her burdens.

Even when apparent health returned I was hardly more hopeful. A nerveless languor had taken an irresistible hold upon me. I neither hoped nor feared nor cared. I was dully conscious of our return to Ryalmont, but noted little of what had happened. Vacey had remained upon the premises with her children. For many months the house was the headquarters of the Federal officer commanding in the valley. Strangely enough, he had neither stolen nor defaced. I think there is hardly another house in the entire theater of war in which the Yankee set his foot that does not yet bear marks of his occupancy. Perhaps it was because Vacey remained and served him that her mistress' belongings were not pillaged. Rank weeds were growing where the mansion at the Grove had stood, but despite the vicissitudes it had undergone we found Ryalmont almost as comfortable as when we were driven from the shelter of its roof.

The Federal soldiers had buried Jack near the mouth of the Pass, with a cairn of loose stones heaped over him, and an inscription reciting his merits painted on a rude headboard. This was soon obliterated as an insult to

our people. He died for his race, but they will never do him honor. Gratitude for favors past, seems to be a virtue foreign to their natures. Even John Brown, to whom they owe more than to any other man, they have never dreamed of honoring. A penny from each would build him a royal monument, but the place where his gallows stood is not even hallowed ground to them. The promise of the future is, as yet, far more significant to them than the sacrificial offerings of the past.

It was well that my mother was an Elspre. She inherited with the name not only the thrift but the hopefulness of her Breton ancestors. I never knew how it was done, but late as the season was, a crop was pitched at Ryalmont. Christopher, with a Federal uniform upon his back and a small supply of Federal "greenbacks" in his pocket, reappeared and offered to work the Grove "on shares." There were neither fences, utensils nor stock, but somehow Christopher and my mother managed to raise a notable crop that year. The arable acreage of Ryalmont was not great, but the land was fertile and all the richer for the dead lying beneath its mold and the enemy's long occupancy. The presence of the commanding officer had saved the grounds from spoliation, and the years of war had added luxuriance to the trees my father had planted. It was a bower of blossoms when we returned, and every petal seemed redolent of his memory. While my mother was intent on restoring our fortunes I only brooded of the past.

No appeal that she could make stirred in me a throb of ambition. Even the sight of her hopeful energy gave me no desire to share her toils or lighten her labor. She wished me to emulate my father's example, but I could not bear the thought of exertion. To escape her importunity I wandered about upon the mountain loitering dreamily, in sunshine or shadow, thinking only of the past. My mother bitterly reprov'd my listlessness, declaring that it was the "poor-white blood" asserting itself in my nature. It is a curious fact that the planter-class of the South, who are regarded by the North as ease loving aristocrats, have an ineffable scorn of the lack of ambition and antipathy to labor which the "poor-white" man so often displays.

My mother's reproaches only drove me oftener from home and farther into the solitude of the mountains. The Pass, with its sad associations, had a peculiar charm for me. I often traced its windings, noted the indications of the enemy's brief sojourn, and studied with interest and surprise the ingenious devices by which they had overcome, swiftly and easily, what seemed insuperable obstacles to their sudden night march. I learned that a body of "pioneers" in a single afternoon had made the night march through the rugged glen not only possible but comparatively easy. The old trail and the bed of the mountain torrent had helped them. So the time dragged by until the midsummer came and the anniversary of my grandmother's death drew near.

## CHAPTER XVI.

One of the works in the valley to which our Pass led had grown from a simple redan, constructed to oppose the ingress of the enemy, to a fort which was the key to the whole valley. The roads leading north and south between the mountain ranges met a hundred yards in front of this fort, and entered a wide easy pass that ran to the westward. The fort became important to the enemy after his advance, commanding as it did the most available route to his rear, along which supplies must be brought in case the railroad should be disabled for any length of time. For this reason it was enlarged into an enclosed work of great strength, which was held by a considerable force for some months. It was so formidable, in fact, that Hood abandoned the design of assailing it when he broke through the enemy's lines, and turned westward to fall on his communications instead of his rear.

The valley had been denuded of timber, partly to supply the needs of the armies and partly to give range for artillery. The new growth had sprung up with wonderful luxuriance, transforming the whole plain into a dense thicket through which, white and tortuous, wound the roads, shut in by walls of solid green. Fosse and scarp were covered with the same rank growth, which choked even

the noxious weeds the invaders had brought with them. Here for the first time I saw the plant known as "Canada thistle," which was never found on Southern soil until war brought it among the curses that followed in its train. Not many travelers passed along the country road at that time, and few of these paused to trace the green billows which alone marked the position of the old earth-work.

This crumbling fortress, hidden in the dark green sea of rank growing chapparel, was my favorite resort. The brambles had lined scarp and counter-scarp with an almost impassable *cheval-de-frise*. On the crest of the parapet I had cleared a narrow path. A vixen had made her den and reared her whelps in one of the angles. There was a fine view to the west and south, while on the mountain side to the northeastward one could yet trace the lines of works where the grand assault was made and repulsed.

On the right of the road, a hundred yards to the westward, was an old church which war has made forever famous. The flinty knoll, on which it stood, once crowned by a noble oak grove, was now bare, leaving the dark weather-beaten hulk a landmark in the unbroken sea of green. It still bore testimony of the scath of war. There were holes in the roof through which the shells had come shrieking on their way to the little work behind which our forces stood. Its door was open, so that man or beast entered unhindered. Its floor was yet grimy with unholy use. Upon the dark pine ceiling were yet darker traces of the



spray shot upward from severed arteries when the surgeons plied their instruments within its altar.

In digging the ditch on one side of the fort, a vein of pure cool water had been struck, which still sent a little stream trickling under overhanging alders to the sandy roadbed below. This spring had been carefully walled and arched by the ingenious soldiery, with pieces of white quartz brought from a hillside half a mile away. The bottom, too, was lined with choice crystals of the same. Small specks of gold and sparkling veins of delusive pyrites showed in the alabaster blocks. They had built over it also a little grotto with rustic benches. On the outer line of the work at this point grew a sturdy oak. It had been cut off even with the parapet and a narrow flight of steps in the red clay embankment were half hidden by its bole. Over this was built the arbor that shaded the spring. The stump had sent out so rank a growth about its crown that the overweighted boughs sloped down until they met the undergrowth around. Young shoots had sprung up through the rough wood-work here and there, but I had cut them off, cleared the leaves out of the spring, and made myself a retreat almost impervious to prying eyes and so deftly hidden that no passer-by would dream of its existence.

I do not know why, but it pleased me to think that I might walk upon the parapet, looking out over the sea of dark green foliage for miles in every direction, and by taking three steps down its side be hidden as securely as a

mole in its burrow. The silence and the desolation pleased me. There was an indescribable charm in this piece of the enemy's handiwork. I had collected a grim museum in it. Bullets, pieces of shell, a skull, and other relics of war time, lay upon the bench around the foot of the oak whose rugged bole itself bore marks of the conflict. Through the network of leaves I could see both the roads and had a fair view of their junction.

To this retreat I came one day in midsummer. It did not occur to me, until I had eaten my simple luncheon and drunk of the spring, that it was the anniversary of my grandmother's death. As may be imagined, my reflections were not pleasant. I hardly knew how time passed until cheerful voices roused me from my absorption. I knew instantly they were the voices of strangers. We had little laughter among us then. The few country people I had been wont to see passing along the road had that look of hopeless apathy which invariably settled upon those who lived within the actual theater of war.

I remembered having heard that a company of federal officers were surveying and mapping the old battle-fields, and feared they might be coming to examine the fort. Perhaps they would even profane my leafy sanctuary. I wondered if they would find the little path that led down to it from the parapet. I dreaded to look out, lest I should catch sight of a blue uniform. My feeling towards our recent enemy was, at that time, one of simple unmitigated

hate. No other word expresses it, and I am not sure that even this tells all the sickening intensity of my detestation. Even now, when all malevolence is gone and only kindly admiration remains in my heart, I have a positive antipathy for blue. I think this is common with my countrymen. It does not imply hostility, but only the bitter taste that brings to the mind the bolus—the continuing and inherited aversion to what recalls our days of humiliation and defeat. The gray is a not uncommon uniform with the militia of the North, but even the holiday soldier of the South would never feel comfortable in a garb of blue. Its darker shades have not been popular even with our ladies, since Appomattox. We have, I suppose, the same unconscious dislike for blue that our forefathers had for red-coats, only intensified by disaster instead of being mollified by victory.

I was not disappointed when, peeping through my leafy screen, I saw a half dozen officers in more or less of military undress, but still with the hated blue predominating, mounted on finely groomed and caparisoned horses, riding toward the forks of the road. I cannot express the bitterness I felt, yet I could not help observing their movements. With them were two or three ladies. I knew they were Northern women—probably the wives and daughters of some of their escort. I smiled at the stiffness with which they sat their horses and would have known by that alone they were not my countrywomen. But I had no need to speculate upon that question. There were few

Southern women who would have accepted such escort at that time. There was one exception to this awkwardness. The last couple in the cavalcade consisted of a dapper young man, who wore spectacles and rode a showy, meaty sorrel, which I noted scornfully. The lady, however, sat her horse with ease, and I half-wondered whether she were not Southern born.

The company paused at the forks, and I could hear them discussing the route they were to take. I gathered that one they called "General," with the ladies and some others of the party, had come to spend a few days at the camp of the engineers and review the scenes of former exploits. The spectacled officer was in favor of taking the southern road and started along it with the young lady under his charge. After going a little way they paused and waited the decision of the others. The day was sultry and the blistering three o'clock sun looked down on an almost breathless plain. While they halted the lady took off her hat and fanned herself with its wide brim. As she did so a coil of dark hair fell down upon her shoulders as she sat with her back towards me. I noticed that her horse seemed restive, tossing his head and pawing the ground. The question of their route was settled by the general's starting toward the pass to the westward and calling the others to follow. As they rode away I noticed a mass of white thunder clouds creeping up behind the mountain to the south of the pass, just in the path of the blazing sun.

I laughed to think how one of our sudden showers would soon send them dripping and draggled to the old church for shelter. I could almost hear them pounding along the corduroy road in their enforced retreat. But if they came to the old church, where should I find refuge? My leafy grotto was well enough while the sun shone, but a poor shelter from the rain. The thought annoyed me and kept my mind running on what I had seen. It was curious that I was able to recall the appearance of but one of the ladies. Of the others I could only remember that their habits were blue—they may have varied in shade, but they were blue. For this one, her habit—what was its color? I was sure it was not blue. The hat was black; of that I was certain. And the horse?

Somehow it pleased me, this attempt to piece out my memory. I had noted little and guessed rather than remembered that she must be young, and fair rather than beautiful. Further I could not go. Habit and feature seemed curiously to elude my recollection. Her hair I knew was dark and abundant. The horse she rode was much more distinct in my mind though I had not consciously scrutinized him. But his full eye, strong bony head, long neck and deep but firm-drawn quarter, made a picture no lover of the horse could fail to note, of which, to a casual observer, the young girl upon the saddle, however fair, would be only an incident. Indeed, one almost regretted that the flowing drapery concealed the

burnished coat. As I thought of this, it occurred to me that her habit was of the color ordinarily known as cadet gray, only a shade removed from that worn by the officers of the Confederate army. I remembered that it was slashed with black and ornamented with buttons, and that the hat was a plain felt, with a long drooping plume. The picture was not an unpleasant one; and as, one after another, I evolved its details from my memory, my heart warmed to the rider of the noble horse, whose costume was so closely modeled upon that which must ever be cherished by the Southern people as a memento of a glorious epoch. "Confederate gray" became not so much a national color as a shroud of holy memories which profane hands might not touch.

As this thought came uppermost in my mind, it flashed upon me that the habit might have been adopted in derision—as a taunt to a conquered people. At once the half remembered face grew hateful. The horse I would have sworn was of southern blood—perhaps a captive forced to bear the daughter of a conqueror. If so, how must not he despise his present task. He that had faced the glare of battle and felt the shock of onslaught, how must he not chafe at being made the pet and plaything of a conqueror's favorite!

All at once my heart stood still! She that rode and all that was about me faded from my mind. I saw only the horse—that grand, deep-throated chestnut with his eyes of flame, muscles of iron and heart as fearless as the

lion's! The level landscape disappeared. The summer flame died out. Cool, spring breezes fanned my brow; the scent of the blossoming wild-grape was in my nostrils; the shadow of the mountain road was about me and I heard again my father's voice!

The thought choked me. I clambered up the parapet and gazed eagerly along the road they had taken. My father's horse! It seemed as if he himself stood beside me—touched me—called me by name, sent a dying message to me!

Know him? How my heart beat at the question! I would have known him among a thousand in the desert wilds, aye, even in the city's streets disguised by draft and burden. Had I dreamed that he yet lived, I would have hunted the world over rather than he should have been a captive. Yet he was a captive. I remembered how the brand stood out upon his flank as they passed by. How the hated letters marred his silky coat—"U. S."—badge of shame and profanation!

An hour before I would have given anything to obtain possession of him—to have known even that he lived. Now he was forever disgraced. I spurned him because he was not dead. My father's war horse with the brand of captivity upon him! I could not bear the thought. I did not envy his northern mistress her possession. I only hated him for having lived to serve his master's conqueror. I hated him that he did not die when his master fell—that

maggots were not eating him on the Virginia battle-field ! I wished that he might die—that I might kill him !

No doubt the doll-faced creature whom he carried boasted that her steed had belonged to the leader of that last gallant charge. I could have pitied Bucephalus transformed into a cart-horse ; but my father's charger as a lady's pet—his mistress the child of an enemy ! The thought heated my blood to madness. Almost unconsciously I began to plan his destruction.

I had grown tall and strong-limbed during the years of conflict. My father had resembled his father in appearance. I was like my grandmother, and had been noted from boyhood for strength of arm. Perhaps her fondness for me was in a measure due to my resemblance to her father, who was said to have been the strongest man in all the region round. As I strode back and forth along the parapet, muttering imprecations at the senseless beast that had aroused my anger, almost unconsciously I took out my knife and cut a hickory sapling that had shot thick and stocky from the heaped-up earth. I remember thinking, as I forced the keen blade through the white fiber, how I would like to bury it in the throat of the recreant beast, and see his blood flow after it—the base blood that had dared to stay in his veins after his master fell. I cut the stick and shaped it for a staff. Why, I did not know. I had long since discarded a cane with that contempt youth has of weakness. I trimmed it carefully and rounded the



end to fit the hand. The wide white grain showed its quick growth and attested its toughness. What did I mean to do with it? I did not ask myself the question.

Thinking only of the horse I would have worshiped as an idol, could he have come to us directly from his master's grave, I had forgotten to notice anything about me until a vivid flash, followed by a peal of thunder that echoed and re-echoed among the peaks, startled me from my abstraction. The sun was blotted out, and the pass was black with heaped-up clouds, along the face of which the lightning played. I heard a cry—a shout, and saw a cloud of dust on the road that led through the pass. It rose up, white and feathery against the inky sky. The breath of the coming storm caught it and whirled it against the dark green side of the mountain on the north. I looked on with grim enjoyment, as I thought how fast the gay company of northern sight-seers fled before a southern storm. Again a cry—or was it a shriek?

Looking over the billows of wind-beaten oaks I could just see the figure of a woman clinging to the back of a flying steed. Her habit was streaming out behind; a black plume was tossing in the wind. Far in the rear, lashing on their straining steeds, came one, two—a half dozen pursuers. It was a hopeless race. Those coarse-haired mongrels might as well try to catch the wind as to overtake that clean-limbed, deep-chested southern horse of royal pedigree. My heart exulted in his prowess, but I hated him

all the more that he should wear the fetters of a silken captivity.

I looked again. It was no race for shelter. The horse had broken away from his rider. I exulted in the idea that he was making a dash for liberty, and gave no thought to his imperilled rider. The storm came swifter than the steed, and its wild breath tossed up the branches of the oak that grew beside the parapet so that I could not see the road. A mad idea seized me—a wild longing to destroy!

I sprang from the parapet and started towards the road. Whether I walked or ran I knew not; it was barely fifty yards away, and there was time enough for either. A thick clump of mingled oaks and chinquapins, high enough for concealment yet affording opportunity for observation through their branches, lined the roadside at this point. I judged the horse would take the way by which he came, and so pass close to this leafy covert. I remember standing with my arm drawn back; the clean hickory bludgeon I had cut, reversed; my hand clasping the smaller end until the nails cut into the flesh of the palm made soft by sickness and sloth. The wind had blown away my hat. My coat was lying on the bench in the arbor. I must have rolled up my sleeve as I crossed the intervening space, for I remember that my right arm was bare almost to the shoulder. The wind blew the hair into my eyes. I shook it out not thinking that I could use a hand. I had

but one thought—to clutch and kill the horse which would soon pass within my reach !

I heard the clatter of hoofs upon the rough corduroy, coming momentarily nearer and nearer. Presently, through an opening in the fluttering leaves, I saw the hot eyes and blood-red nostrils of the straining horse, and the pallid features of his rider framed in black and gray above. I laughed to think of her attempting to control the horse my father had selected especially for his power. She might as well have tried to turn a steamship. She evidently realized this fact and was making no effort to direct his movements. Despite the hatred that had grown up in my heart, I could not but admire the courage and self-control she displayed. Aware of the futility of any effort, she yet did nothing to enhance her danger. There were no screams—only the set, intense watchfulness showed with what care she sought to maintain her seat. If she had been a better horsewoman, this would have been a matter of no difficulty, for he bore her as lightly as a feather. As she came nearer I could see that the skirt of the habit had been caught and torn, and the ragged strips were flying back from the horse's side. I rejoiced that the cursed thing was torn. Perhaps I stepped a little forward in my excitement. At least I must have disclosed my presence in some manner, for the horse was nearly fifty yards away when the rider let fall into my heart as it were, a look of wild entreaty.

I know not what answer mine made, if any, but at this

mute appeal I forgot the horse in pity for the rider. It was but an instant. Then came again the wild desire to slay. The iron hoofs consumed the intervening distance like a flash. The glaring eyes came rushing on as if a thunderbolt were behind. I noted every detail—the silky forelock parted and flying backward in the wind, the shining whorl in the center of the forehead, the one white spot hardly bigger than a dime that I remembered on the black muzzle. I scanned the reins, saw how they were attached, and determined where I would fix my hold. The low outstretched neck brought the red nostrils and bony head nearer still. It seemed as if I might almost touch them, but I did not move. Nearer and nearer. I glanced up at the rider. She seemed rushing down upon me—the pale face and staring eyes full of piteous pleading!

I had judged my distance and formed my plans. When the whorl on his forehead showed just beneath the outer limb of the nearest chinquapin I sprang forward. There was a blow—a shock—a feeling of helpless projection through infinite space—a sense of falling, with dark accusing eyes and a drawn pallid face above! Then came the shock of an incumbent mass—then darkness

## CHAPTER XVII.

The night that followed was full of harsh and painful dreams. When I finally awoke, it was to find myself strapped to an iron bedstead in a plain, rough-boarded room, which yet displayed evidences of comfort and refinement. My right leg felt stiff and cold and seemed held to a frame by a curious straining force. I learned afterwards that a weight of two hundred pounds was attached to it. It seemed to be broken from hip to toe. I was yet to learn that a fracture of the neck of the femur—that bit of springy bone which joins hip and thigh together and keeps man upright—was the most serious of my hurts. This was no light matter, but I did not speculate about my injuries or what caused them, at that time. The chill, the strain and a terrible longing for a change of position were the only sensations of which I was conscious. My left hand and head were free—all the rest, body, shoulders, limbs were strapped fast.

As I struggled to move, a curtain was pushed aside and an attendant entered noiselessly. He wore a dark blue blouse, short, scant, and ill-fitting, with light-blue trousers—the uniform which Yankee economy has devised to mortify the pride and degrade the manhood of the Federal soldier. Such is the dread of war among that curious people,

that it is regarded as good statesmanship to make the soldier ashamed of his occupation, so that only the most unfortunate and degraded of their population will enter the army except as officers, and even they are ashamed to wear their uniforms save when on duty. They seem utterly oblivious to the fact that the safety of the republic depends on a universal and ever active military spirit. The regular army of the United States, before the War for Separation, was made up almost entirely of foreign mercenaries, officered by Southern gentlemen. Even in that struggle a large proportion of their most efficient leaders were renegade Southerners, and the most efficient of the rank and file of foreign birth. At the outbreak of that war, the South had probably more officers than privates both in the army and the navy.

It is to be hoped that our new republic will bear in mind the fact that her army must be organized upon the French, rather than the English ideal, if it is to be relied upon in great emergencies. The white man of the South is not purely mercenary in his instincts like his congener of the North. With us, the sense of honor very often entirely overrides the consideration of profit. The North hires its private soldiery to endure its scorn. As a consequence it pays the highest wages ; gets the poorest service ; has the largest percentage of desertions of any military organization in the world, and, in the event of war, finds its regular army infinitely below its volunteer force in the morale of its rank and file. Let my countrymen remember

that honor and opportunity will win the best men to engage in the humblest service, which is thereby exalted to the highest dignity. I sincerely trust that no man will be allowed to wear the emblems of rank in our Southern army, who has not first worn the garb of the private and won his way above the ranks by length of service, attested acquirement or approved conduct. By this means we shall always have an army of gentlemen, inspired to do the utmost that valor can achieve.

This will be all the easier to effect from the fact that the inferior race will always furnish a host of mercenaries, who can be relied upon for the more menial phases of the service. I know such counsel contravenes the feelings and prejudices of our people, but I feel assured that a thoughtful consideration of unalterable facts will enable them to see the wisdom of such a course. It is essential above all things that the new republic, if it is to maintain its dignity and power, should harmonize not only the interests but the inclinations of the two races within her borders. She needs to stimulate the efforts and aspirations of both to the very utmost to hold her place abreast of other nationalities. By constituting her army of two great contingents equal in pay and equipment, the rank and file of one to be of the inferior race, officered at first by promotion from the white soldiery, and afterwards its honors made a reward for intelligence, capacity and devotion among its own rank and file, its officers, whether

black or white, to be always junior to those of like grade in the white corps, it is possible to unite the best aspirations of both races in support of her power and glory.

The problem is not without difficulty, but touching as it does the very life of the new nation, is certain to command the immediate attention of our people. Such a policy was impossible under the old government because of the curiously fanciful construction given under it to the dogma of equality. In the Federal army a colored officer was liable to be assigned to the command of white troops without regard to his rank, while the white officer felt degraded by assignment to a colored corps. In truth, such was the curious fear of recognizing the fact of race or color, that instead of offering to them the spur of promotion in a colored contingent, the negroes were treated simply as servile mercenaries. By the plan outlined above, a colored subaltern would never be in command of white troops, and if one, by long service, good conduct and marked ability, should perchance reach the higher grades, his capacity and attainments would be so pronounced as to command confidence of all and so silence every feeling of insubordination. Such an event is not likely to happen in this generation unless in a case of such phenomenal capacity as to secure universal approval. The details of the plan would have to be worked out with care, but the experience of the Knights of the Southern Cross proves it to be not only feasible but eminently adapt-



ed to the end in view—the unification of the interests of the two races.

My surprise had hardly time to shape itself into disgust, when, as my attendant drew aside the curtain, my eyes fell upon a scene so familiar as to make me wonder if what I saw was not a dream and my painful confinement only some horrid nightmare. The oaks, through which the morning sunlight streamed, seemed the very ones that stood before my chamber window in my father's house. I was not mistaken. The camp, in the hospital of which I was lying, had been located on the slightly hill where the ashes of "The Grove" still showed through the rank-growing weeds. The rent the government had been paying for the premises since the establishment of the garrison at this point after hostilities had ceased, had been the main support of my mother's thrifty enterprise. So the enemy's subsequent need partially repaired his previous acts of wanton destruction.

It is unnecessary to detail the incidents of my recovery. Two days of an imprisonment that lasted until the leaves upon the oaks were brown and sere, had passed, when I first became conscious of my surroundings. All before that was a troubled void. Anesthetics and anodynes had kindly prolonged the darkness that attended syncope. I had rescued the general's daughter from death—so said my garrulous but attentive nurse—and had been brought to the hospital more dead than alive. I

made no inquiry about the general or his daughter simply because I cared nothing about either. In fact, I hardly realized to what his words referred. My apathy made no difference with his garrulity. He went on to tell me, while he busied himself in relieving my pain, how the whole surgical force of the military department had been taxed to ensure my recovery. The medical director, the hospital surgeon and the local practitioners had all been engaged upon the case. Our old family physician had recognized me and from him my identity had first been learned. An ambulance was at once dispatched for my mother and quarters assigned her at the camp by the general's express orders. The attendant evidently expected me to be overpowered by this graciousness, but it did not seem to me at all strange. Indeed, I could see no reason why I should not be there or why my mother should be elsewhere. I had been injured, but how or by whom I had no idea nor even curiosity enough to ask. He said the horse was undoubtedly mad. He had taken a long journey by rail while in high condition. The heat and the dust, with the noise and jar of the train, had induced a congested state of the brain and predisposed him to madness.

He employed the medical terms which he had no doubt heard the surgeons use in discussing the matter. His language struck me as singular and I wondered what he meant. What had I to do with "the horse" or "the horse" with me? I must have dozed while he droned on.

I was bruised and full of pain, but he still talked about "the horse," while he loosened the straps by which I was bound ; chafed my limbs and shifted my position by changing the location of certain hard little pads or cushions with which I became very familiar during the weeks that followed. The relief I felt was instant and delightful. As I half-slept and half-listened to his words, one thought was in my mind and I kept muttering to myself :

"The horse ! The horse !"

"Yes, sir," said my attendant approvingly, "it was a great pity, for he was the finest hoss in the department—by all odds the finest—and never the least ugly before. Some says it was the whipping. You see, sir," (he pronounced it "sorr," which struck me as odd ; I supposed it a Yankeeism, then), "you see, sorr, he wasn't used to it. The lieutenant feels proper bad about advising it, but the doctors say it only hastened the crisis a little."

It was curious that I felt no interest in what he said, and had no thought that it had any relation to myself.

"But that was a nate blow ye gave him and a nate bit of a stick that ye did it with too, sorr," he continued as he lifted my right arm so that the blood might circulate through its veins. "Sure, there's no lack of muscle here"—he ran his hand back and forth on my bare arm as he spoke—"but one wouldn't expect anything so soft to give such a killin' blow, just in the right spot too. The doctors say it's wonderful, sorr, quite wonderful. They say the

tenth of a second or a quarter of an inch miscalculation, and instead of killing the horse and saving the young lady you'd both been killed. For that matter it was touch and go, any way, with you. He couldn't have served you much worse if you hadn't killed him, though of course it might have been bad for the lady."

"Killed the horse?—killed the horse?" I repeated dully.

"Yes, sorr, killed him fast enough," said the nurse, "and by the same token his name was 'Secession,' and by good rights he ought to have been dead long ago."

"Secession! Secession!"

It all flashed upon me then.

"Did I kill him?" I asked.

"Faith, that you did, sorr, as dead as a mackerel."

"Thank God!"

"Indeed, sorr, that's what the young lady said, and good reason *she* had to thank the Lord and you too, as no doubt she will as soon as she knows you're able to understand what she says; but I don't see that you've any special reason to be grateful, unless it is for the chance of saving her. An' in faith a man with all his seven senses about him might do worse than risk his life for the likes of her."

Despite his enthusiasm, for the young lady, I was grateful only that I had killed the horse she had ridden.

It was a curious experience, those long weeks of confinement, strapped hand and foot, or rather body and limb,

to the iron bedstead, with that terrible weight tugging night and day at the broken leg. I had other hurts, but this was the most serious, and it was essential that I be kept from any involuntary movement of trunk or limb until the fractured bone had knitted solidly together. It was my only hope, and with youth and health on my side the chances were in my favor. The ordeal was not a light one. I had the best of care, however, and was soon surprised to find myself enjoying the society of those who wore the uniform I hated. Perhaps this was in part due to the cordial praise the officers of the garrison bestowed upon my act. It was hardly strange that I flushed with pleasure when these men, almost every one of whom bore visible tokens of the courage he had displayed upon the field of battle, called my act heroic and spoke in laudatory terms of the strength and address it must have required. I felt their commendation to be praise indeed. My mother was with me every day. Friends, old and young, dropped in to see me and I soon became a link between the city's life and that of the garrison of which I had unwittingly become a part.

Of course, the general and his daughter were anxious to express their gratitude for her deliverance. I avoided the interview as long as I could, and would have been removed on purpose to escape from it, if I had not been assured that removal was impossible until the bone was firmly knitted. My mother was greatly annoyed at what

she termed my foolish shyness. She did not know how I dreaded the alternative of accepting their gratitude or confessing the truth. She had been the guest of the general's daughter since my mishap, and was enthusiastic in her praise. When I could defer the ordeal no longer they came. There was very little said—so little that I had, or thought I had, no opportunity to proclaim the truth. Perhaps such things are never quite convenient. I began to wonder if it were not possible to avoid it altogether. The daughter had been saved by my act ; was it necessary that I should avow the intent that really inspired it ?

The general referred to it as a deed worthy of my father's son, and seemed to think there could be no higher praise. There was nothing that could have given me so much pleasure. The daughter uttered some quiet expressions of gratitude and—that was all. I was glad they said no more and ashamed that I had not avowed the truth.

After that she came often—sometimes sitting with my mother, occasionally relieving her in her watch at my bedside. I came at length to expect and enjoy her presence, despite the horrible thought that I was deceiving her by my silence, and receiving her graceful attentions for an act I never intended to perform. A thousand times I determined to confess the truth, but was never able to begin the humiliating task.

So the weeks dragged by. When I was able to ride in an ambulance, upon a bed specially designed by the

ingenious surgeon, she often sat beside me. In this way we rode about the valley, and thus attended I returned to Ryalmont. Yet her presence gave even more pain than pleasure. Had I not won whatever place I held in her esteem by falsehood? Nevertheless the world had changed wonderfully to my eyes since I sat in the angle of the old earthwork, and saw the gay party ride by. Before I even dared to tempt disaster by the use of a crutch, my brain was teeming with wild ambitious schemes. My mother had no more need to urge but rather to restrain. I was burning to rival in achievement the father to whom I had been so fortunate as to be compared in courage. That commendation at least I could rightfully and honestly accept. The motive did not detract from the coolness and courage required to perform the act. Yet, after all, it was the motive rather than the act that inspired the praise of which I was so greedy. I did not like to speculate upon the matter, but determined that I would thereafter deserve the praise that had been so generously accorded.

Had I known all these weary weeks that I was the personal guest of the general, my chagrin would have been unendurable. I not only had the notion which is prevalent among my countrymen in regard to the mercenary character of the Yankee, but was quite ignorant of that inflexible system by which modern armies are subsisted. I had regarded myself, whenever I thought of the matter at all, as somehow supported and cared for at public expense—

merely living upon the superfluity of the satrap who ruled our people. I did not dream that there was any impropriety in thus billeting me upon the service with which he was connected, and if such a thought had occurred to me I should hardly have deemed it out of character in a Yankee general.

The truth is that our Northern friends have boasted so long of the sharpness and shrewdness to which they attribute not only individual success, but the general prosperity, that they have only themselves to blame if they are regarded as a nation of tricksters by whom the ability to deceive is considered the most desirable of attainments. It is hardly strange that to the people of the South, the Yankee and the Jew should stand on the same level and be deemed alike thrifty traffickers, who have sought their own advantage by devious ways so long that honor, though not altogether unknown among them, has become very rare and is held in little esteem. I suppose this feeling reconciled me to the acceptance of favors I would otherwise have shrunk from receiving at a stranger's hands.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

Ryalmont even in its autumn garb was beautiful. The soft October haze hung about the hillsides. The gums and maples flamed among the pines. The dogwood flaunted its crimson banner among the russet oaks. The dying year had never seemed so beautiful before, for my long illness made the earth appear all the brighter when I came to look upon its face. Perhaps the fact that Edith Fairbanks was a guest at Ryalmont had something to do with my enjoyment of the season. Fate seemed to have decreed that we should not be separated. Her father had made all his preparations to return north, when he was suddenly ordered on special duty to New Orleans. He expected to be absent but a week—not more than two at the farthest. My mother invited the daughter to pass the interval with us at Ryalmont. It was Christmas when her father returned. My convalescence was then complete. How could it be otherwise. Love had been my nurse. When I began to try the shattered limb, it was upon her shoulder that I leaned. Her eyes looked up to mine with anxious solicitude at every careful step. It was not long before I had confessed my fault, told the story of my foolish hate, and been forgiven. Then I confessed another passion and was forgiven that also. The announcement of our betrothal

awaited only her father's return. It hardly needed to be announced. Everybody knew that we were lovers, and all had a kindly interest in our little romance. The world is always kind to unassuming love, and we took no pains to conceal ours.

Ryalmont was gayer than it had been for years. Officers from the garrison and friends from the city came to see us often. My mother almost forgot her sorrow in duties especially congenial to her nature. Peace had come ; prosperity had begun, and fortune would soon follow. So the hours flew by with amazing swiftness. When I met General Fairbanks as he alighted dripping and sleety at our door, it seemed but a few weeks since I had seen him riding through the valley, with his white Panama hat pressed down over his eyes to exclude the sunshine. He had come for the daughter who was already domesticated in our hillside home. Would this grey-bearded, firm-lipped soldier approve his daughter's choice, or was my brief dream of love already over—killed by the frosts of a single winter ?

General Fairbanks was a successful manufacturer, whom the war had transformed into a soldier. The regiment which he recruited was equipped at his own expense. He was made its colonel, not a little against his inclination, and in this position had shown an aptitude for war hardly inferior to the ability displayed in his private affairs. While he fought his business had reaped advantage from enhanced

prices, which more than compensated him for the sacrifices he had made. He was justly regarded as a fine type of his people—earnest, brave and honest; but above everything else enterprising and successful. He was somewhat past middle life, and, save the dowry which his wife brought, his fortune was due entirely to his own energies.

He was a splendid specimen of physical manhood. In height I stood above him a hand's breadth, but, as I greeted him upon the porch, I felt myself a pigmy beside him. He was not large even for his height, but there was an air of power about him as he sprang from his horse, and mounted the steps in the pelting storm, careless of its force—not as if seeking shelter, but as if the storm was only an unpleasant fact, not to be seriously regarded by one having a man's work to perform.

It is chiefly in this truly regal scorn of material obstacles and their irrepressible desire for accomplishing whatever they undertake that the people of the North are our superiors. The rage for achievement is so universal with them that they have ever the air of facing difficulties which must be overcome without delay. They appear always to be going up hill. They are almost universally given to talking of what they are doing or about to do. Our people, in exchanging greetings, ask after one another's families with particularity. A Northern man's first inquiry of his fellow is as to his business. It is not so much self-assertion—for they are really a modest people, more given to

doing than to boasting—but rather the natural result of an approved confidence in individual power.

In dealing with material problems, and especially in individual capacity and self-reliance, the Yankees are unrivalled by any people in history. They have skill to devise, courage to undertake, and fortitude to perform all that is possible and many things that seem impossible. As business men they are the most enterprising and dauntless that the world has ever known. They have no distrust of their own conclusions, and no fear of unforeseen contingencies. Strange as it may seem, the same influences have developed a people collectively the weakest and politically the most truckling, whimsical and unstable, that ever held the reins of power. Individual self-reliance seems so prodigiously developed that confidence in public integrity, wisdom and official unselfishness, has become impossible. They are not, in fact, a people at all, but a mere aggregation of units, having only one thing in common—an undoubting confidence, each in his own intellectual conclusions, and an almost equally impregnable conviction in the sharpness, selfishness and lack of principle of the others. Confidence in himself makes each one bold in the assertion and maintenance of his own ideas. Distrust of his fellows makes him chary of boasting, but hinders continued harmonious action. The result of these qualities is a people self-reliant, but not self-assertive ; individually opinionated and contentious, but weak, through want of unity ;

with a strong pride in their business capacity, but a lax instinct of personal honor. The power to outbid one's fellows in the legal tender of the land is the highest object of ambition, and the capacity to rise from poverty or mere comfort to the rank of the millionaire is the crucial test of merit. And well it may be, for with them the ladder of fame has always golden rounds. The decimal point and the dollar mark determine all values. With millions, there is no honor or dignity that one may not achieve. Without them he is powerless—socially and politically a cipher. The golden key unlocks for him the door of privilege. Money hides disgrace and glorifies crime. No life is too shameful to bar the gambler or the pugilist from the halls of Congress, if he is but free-handed enough to pave his way with coin. The doors of the Senate work on golden hinges, and the dollar is the unit by which civic rank and patriotic merit are estimated.

I note these facts without any thought of condemnation. They are not altogether pleasant to me, and are especially inharmonious with our Southern ideal, in which honor is not measured by the balance-sheet nor patriotism estimated by Troy weight. They may be unavoidable in a more advanced state of society, and under the peculiar influences of modern civilization. As to this, I cannot say. I am willing to admit that the results are in many respects remarkable, and that the men it produces in-

stead of being altogether ignoble are oft times among the most magnificent specimens of Anglo-Saxon manhood.

Such an one was Ambrose Wilson Fairbanks, Major General in the Volunteer army of the United States, one of the wealthiest manufacturers of the East, who had risen from the humblest rank of life to the highest civic and military honors by the golden ladder of business success, when he became my guest at Ryalmont. I say "*my* guest," for in these few months I had come to be the head of the house, according to that inflexible Salic law of our Southern life. My father's absence for so long a time had made this transition all the more easy when it came. This fact prevented me from being overwhelmed with a sense of insignificance in the presence of this man who, unaided and alone, had won his way to distinction in the two arenas where the fight of life is hottest and the manhood of the combatant most severely tested—war and trade. As his host I was his equal, and forgot my callowness in the duty thus imposed upon me.

After the plain yet abundant dinner, we retired to this room for our post-prandial cigars. According to our Southern country custom it was guest-chamber and smoking room in one. A "light-wood" fire burned brightly on the hearth, giving it an air of luxurious comfort that nothing else can bestow. With much misgiving I told him of my love and hope, briefly and awkwardly no doubt. He was evidently not uninformed of what had happened, yet

his self-control was not sufficient to hide the excitement its recital brought. He grew pale to the very edge of the clear-cut lips that showed close-shut across the parting of his monstache. His cool, gray eyes gazed almost fiercely into mine. The muscles of his face, however, were too thoroughly under control to betray emotion. The smoke came from his cigar in even, annular waves, and floated steadily upward in the firelight. I was surprised at what I saw, but only thought how dearly he must love his daughter to be so moved at what concerned her future, and my heart went out to him in reverence. His agitation gave me confidence, and I said, no doubt, more than the occasion demanded.

He did not interrupt my communication by word or gesture. When I had blundered to an end there was a moment's silence, just enough to impress me with the fact that he did not answer at once. The struggle with the world had taught this simple, straight-forward man to use the weapons of silence and composure with exquisite skill in his intercourse with men. It was as if he knew himself to be powerless, if he let the enemy come within his defences, that he stood thus on guard upon the outer walls. I knew before he had spoken a word that he did not altogether approve my suit.

Edith had told me little about her father. She was his idol, her mother having long been dead. It seemed not to have crossed her mind that he could ever contravene her

wishes. Once when I intimated a doubt of his approval, stating my inexperience and lack, not merely of achievement but of preparation, she had responded gaily that with such a father as mine I had no need to have a certificate of merit ; and as for her papa, she was sure he was too grateful to the man who had saved his daughter's life to refuse to admit him to a partnership in her love. So we had talked it all over, and settled the immediate future almost without consideration of this potent factor--this man that now sat across the table from me, the firelight shining on the gold buttons of his buff vest, and showing the dark braid upon the sleeve of his undress coat, which was the only hint of rank he wore. No one could doubt his love for the daughter, but I felt he was about to intervene to save her from what he deemed her folly. I could not say I thought him in the wrong.

“ You are young, Mr. Owen,” he said at length.

The tone confirmed my impression. It gave the words a sting that cannot be here expressed. Yet I was not angry. He had the right to question and also to disapprove. I owed him respect and complaisance in the exercise of this right.

So I answered quietly:—

“ A little past nineteen, sir.”

“ Indeed !” he ejaculated in surprise. I was evidently younger than he had supposed. “ Hardly older than Edith,” he added.



“Two years and two months, sir.”

“Ah,” he said, as a smile of wonderful sweetness came over his face, warming its color and softening its outlines. “You have evidently been comparing notes !”

“Naturally.”

“And you have settled everything to your mutual liking, I suppose ?”

“Subject to your approval, sir.”

“Oh, of course,” with a careless wave of the hand.

“You know, doubtless, that Edith has an ample fortune in her own right as well as her expectancy from me ?”

So he thought I was after his daughter's money ! I could not suppress a smile at the idea. Yet what else could I expect ? Was not he a successful Yankee, and I the impoverished son of a Confederate soldier, whose estate, at the best, had been insignificant ? I was half-amused and half-provoked that I had not anticipated this. So I answered lightly, but perhaps a little proudly :

“I suppose I must have known that you were wealthy. I heard the attendant in the hospital say you equipped your regiment. Of course, that implies wealth. I have heard your daughter speak of your Mill. What sort of a mill I never asked nor cared. As to your wealth or hers, I am sure I never gave it a thought. Perhaps I ought to have inferred it from your rank.”

“Hardly,” he replied, with a tone of amused sarcasm. His eyes lost a trifle of their harshness as he continued :

“ You have enough to live upon, I suppose ? ”

“ I am my father’s heir, and will some time be my mother’s, too.”

“ And your father left—? ”

“ This plantation, the few books your soldiers spared, and his name.”

“ Of which you prize most highly the latter I suppose ? ”

“ Certainly, sir ; I am very proud of that.”

“ And you are quite right to be so,” he responded with a heartiness that surprised me. After a moment he added : “ This plantation, I take it, is not a very valuable property.”

“ I suppose it would yield a fair living,” I answered seriously, “ and, supplemented by what I expect to earn, would be enough.”

“ Spoken like a man, Mr. Owen ; spoken like a man ; ” said he, approvingly. His earnestness confused me. As long as he remained the cool, calculating guardian of his wealth I understood him, or thought I did ; but when he spoke in this manner he took me at a disadvantage. So I began to distrust him when he said in tones of marked kindness :

“ And now about yourself. What do you intend to do ? ”

Was he about to yield ? My hope revived.

I told him that I proposed to complete my education, and afterwards adopt my father’s profession.

“ And this will take—”

“ Three or four years.”

“ And you are willing to wait ?”

“ Of course,” said I indignantly. “ You do not suppose I would think of marrying your daughter until I was able to support her properly ?”

“ No matter what I supposed ; I am glad of your assurance to the contrary.” Then he turned and looked thoughtfully into the fire. I could not understand him, so I said :

“ I hope you believe what I say, General Fairbanks.”

“ Every word of it, sir,” he answered, looking me squarely in the face. “ I believe that you love my daughter for her own sake, and would loyally love and maintain her if she had not a friend or a penny in the world.”

What did he mean, this hard, practical man ? I could not make him out. I wished to thank him, but I felt sure that there was to be an unpleasant sequel. So I remained silent.

“ And Edith,” he asked, after awhile. “ Is she content with this prospect of love in a cottage ? That is what you term such rosy expectations, is it not, Mr. Owen ?”

He spoke with a smile, but his words galled me.

“ Perhaps you had better ask her,” I replied, rather tartly.

“ Of course, I intend to do that,” he responded in a

matter-of-fact tone. "I shall have to talk it over with your mother, too. Perhaps the best way will be for us to consider it all together—a sort of council of war."

"Nothing could please me better," I replied. "Shall we call them?"

I rose as I spoke and threw my cigar into the fire. I had hardly smoked it at all, and noticed that the one my companion held had gone out. It struck me as peculiar, for I remembered to have heard that, no matter how hot the battle raged, General Fairbanks's cigar was always alight.

"Not just yet," said he, with a gesture towards my chair. "I have something to say to you first, which may perhaps render further consideration of this matter unnecessary."

I seated myself and waited. He sat so long looking intently into the fire that I concluded he had forgotten my presence. All at once it occurred to me that he was about to object because of my southern birth and Confederate affinity. I knew that the strongest impulse of his nature was patriotism. I knew also, that he represented the very extreme of northern thought. All at once the difference between his views and mine, the great gulf which separated the two peoples, yawned before me. I wondered that I had not thought of it before, but though I could well understand how a Southern father might object to his daughter's marriage with a Yankee, it had never occurred

to me that the same objection, or even a greater, might exist against a southern suitor in the mind of a northern parent. The thought made me angry and defiant.

“Perhaps you object to me, sir, because of my southern birth—because of the Confederate cause with which my name is forever linked by my father’s fame?”

He turned towards me, with a pitying smile upon his lips and a twinkle in his eyes. I noted then for the first time that his lids were heavy and he seemed to have a worn and anxious look.

“We do not carry politics or religion into our social relations,” he said. “I do not deny that I would rather Edith had chosen one of our own people. I do not share the admiration which so many have for Southern life and character. It is well enough in its way, but entirely different from ours. That, however, is for her to consider. All I can do is to insist that she shall have time, opportunity and freedom to decide, and not be bound by any bond or pledge, prematurely given.”

“I will not conceal from you,” he said, as he rose and paced back and forth in evident anxiety, “that there are grave reasons why she should not at present engage herself to any one. Of these she will be fully informed. In a sense, Mr. Owen, I am not romantic, but I can never forget that you saved my daughter’s life and by virtue of that fact have a claim on her love and my regard which no other man can have. If she finds you worthy, I have no right or

inclination to object. I shall only require that you leave her free to determine, at any time, exactly what shall be your future relations, and I assure you, sir, that whenever she may decide that her happiness will be subserved by uniting her destiny with yours, I shall most heartily approve. A son of General Owen, who reveres his father's memory and has shown the spirit you have manifested, is worthy of alliance with any American family. As for the difference of sentiment existing between us, I am willing to trust to time to teach you that your father was wrong. That is all there is of the matter, anyhow. To my thinking the difference is merely fanciful, and I believe the war to have been unnecessary, if not foolish. In time you will no doubt arrive at the same conclusion."

How his careless words and dispassionate manner stung me! Could it be possible that I should ever fall so low as to admit that the father whose memory I worshiped had been wrong? Was that the condition precedent of my happiness? If so, I determined to elect disappointment and misery instead.

Meantime General Fairbanks went on:

"I should be glad to show my confidence in your father's son by informing you of the nature of my objection to a present engagement, but I am not at liberty to do so. This I will say: I have never contravened my daughter's wish in any matter where her happiness was at stake, and shall not do so now. The decision will be hers."

“Indeed,” said he, as he paused before me and extended his hand, “I sincerely wish that the obstacles were swept away and that you and Edith were ready to commence life in this pleasant mountain home with your courage and her faith as the sole capital of your life venture.”

I forgave him even this mercantile simile as I felt the earnest clasp of a hand as strong as my own.

“But you must remember, sir, that we have not at all times control of our own acts. You yourself are not yet ready for the happiness you desire. Some years must elapse before you can think of marriage. What may happen in the meantime we do not know. The obstacle that now exists may possibly be removed. Thank God, it is not absolutely insurmountable, and if my daughter’s happiness depends upon my overcoming it no effort on my part shall be wanting. In these years you may change—I know,” he said, anticipating the denial that sprang to my lips, “I know you do not think so. But you are young. So is Edith. The next few years will bring much experience to you both. I shall put no restriction on your intercourse. In fact, I should prefer that it continue. I hope to see you often in our home and trust we may again be your guests. It is only fair that I should tell you that I have resigned my commission in the army and am on my way home. My place is but an hour’s ride from the college you are to attend, and we shall be glad to have you and your mother make it your home as often as you desire during

your course. Edith has written me about the matter and I heartily approve. Are you willing to leave things thus deemed advisable to modify your relations? You must in abeyance until she comes of age or it is mutually remember that I act as guardian as well as parent."

I was not willing. What lover was ever willing to prolong incertitude as to his fate? This he no doubt saw, for he added :

"I mean, of course, if Edith approve what I suggest?"

What lover ever dare refuse to submit to such arbitration? I bowed assent. He shook my hand warmly and said heartily :

"Thank you!"

I thought his voice was husky, but it was clear enough a moment after when, having relighted his cigar, he said :

"Well then, that is settled. Now please send Edith to me for a few moments, and come yourself after a time with your mother, whom you will, of course, inform as to the purport of our conversation. I doubt not she will approve what I have done."

I found Edith and my mother in the sitting-room. They sat together on the rug before the fire, my mother holding the young girl in her arms. The widow's weeds contrasted well with the bright maidenly attire of the girl, and my mother's fair matronly face with its massy coil of golden hair detracted nothing from the classic outlines of the delicate head that lay upon her bosom. The firelight



formed an aureole of fitting and peculiar radiance about them. I thought I had never seen so fair a picture.

Edith raised her head and turned a flushed face full of tender inquiry towards me as I delivered my message. She was evidently surprised—almost alarmed—but rose and went to her father without remark. I sat down and told my mother what had occurred. She leaned her head upon my knee and turned her soft, sweet face towards me as she listened. When I had concluded she sat awhile in thought. Then she said :

“He is right, my son. Do not be cast down. He is a good man—a good man, Ryal, and you may trust him.”

Presently there was a rustle behind us. Edith stood in the doorway. The darkness of the passage behind seemed to enfold her as if dragging her away. Her face was clouded, too. I could not see her eyes, but thought there must be tears in them. She held a handkerchief to her lips and her voice trembled as she said :

“If you—please—my father—is waiting.”

I assisted my mother to rise, and we followed to her father's room.

## CHAPTER XIX.

When we entered Edith was already seated on a low ottoman, her face turned half away from the firelight, one hand resting in her father's, her head leaning upon the other, which still held her handkerchief. Her figure drooped and she seemed suddenly to have grown old. It was evident that some fact of a serious nature had come into her consciousness since she had responded to her father's request. I felt in an instant that I had dropped out of her life, at least as a controlling factor. Thereafter I might be first in her love, but her father's wish would shape her destiny. An hour before, my love had been supreme in her heart; now I knew it to be subordinated to a sentiment so absorbing and intense that the very thought of love seemed to have been obliterated.

A pang of jealousy shot through my heart as I realized how completely I had been supplanted in her thought. In an instant, however, this feeling was changed to one of infinite pity for the drooping figure on the hassock as she gazed up into her father's face with such completeness of self-immolation. I loved her not less but more, and knew that henceforth I must always be the willing slave of that love. I might be nothing to her, but she must be everything to me. I knew better than ever before that she was

mine ; mine, not perhaps to have and to hold, but mine to love and trust to the end.

So my little romance was over. The love I had won by accident had been blighted by fate. The hate which had turned to love, revenged itself upon me by demanding all and promising nothing in return.

The general received us courteously. When we were seated he said, addressing my mother :

“ I suppose there is no need of explanation ? ”

“ None at all, General,” she answered, with the fine tact that always marked her words. “ My son has to make his own way in the world, and while I cannot blame him for loving Edith, I think an engagement should not be thought of until his prospects are more definite than at present.”

“ No doubt,” he answered, with his businesslike air. “ But my course was not determined by any such consideration. My daughter’s happiness is mine, and no prudential consideration could induce me to thwart her desire. I regret that I am unable to speak more frankly of the real motive of my conduct.”

“ It is quite unnecessary,” said my mother ; “ we are sure it must be a good one, and are greatly obliged to you for informing us that it has nothing to do with the unfortunate events of the last few years. I am certain that if my husband had lived he would have been foremost in every endeavor to restore harmony to our distracted country. It

is for this reason, chiefly, that I am anxious that my son's education should be completed at the North. I would not have him cease to be a Southern man, but I think the people on both sides should try to understand each other and join hands in the endeavor to hold the country together and prevent any recurrence of the horrors of the past four years."

There were tears in my mother's eyes and her voice choked as she ceased speaking. I was surprised that one of her domestic inclination should express such decided views upon public matters. It was hardly strange, however. The people of the South thought of little else at that time, and the mothers were very often wiser than the sons. There was a look of positive admiration in the general's eyes as he listened to her words, and at the conclusion he said :

"If everybody were as sensible as you, Mrs. Owen, we should soon forget all that has happened."

She glanced at her mourning gown and touched it almost unconsciously, smoothing down a recreant fold. He perceived his error, and flushed deeply as he added :

"I mean, of course, in a public sense. The dead—of course—"

Here he broke down completely and my mother, apparently answering his thought rather than his word, echoed :

"Of course."

After a moment's silence he said :

“There is another matter of interest to you which must now be attended to as I am compelled to leave on my way North to-morrow morning. While I should have been loath to go without congratulating your son upon his recovery and testifying again my gratitude for the gallant act which left me one thing in life to cling to, yet I would hardly have delayed my journey even for a day, had it not been for a duty enjoined upon me under peculiar circumstances, which I may have no other opportunity to perform.

“I am not generally superstitious, but you will hardly wonder that I was somewhat startled at what has occurred, when I tell you that my chief reason for accepting my recent command was a desire to find one Ryal Owen.”

Our surprise at this announcement could not have been greater than that which showed itself in Edith's countenance. Her father noticed it and said with a smile :

“Edith never heard your name, Mr. Owen, until you had saved her from peril : but I had been hunting you for months, little dreaming what your discovery might cost me—not that I should be entirely the loser by the proposed exchange.”

Even in matters of the heart the Yankee instinct was uppermost, and the simile he used was drawn from the conflicts of the arena in which he had first won distinction. My mother smiled at this somewhat awkward attempt at

gaiety, and the matter-of-fact soldier relapsing into his usual tone, continued his narrative :

“ I do not know why I never spoke to her of it, unless it be that reticence has become almost second nature to me. The fact is, I entered upon this quest at the special request of General Godson Owen.

“ You are surprised at this, and will be more so when you know how curiously I was baffled in my search. Knowing Edith’s romantic desire to restore your father’s horse to the family of his gallant owner, I thought to give her a pleasant surprise as well as perform a duty incumbent upon me by finding you without her knowledge. So I sought for you far and near, and had just learned that you were home were in this region when fate brought us into such strange relations.

“ You wonder how I came to know of your existence or to have any desire to find you out ? It is not a pleasant story. You are aware, madam, that I commanded the troops against which your husband led his division in that last hopeless charge. I was standing on the ridge along the side of which my skirmishers were advancing in a pretty strong line, driving the enemy—the Confederates, you understand—before them. We all knew that the end could not be very far off, and I think every one felt a thrill of horror at every shot that was fired and every life that was thus needlessly sacrificed. For three days there had been no hope for Lee’s army. Indeed, when he left the works

around Petersburg there was no longer any reasonable hope. For two days his retreat had been a continued series of useless encounters to gain an hour's time in order to enable the commander and a fragment of his army to escape immediate capture. I do not wish to be harsh, but to my mind every life that was lost after Lee found himself forced to retreat in the face of overwhelming odds, with one splendidly appointed army upon his track and another on his flank, was simply a sacrifice to unholy ambition. So we pursued the shattered army and slew those who would not yield. We pressed them hard—it was a mercy to force the end—yet it was sickening work.

“I was saying something of this kind to my staff, when I saw General Owen come out of the woods in front of my line with his hat on the point of his sword. He did not once look back, but, facing squarely to the front, rode towards our skirmishers, his men pressing close after him with loud huzzas. It was a useless though heroic effort. My heart turned sick as I gave the orders that would destroy the gallant little band. They had pressed the skirmishers back upon the main line when a dozen cannon and ten thousand muskets poured death into their ranks. They wavered an instant and then fled—all that were left of them—across the creek to join again the toiling ranks of the fleeing army.”

My mother was weeping silently. Edith stole across

the room and, taking a seat beside her, drew her head upon her shoulder. Her father glanced at them approvingly.

“I saw your husband when he fell. Somehow I felt irresistibly attracted by his gallantry. In a moment I was beside him. Some of my men had already laid him by a blossoming thornbush on the road side. He was dead—was probably dead before he fell from the saddle. His horse, badly wounded, stood by him neighing piteously. I ordered the body to be buried by the thornbush where it lay, having ascertained his name by papers in his possession. The saber, which he still held in his stiffening grasp, and some other mementoes I took charge of, hoping some time to transmit them to his family. The glove he wore was taken from his right hand and a case found in an inner pocket placed within it. He sleeps with the image of his loved ones on his breast, madam, and it only remains for me to hand you these mementoes of as brave a soldier as ever wore a sword.”

General Fairbanks went to the bed, on which lay a package, which his orderly had brought, and, returning, placed a sword, a pair of spurs and a soiled gauntlet in my mother's lap.

“And these,” he added, turning to me, “you will see I give into your hands according to your father's request. His directions misled me, and your unfortunate accident induced me to wait until all apprehension of harm from the



excitement necessarily attending the revival of such sad memories should be passed."

I received from this strange messenger of the dead a small leather-covered volume tied with a string, and a large official envelope, bearing the imprint of the division my father had commanded, and directed in his hand :

"To my son, Ryal Owen, supposed to be living near Oconee, Georgia. In case of my death, the finder of this will please deliver, if possible with his own hand ; if not, then by the most certain method that may offer. Signed,

"GODSON OWEN, C. S. A."

There was a long silence. My mother wept and kissed the dear relics again and again. We both endeavored to thank the brusque soldier who had so kindly remembered the family of his foe, but he waved aside our gratitude and turned quickly away to conceal the tears that filled his eyes.

From that hour I never questioned the motives of Ambrose Fairbanks. Fate had made him my father's ambassador ; and his character was sacred to those to whom he came thus strangely accredited.

After a time I untied the string and glanced along the pages of my father's diary—the record of his thoughts during those final days of struggle. Each year he had sent us one of these priceless mementoes of his love. Then I looked at the envelope made of the coarse, yellowish paper which was the only kind we had within the limits of the

Confederacy. Mechanically I broke the seal and found within another. I took it out and read aloud this super-  
scription .

“To my son, Ryal Owen :

If you are yet unmarried on your twenty-third birthday, I desire that you will open this on that day and read its contents. Should you decide to marry previous to that time, I request that you will burn this unopened.

“GODSON OWEN.”

“Bless me, what a strange thing !” exclaimed my mother, forgetting her grief in the wonder and awe which this injunction inspired. “It really frightens one to think—”

She stopped and glanced from one to another as if she had said too much.

There was a long silence. Each was conscious of the other’s thought. Then Edith rose and coming softly to my side held out her hand and said :

“Will you give me that letter to keep for you ?”

I glanced at her father. He nodded approval and I placed it in her hand. She clasped it to her bosom and remained standing beside me.

“Ryal,” she said. I rose and stood beside her. She looked up into my eyes. There was the same beseeching look in hers that I remembered when she looked down upon me from the back of the flying steed. “Ryal,” she

repeated, "the life you saved will always be yours, happen what may."

I looked towards her father, anxious not to seem to break my pledge. His look did not forbid. I took her in my arms and kissed her lips.

"Command me," I said, "and I will obey. Whether as lover, friend or servant, it matters not—"

"Nay," said she gently interrupting, with her hand upon my lips. "Be my knight to do whatever honor requires, in my name."

Before one could guess her intention she had released herself from my embrace, taken the sword from my mother's lap, drawn the polished blade from the worn scabbard, and turned toward me with it upraised. I do not know why, but I knelt before her. She touched me lightly on the shoulder, presented the golden hilt with the one silver star upon the cross, and I pressed it to my lips with as much consecrating fervor as any knight of chivalry ever felt.

It was a curious scene for this matter-of-fact age, but somehow none of those present seemed to think it out of place, and even as I write of it now, it does not seem altogether absurd. Many a knight has kissed that jeweled hilt since then and I—I have fulfilled my vow.

## CHAPTER XX.

Little need be said of the years that followed. My life was that of the ordinary college student, only for me the college was situated in a new world. It was the first glimpse of what I had hitherto only dreamed of as "the North." To me it had only been the antipode of the South—*my* South—*my* home—*my* country, whose aspirations, woes and prejudices were part and parcel of my life. This life I brought with me—its defiance, scorn, almost contempt, of all that differed from it. The misfortunes of my people, the injustice they had suffered, the losses they had endured—all these were in my mind when I came into the enemy's country to fit myself to satisfy my mother's ambition and win the fairest daughter of our hereditary foes. I realize now what a strange compound of arrogance, suspicion, self-conceit and romantic aspiration it was that came up from the Southern battle-fields and knocked at the portals of the Northern college.

There was no question about my ability to matriculate. Fortunately my training had been thorough if somewhat fragmentary. I had, too, something of my father's aptitude for acquirement as well as his stubborn resolution to achieve.

I hardly know when the awakening came. Little by

little my preconceptions were destroyed. I sought in vain for my ideals. I could not find among the people I so thoroughly disliked the attributes on which my antipathy was founded. At first, I counted those whom I met exceptions, as I had already decided Edith and her father to be, to the general life from which they sprang. As these "exceptions" multiplied I began to doubt, and long before my course was ended I had abandoned my former prejudices, concluded that it was mere ignorance of each other's inclinations that kept the South and the North apart, and wondered that this misconception should have culminated in war quite as devoutly as I had previously questioned how it could ever subside into peace.

Of course, I still thought the fault and the offense were on the part of the North, but I wondered greatly how such a good-natured, kindly, tolerant people could have been so misled and corrupted by demagogues and zealots. I regretted most sincerely that there was not a full and perfect mutual understanding and comprehension of motives and sentiments on the part of the people of the two sections. I was sure that nothing more was necessary to secure the most perfect and complete accord. That was what I said, and what I thought I felt. The fact is, I only thought of a one-sided tolerance and appreciation, not a mutual one. I wished the people of the North might understand the motives and impulses of the people of the South. Then, I was sure, they would realize how much they had unwittingly

wronged them ; and then, I was confident, our people would forgive them fully, and after that there *could* only be harmony.

To the other side of the matter I gave little thought. It never occurred to me that it was equally desirable that the people of the South should learn to understand and appreciate the people of the North. I do not remember once to have considered the question whether the wrong and the folly might not have been on their side. I did sometimes wish our people might understand that the Yankees were much better fellows than our fancy had painted them --here at home, at least. I even wished that some of them—a good many of the richest and brightest and most enterprising—might go to the South with money and skill and transform our almost barren wastes into fruitful fields and centers of prosperous industry. I dreamed the dream, which comes to every Southern man of intelligence and patriotism, of a South built up and enriched by the munificence, thrift and energy of her conquerors. I saw her mines, her forests and her waterways made tributary to the demands of commerce, and her people enriched by the sale of their possessions to the stranger. But it never once occurred to me that the stranger would naturally seek to become a constituent and distinctive element of our society, that he might desire to change its characteristics, or that the energy and enterprise I so greatly admired were the results of essentially different conditions, and must of necessity demand

and require great modifications of our Southern life. It seemed to me a very simple matter, if the Northern people could only be made to understand its simplicity.

Perhaps my views on this subject were modified, not only by the surroundings of my daily life on the campus and in the class-room, but also by two events which separated me still more from the common lot of my countrymen. It was scarcely a year after my departure that The Grove was sold. As I have said, the family seat was at Ryalmont. There all our sweetest memories and fondest associations seemed to have centered. I did not comprehend the reason then. It is plain enough now that my father was never really at home at The Grove. The productive, well-ordered plantation did not compensate him for the picturesque beauty of the mountain farm. My mother must have realized this, so that her heart turned instinctively to Ryalmont as the real home of the husband whose memory she cherished.

After the camp was discontinued and the entire plantation at The Grove reverted to my mother's possession, we found a considerable portion of it occupied by those half-unconscious trespassers, the newly-made freedmen. They had naturally gathered about the camp, and by some means or other had contrived to build not a few of those little huts which were the first refuge of the freedman, fleeing with a sort of undefined dread from the scene of his servitude, as if freedom was to him an incredible fact

until he had actually tested his own power to contravene the wish of his former master.

This little cluster of huts had grown into quite a village, and it was evident that a colored colony, such as is always found upon one side or another of every Southern city, had pitched upon our old plantation as the chosen site for the freedmen's suburb of the city it adjoined. In that chaotic time no attempt was made at their expulsion. The law was yet dormant after the clash of arms. Christopher cultivated the bottoms and exacted from the occupants of the huts upon the hills an uncertain rental, which, though but a slight tax upon each, added materially to our revenue. Many of them inspired by a curious sense of the dignity attaching to the ownership of land, very soon desired to purchase the lots they occupied by virtue of a sort of squatter sovereignty.

Perhaps it was these circumstances that led eventually to its alienation. However that may be, it was sold to a wealthy Northern philanthropist, who selected it, I think, not a little through the influence of General Fairbanks, as the location of an educational institution he proposed to build for the use of the colored people. No more fitting site could have been chosen. Overlooking the thriving town and the fertile valley, it was the ideal location for a university.

Neither my mother nor myself at that time had any sympathy with the use for which it was intended. In the



freedmen, as a self-directing race, we had no interest, and indeed, no thought for them except a sort of contemptuous pity. Our chief feeling in regard to the transaction was that it only completed the desecration begun by the Yankee army; and as we did not wish to live at The Grove, we saw no reason why it should not be sold, especially as the price offered was a liberal one. I learned afterwards to respect the motives of those engaged in the work of educating the freedmen. I did not then deem it possible that they could ever become an important element of our civilization, and thought the attempt to educate them only a harmless continuation of the Northern crusade for their emancipation.

So I was glad the plantation was sold. Its possession served only to keep alive the one memory of the past which I could not forgive. I never thought of it without seeing my mother and little sister fleeing half-clothed into the darkness, while the flame lighted up the surging column of sooty vapor that rolled upward from the blazing roof-tree. Then would come the memory of the torrents pouring down upon us, of the slippery, crowded roads, the frightened women and fainting children, the hot, quick breath of the little sister that lay in my arms as we trudged through the darkness. So, though I had all the Southern fondness for land, I was glad to part with the plantation and especially glad of the relief from care which the transaction brought to my mother. I have since felt a tinge of regret

that a stranger's name is linked with the old home in the relation it must bear to the future of a race. Historically, it is an enduring monument of a wisdom and beneficence we were not then ready to appreciate.

To my mother this sale opened the door of a new life. It lifted her not only above want but even above the necessity of irksome economy. We were richer in comparison with our neighbors than ever before. The income of the amount realized by the sale together with the rental of Ryalmont was enough for our modest wants and a sufficient surplus for our holidays.

I have alluded before to my mother's personal charms, but I never realized until that time what a tender effulgence her beauty cast about her. She was still young and there was no little of loverlike adoration in my regard for her. After the sale she spent little time at Ryalmont. Every autumn she returned to collect the rents, which, of course, were paid "in kind," and to make arrangements for the following year. The remainder of the time she spent at the North—the greater portion of it with Edith Fairbanks. Somehow there was a peculiar harmony between the fair-haired Southern woman, with her blue eyes and soft, transparent complexion, and the dark, slender Northern maiden, who was the very ideal of that conventional beauty which, with curious inaccuracy, has been made the type of Southern loveliness. They were almost inseparable.

General Fairbanks' residence, "Sagamo Lodge," as he

had humorously named it, was hardly an hour's ride from the college I attended. It stood upon the banks of a beautiful river with the blue waters of the Sound in sight from its upper windows. A mile away was the little village which had grown up about his mills—a model village in a community where more attention is given to the questions attending industrial association than in any other part of the world. The banks of the stream and the wooded eminences far and near were crowned with the elegant and sometimes palatial residences of the princes of the great metropolis of trade, which lay within easy reach. Between the families of the owners there subsisted a sort of baronial courtesy, resting rather upon the fact of commercial solidity than similarity of tastes and character. They were of all sorts and classes, gathered from all parts of the country and some from other lands; but they were all rich—some of them lavishly and luxuriously, as the good American loves to be in attestation of his success, and some of them quietly and contentedly like soldiers enjoying the fruits of victory of which they do not care to vaunt. Taken all in all, they formed a curiously pleasant class, insensibly distinguished from, and yet harmoniously related to, the inhabitants of the prosperous villages, scattered here and there along the line of railroad. Their yachts dotted the sparkling river; their equipages dashed along the quiet roads. The low, sandy beach that bordered the Sound was overlooked by summer houses overflowing during the season

with rich people from the great city bent on self-enjoyment.

Such an atmosphere seemed to develop a phase of my mother's character which I had hardly suspected. My grandmother had called her gay, and she had been noted as the most attractive hostess in a region where entertainment is the most highly-prized of all the arts. I was young then, however, and what had since occurred had almost blotted it from my memory. I had never dreamed that such a change was possible. It was not frivolity, still less was it a desire for admiration. It was simply the peaceful enjoyment of pleasant surroundings. There was nothing feverish or unnatural about it. She neither invited nor repelled admiration. She did not forget her relations to the past in her enjoyment of the present. If my classmates raved about her when she came to visit me at the college, it was as my mother that they sang her praises and honored me with kindly envy. She did not forget her widowhood, refusing to lay aside the indications of mourning until the day of my graduation.

I hardly know how it was that we became, my mother and I, such habitual denizens of the Fairbanks home. The father, despite the proximity of the mills, which were supposed to be the foundation of his fortune, was absent much of the time, and I think was very glad to secure for his daughter so distinguished and acceptable a chaperon as my mother. He was engaged in great enterprises,

which absorbed his entire attention and demanded all his energies, giving him little opportunity to cater to his daughter's comfort and enjoyment.

For myself, I came and went with scarcely a thought of the singularity of my position. Nothing more had been said in regard to my relations with Edith. When they were at home I usually went down on Saturday and spent the Sabbath with them. On such occasions I always found Edith, with her phaeton and her favorite horse, awaiting my arrival at the station. She treated me, I thought, with the frank, affectionate manner accorded to an accepted suitor. Though her father had never in words stated his approval, yet it was evident from a thousand things that he looked forward with pleasant anticipation to the completion of my preparatory studies and my entrance upon real life. He was especially anxious that I should fit myself for my father's profession, and spared no opportunity to urge me to renewed exertion. He manifested also a great desire that my preparations should be completed before the opening of the packet my father had left for me. I was able only by the greatest effort to gratify his desire.

This life, though seemingly an idyllic one, was to me therefore one of unremitting toil. During the whole period I hardly knew what it was to have a holiday. Every glimpse of my mother and Edith was a spur to redoubled exertion. I had the delightful consciousness that my course was watched by loving eyes, and that more than one life was

ordered with a view to promote my success and secure my happiness.

During the winter the house was generally closed for a considerable period, which my mother and Edith spent either in "the city"—as New York is always designated by the dwellers in that region—or at some other social center. One season they were in Washington, where I joined them for the winter vacation. There could have been no better initiation into the curious life of the national capital than that which I received as the son of Godson Owen and the prospective son-in-law of Ambrose Fairbanks, who was no less eminent as a financier than as a soldier. These two circumstances opened to me every door, and made me welcome even to the antipodes of political thought.

While I was often congratulated by friends on my supposed relation to Edith, no allusion was ever made to it in the family and only rarely between Edith and myself. It was rather an assumed than an acknowledged fact. Only my mother spoke of it frequently. It was the acme of her hope, and she never lost an opportunity when we were alone together of giving expression to her desire. She seemed to think that she must not relax her watchcare over me until my fate was irrevocably linked with Edith's, and she counted the months until my twenty-third birthday with ill-concealed anxiety. Especially was this noticeable during my last year of preparation. Indeed, her whole conduct that year had a strange flavor of excitement.

As I said, it had been decided to defer the reading of my father's missive until the conclusion of my course of preparation. It was still in Edith's possession, and as we could not guess its contents we had long since ceased to speculate in regard to them; at least, I had. I learned afterwards that apprehension as to its character had not only rested continually on my mother's heart, but had prevented Edith from looking forward with secure anticipation to our future. As to General Fairbanks, his anxiety towards the last became evident to all. It had been arranged, at his special request, that the missive should be read on Saturday, the first day of July, Edith's birthday falling on the third. Even with this arrangement fate interfered.

My preparation had ended more than a month previous to this date, and at my mother's suggestion I returned to my native state and was admitted to the bar, in order that I might place the credentials of my profession in the General's hands at the same time, as an earnest of my determination to rely upon myself rather than on any accident of fortune. It was not my intention to return to the South to live, but rather to seek a location in the West, the opportunities of which fascinated my ambitious fancy. I was desirous of working out my own destiny in my own way. I wished to achieve for myself an individual success worthy of my father's memory and equal to what I deemed the aspiration of Edith's father for the husband of his daughter.

A distrust of my ability to do this was, I thought, at the bottom of the reluctance he had at first manifested to sanctioning our engagement. I mentioned this to my mother on my return, and was surprised at the look of anxiety that overspread her countenance as she listened to my words. Somehow her seriousness gave me an uneasy feeling. For the first time, since that winter night at Ryalmont, I began to wonder whether there were any serious obstacle to our marriage, which her love had divined and mine had not discovered. Had I been so absorbed with preparation as to neglect peril to my love?

It was the day before the first of July. The morrow was to decide my fate. I put on my hat and strolled down to the river's edge, where the General's steam yacht lay at anchor. It was being prepared for the fête that was to take place on Monday. I wondered if I should be one of her passengers on that occasion. Somehow, I found myself possessed with a vague terror as to what might intervene.

As I approached, I saw the skipper in conversation with a man whom I had sometimes seen at the house of General Fairbanks during my visits. It flashed upon me all at once that I had met him much oftener than any other guest under the roof of Sagamo Lodge. His name was Martling—Richard Martling. He was not a relative of the family, and, as far as I knew, was not associated with General Fairbanks in business. Indeed I had an idea there was something of business



antagonism between them. I have called him a guest. I might more properly have termed him a frequent visitor. It had never occurred to me to ask why he came, yet, now that I thought of it, I seemed to have noted that his presence always brought something of restraint to both father and daughter. It flashed upon me, too, that my mother had never mentioned him in our frequent talks, without manifesting a peculiar prejudice against him.

He was rather under middle age ; dark, with keen eyes, full lips and a hard, watchful look. His manners were neither good nor bad. He was a man of business, reputed to be very wealthy, and a favorite lieutenant of a noted " Oil King," who was the financial nabob of the region—a near kinsman of the most remarkable financial prodigy of this or any other age.

As I drew near I heard Martling ask :

" Fitting out for a cruise, Osborne ? "

" A cruise ? Bless your soul," said the lank sailor, looking at his interlocutor and sending a stream of tobacco juice over the rail, " no sech good luck ez that. It's e'en a'most two years now sence I had a good sniff of salt water, sech as blows on t'other side of the Island, you know, an' I did hope the old man would make up his mind for a real, old-fashioned vy'ge this year. So I had her cleaned up and overhauled from stem to starn, all on my own notion, you know, thinkin' the sight on her in clean clothes might set

his head in that direction. An' what do ye suppose I got fer my pains, Mr. Martlin'?"

"Why, your wages."

"Of course, of course; every man always gits his jest dues that deals with the old man."

"He does, eh?" said Martling, with a half sneer, as I thought.

"That's what he does," answered the sailor, emphatically; "if he deals fair, that is. What I was alludin' to wasn't pay, exactly, but favor."

"Well, wasn't he pleased with what you had done?"

"Oh, yes; but instid o' sayin' a word about the deep sea, he jest said 'she looks nice, don't she? You may git in a ton or two of coal and be ready to take a company of friends round the Head for a clambake, on Miss Edith's birthday.' That's Monday, ye know, an' I 'spects that's all the sailin' he'll git time fer this year. What sort o' way's that fer a man to do that's got sech a craft as this? A ton or two o' coal! She ought to have a hundred in her if she has a pound!"

"What is all this stuff you're taking on?" inquired Martling carelessly, pointing to a lot of boxes on the little wharf.

"Jest a lot of nicknaeks that come from the city fer the clam-bake. Looks as if they was goin' to have all Connecticut an' a squad from Rhode Islan' by the ice an' liquors, an' ehickin fixin's of all sorts, from bakers and

confectioners an' the like, that he's layin' in fer Monday. If there was only a few boxes o' good sea biscuits an' a little salt horse a goin' aboard it would please me better."

"But not me," said Martling gaily.

"I s'pose not," said the skipper, showing a row of stained and irregular teeth, as he rolled his lip upward in what was meant for a grin, but which seemed to the observer more like a painful distortion of his grizzled face. "'Spect you've got an invite, hain't ye?"

"I shall be there, you can bet your life," said Martling, as he threw away his cigar and lit another. As he turned to leave the wharf we stood face to face. I noticed that he gave me a keen glance as I came forward. It will be remembered that I limped slightly.

"Hello, Owen ; come down to look after the cargo?"

"No, indeed ;" I answered lightly, "I'm too much of a landsman for that. I have as great a dread of salt water as Osborne professes fondness for it."

"So?" he asked, sharply. "By the way, I've often wondered where you got that limp. A relic of the 'wah-time,' is it, like everything else at the South?"

His tone seemed half insolent, but I answered, laughingly, "No, indeed ; only the result of an awkward adventure with a horse."

"Too bad, I thought you were a hero."

I made no answer, but turned and walked towards the shore.

“See here, Owen,” said Martling, stepping quickly to my side, “I didn’t mean to be rough, but I’m not much on manners, as you know. I’m business, nothing but business—first, last and all the time; and business don’t feather a man’s tongue. I’m plum straight out, though, just what I am, with no apologies or cross-cuts. There isn’t any need for us to quarrel—at least just now. When there is we’ll both know it. If you don’t object I’d like to walk along with you and ask a few questions.”

“You are at liberty to ask anything you choose, Mr. Martling—about myself,” I replied, with some emphasis on the last word.

“I understand,” he responded with a nod. “You don’t exactly approve the way I have been pumping Osborne. Well, it wasn’t nice, I admit; but a man sometimes has to do what he don’t like himself. But it is of yourself I want to question you. What I want to know is, are you engaged to Miss Edith?”

“And if I am?” I asked hotly, turning towards him.

“In other words,” said he coolly, “you mean to ask what business is it of mine whether you are or not. I don’t know as I should care to tell, and you are equally at liberty, of course, to decline to answer my question. You gave me leave to ask it, you remember. If there is any reason why you do not wish to answer, of course you will not.”

“Mr. Martling,” I replied, “I know nothing of your

motive for such a question, and there is certainly no reason why I should not answer it—I am not.”

It was impossible not to note the look of exultation that flashed into his face as he heard these words.

“I will be frank with you, however,” I continued, and there was probably a touch of confident pride in my tone, “and say that I hope to be.”

“Indeed?” said he exultingly; “well so do I. There is frankness for you. Ta, ta!”

He turned off along the foot-path leading to the luxurious house of his friend, Stoningham, with a wave of his hand and a light laugh. I heard him humming an air from a new comic opera as he disappeared, for this hard-headed and rough-mannered child of business was a musical amateur of no mean acquirements. I have heard a great deal in life of the refining and ennobling influence of music, but if I had a son to advise, I would impress upon his memory, at an early day, this warning: “Beware of the man who sings at his work or when busy with his thoughts.”

I cannot say that I felt seriously disturbed by this avowed rivalry. Indeed, I found myself smiling in self-satisfaction as I listened to the confident strains that echoed from the elm-bordered path along which my rival had gone. I felt that he had waited too long, and that even with his millions he could not hope to succeed. Yet I remembered, with some trepidation, the uncertainty attending the breaking of the seals which hid my father’s curiously-guarded behest.

## CHAPTER XXI.

That evening we were to be alone—General Fairbanks, Edith, my mother and I. A large company had been invited for Edith's twenty-first birthday. As some of the guests would arrive the next day, it was decided that the missive my father had left should be opened that night. It was still in Edith's possession and we two were to read it first alone together. A pretty little room in the *tourelle*, that hung like a crystal cage above the main entrance of the Lodge, overlooking the river and giving glimpses of the Sound from its broad windows had been our favorite trysting-place. Here we went, therefore, to read the letter which the dear, dead hand had penned so long before, in the midst of war's alarms.

The sun was just sinking as I opened the envelope. Edith went to the window and stood looking out upon the river while I glanced hastily at its contents. I called her, and as she turned I noticed the yacht lying quietly at her wharf and Osborne walking back and forth beside the white tarpaulin that covered the boxes which were piled up beside it. I wondered what sort of a fête the great financier was going to give his daughter, for which such elaborate preparations were being made. For the first time, I think, I realized what an infinite distance there was between us,

measured by the standard of the life which surrounded her. I had never thought much of General Fairbanks's wealth or his daughter's relation to it. I did not covet it for myself nor for her. Indeed, I would have preferred that she should be dependent on me for everything she enjoyed. Love is very selfish and fond of the luxury of conferring favor. I knew her father was reputed wealthy. His triumphs and reverses had been heralded from time to time in the public prints. He was counted at least a millionaire. And it was his daughter to whose hand I aspired—nay, whose love I had never questioned, and to a union with whom I had looked forward as a matter of course.

I thought of all this with wonder as she came and seated herself in a low chair just in front of mine, waiting in quiet expectancy for me to speak. She was not beautiful, but so delicately fair that I trembled as I looked into the great dark eyes, shaded by long lashes, and thought how frail the tenement that held the love which even a sense of her father's wealth could not make me doubt. There was a look of apprehension on her face which I made haste to dispel, saying as I reached out and took her hand in mine :

“It is all right, sweetheart. There is nothing to fear.” A sigh of relief answered my words. Then holding her hand in mine I read to her the words my father had written in view of his probable death. When I concluded we both remained silent for a long time. Then she said, solemnly :

“What a strange letter!”

“But you see, dear, there is nothing unfavorable in it.”

“Unfavorable—to what?”

“Why to our love, of course.”

“How could there be?”

“But you know your father was unwilling that we should consider ourselves engaged until we knew the contents of this letter.”

“Until I became of age,” she said, correcting me.

“Well, yes—though that is the same thing.”

“My birthday will be on Monday.”

“But, good Heavens, Edith, you do not mean—there is nothing else to intervene?”

“It is my father’s request,”—dreamily.

“Yes—of course—but——”

“Can you not wait?”

“Yes,”—doubtingly.

What was the light that shone in her eyes—the flush that mounted to her cheeks? Did she sigh? Did she bend towards me? Did her lips invite?

“No, no, no!” I cried, impulsively, as I clasped her in my arms and kissed her again and again. I felt her breath upon my lips; her heart beat against mine. Ah, how tender was this woman who lay in my arms rewarding my faithfulness but not recognizing my right. I knew that she granted me this for my long waiting—that I might know her heart was mine, yet not be emboldened to



claim what she might not be able to bestow. She hoped, but dared not even yet believe ; loved, but could not plight her faith. I knew then, even in the midst of my rapture, that she would not hesitate to crush the love she allowed me to see, rather than confessed, should any demand of duty make it necessary. Such was the significance of this embrace. It was enough. I did not ask for more. Yet even as I kissed her lips I seemed to hear Martling's laughing declaration of rivalry, and half-mistrusted my good fortune. It is so fitting that millions should match with millions.

“Had you not better take it to your mother?” said Edith, gently releasing herself and picking up the letter from the floor, where it had fallen, “She will be very anxious, and papa too, to know what it contains.”

“Will you not come with me?” detaining her hand in mine.

She pushed the hair back from her temple with the other hand and shook her head as she gave me an arch glance from under the long lashes. My grasp tightened on her hand. “May I come back?”

I knew my voice trembled. The blush flamed into crimson in her face. She gazed into my eyes appealingly as she drew her hand slowly from my grasp.

“Not to-night—please.”

Could ever bashalic love deny such a request? But the soft lips did not refuse tribute for my grace.

My brain teemed with tender visions as I went down the stairs and sought the library, where my mother and General Fairbanks waited for my coming. What was it checked the song of gladness in my heart?

The door of the library stood ajar. As I crossed the line of light that flashed into the dark hall, I saw my mother with her head upraised, her white throat bare and throbbing, while over her bent—Ambrose Fairbanks! Did their lips meet? Was his arm around her? Or had love so distorted my vision that all things bore to me the semblance of caresses? I stopped, confused, overwhelmed with—I knew not what sense of shame and grief.

I did not know that I made any sound but I must have done so, for I saw my mother thrust him gently aside, not hastily nor rebukingly, walk calmly to the door, and say in a voice as full of love as ever fell upon my childish ear,

“Is it you, my son? Come in.”

I went dumbly forward and put into her hands her husband’s last message, while he who had been that husband’s dearest foe stood smiling quietly upon us.

“What is it, dear?” she asked, gazing into my face with a troubled look; “Nothing unpleasant, I hope.”

“Oh, mother, mother! How could it be?”

I put my arms about her and kissed her as it had always been my wont to do in joy or sadness. I had meant to whisper something of my rapture in her ear, but my

heart was now like lead, and there were tears upon her cheek when I released her from my embrace.

“How could *he* send any unpleasant message to us—to me?” I corrected.

My mother seemed surprised at my vehemence.

“True—true enough,” she said, composedly, as she wiped the tears from her face.

I went out—into the night—to think. It seemed as if the house would smother me, it was so full of strange extremes. A storm was coming up the valley. One half the heavens were black, the other bright and starry. The lightning played about the edges and opened fiery, dazzling pits in the black void that stretched from the zenith down to the sea, whose hoarse, sobbing moans came to my ears on the freshening breeze. I looked up at the sky and laughed. Which was real—the bright, placid northern hemisphere or the black, flame-gashed southern sky.

Was Nature playing tricks with me? What had I seen? What had I felt? Was the taste of kisses yet upon my lips—love’s kisses? My mother? Faugh! *My* mother! Love, indeed, had crazed my brain or—photographed its bliss upon my retina!

My thoughts grew calmer as the storm drew near, and when the first great drops came plashing down, I returned to the house and went to my bed to sleep the quiet sleep of youth and dream the blissful dream of love.

\* \* \* \* \*

The morrow came and went as only summer days can come and go. The house was full of pleasant company. Of General Fairbanks I saw little, but my mother was everywhere, and with her always Edith, and both were radiant. In the afternoon we had a long talk about my father's letter and the strange duty he had enjoined upon me. Most unexpectedly, I found my mother inclined to second his injunction.

“Of course,” she said, “it does not seem possible, perhaps hardly desirable now; but your father was a very wise man. He used to make me tremble sometimes with the intensity of his knowledge—if I may use that expression—I mean his faculty of knowing what others did not know, would not know, or, as I sometimes thought, could not know. Yet it was all so plain to him. He had a strange power of compelling the future, as it were, to give up to him what it hid from others. General Fairbanks was very much impressed with the contents of the letter. He says that events have strangely confirmed what your father predicted, and the future promises still further corroboration. As for the final result, it is, of course, a great wrench to him to think it possible. He says he never dreamed of such a thing before. He has looked upon the War for Separation as the end of every possible difference of that sort; but he says there is a sense of reality about your father's views that he cannot resist. It seems as if there were no other way—as if the general good, which to

him is always an irresistible fate—pointed inflexibly in the direction of your father's prophecy. He thinks it will be a long time in coming, however, and that you may, very probably, be older than your father was when the crisis of the national fate came upon him, before you will be called to act in the matter—if, indeed, you should really ever have to act at all.

“I cannot tell you, my son, what a relief this is to me,” she added with a sigh. “Now I am sure there will be no separation—no obstacle I mean. You and Edith can be very happy—whatever may happen to me.”

There was something in her tone I did not quite understand, and a troubled, absent look upon her face, while she talked with me, that was unusual. She was very tender, however, and when she came into my room, after she had dressed for dinner, I was quite enraptured with her loveliness. When I bent and kissed the roses at her throat, she tapped my cheek playfully with her fan, and said it was evident that she must go away or make trouble between me and Edith. Of course, such pleasant banter was by no means disagreeable to me, and I doubt if ever son was prouder of a mother than I of the beautiful woman who went down the broad stairway of Sagamo Lodge that evening on my arm. Even after the day was over and the gay company asleep, she seemed still to be with me. I dreamed I was a boy again and thought she bent over my

couch while the fragrance of the roses filled the moonlit night. But somehow in my dreams the scene I had witnessed in the library would obtrude, and I saw again our host's silvery moustache brushing her fair cheek.

## CHAPTER XXII

The calm of the summer Sabbath was over the land when I awoke. There was a knock at my door—not the matter-of-course tap of the trained domestic, but a hurried, agitated rap upon the panel. I sat up in bed, too much surprised to answer. What sudden prescience was it that translated the light touch upon the door into a precursor of evil? I had no reason to anticipate ill, but a nameless terror forced my heart into my throat. I knew, I know not how, that it was Edith who stood without—her face pale, her mind distraught, and her heart overwhelmed with some grievous woe. What could it be? Had fate come again between us? Had death crept into the silent house? My mother—her father! Could anything be wrong with them? Was it crime, burglary, murder? There seemed to be a mortal terror in her tone as she rapped again and exclaimed, in a low, hurried voice:

“ Ryal! Mr. Owen—come down—at once—please—to the library! I must see you!”

I sprang up, ran to the door and called through the dark polished panels:

“ Edith! What is it? Yes, of course, coming!”

There was no answer. I thought I heard her footsteps stealing—no, dragging, cautiously yet heavily away towards

the stairs. I began to dress hurriedly with a chill, numb feeling. I knew I was pale and breathing short and quick. I heard her step approaching the door again. How well I knew it! I had listened to it so often, with the pleasure that comes from noting unconsciously the attributes of those we love. Could this be hers—Edith's? Again she knocked—softly—stealthily!

“Yes?” I answered, inquiringly.

Why did my voice sink to a whisper? Did I read the heart as well as see the blanched face beyond the solid oak? I knew she was not thinking of me—that she did not come to me for refuge, shelter, guidance—but to direct and command. There was a throb of pain as I felt myself overshadowed, then a thrill of delight at the thought that I might serve.

“Ryal!”

“Yes?”

We were both whispering, yet how clear was every syllable! It seemed as if I could feel the throbbing nerves of the slender hand whose finger-tips rested against the door.

“Come as gently as you can.”

“All right.”

“And as quickly.”

“I will.”

Then the dragging steps went away.

Just as I flung on my coat something white on the



carpet, near the head of the bed, attracted my attention. I crossed the room and picked it up. It was the spray of roses which my mother had worn in her corsage and I had playfully kissed when she came into my room before we went down to dinner the day before. It was a cluster of the creamy-white Gold of Ophir, plucked from a plant brought from Ryalmont. How splendidly it had harmonized with her abundant charms, the full, rounded bust, the radiant face, the tender, beaming eyes, the shining golden hair, the graceful form clad in silk of a mellow russet-bronze, bordered at the neck and sleeves with filmy lace. The old home with its luxuriant embowerings rose before me as I recognized the faded flowers and smiled at the jealousy which had filled my dreams. Why should not Ambrose Fairbanks woo and win so fair a woman? Why should his kisses seem so terrible a thing to me? What right had I—? Ah, none, none; save that she was mine—my worshiped mother—all that was left me of the past.

A piece of paper was twisted about the stems, the ends slipped through a ring in which glittered a single diamond. I hastily unwound it, opened a shutter, and read :

“ My Son :

“ Forgive me for having hidden anything from you. Edith will tell you all. Poor girl—it will be very hard for her. She is not strong and I fear the shock may be more than she can bear. You must be very careful of her. I leave you my engagement ring and hope you will put it on her finger before the sun sets on Monday. Don't let the

clouds terrify you. Take her to Ryalmont and wait for the sunshine. You have not much, but in our dear native South, where honor and worth are not estimated by a gold standard, it will be enough. My duty calls me away, but I shall come to you again, my son, and until then I leave you—nay, I shall daily send you—the unnumbered blessings of a mother-love no other love can quench. M. F.”

So what I had dreaded had come, and now that I knew it to be a fact I was no longer troubled. I was hardly surprised—nay, shall I admit it?—I think I was glad, glad for her sake and for the man whom I so highly honored.

I was not mistaken, then. My mother had come to my room, and no doubt had bent over me and kissed me as I had dreamed. It was like her to bring me the flowers, too, with the note quaintly fastened about their stems with the ring my father had placed upon her finger when he wooed her under the live-oaks by the placid Oconee. She had showed me the very place when we were summoned there by my grandfather's death, more than a year before. Perhaps she thought I might have witnessed the scene in the library and wished to reassure me of her love. Dear mother! She need not have feared my displeasure. I could not have been long displeased by anything she might do. I loved her so that I did not wonder that the father of Edith should love her also. Now that I thought of it, it seemed very natural and very proper, too. It even flashed through my mind, with a sort of whimsical effect, that it would be a fair exchange—my mother for his daughter.

This brought Edith and her summons to my mind. I stole out of the room and along the silent hall. The morning sunshine was vainly striving to make its way through the closed shutters. It was yet early and the servants were not astir, though a bell was calling to early mass in a village across the river. Its soft notes fell upon my ear as I entered the library, the door of which stood ajar as if waiting for my coming. Edith had opened the the upper-half of a shutter and stood gazing out upon the river. The light fell upon her face. What had changed it? It was not so much pallor as hopelessness that showed in its lineaments. She seemed to have grown suddenly old. The lines of her mouth were relaxed ; the eyes had lost their fire ; the lids drooped nervelessly ; a dull, hopelessness seemed to have settled on her. Ah, me ; I little knew what these signs portended!

“Edith! what is it?” I half whispered as I closed the door and stepped quickly to her side. She waved her hand towards the river and said hoarsely :

“Do you not see?”

I scanned the placid surface which the morning breeze broke into sparkling ripples, and shook my head.

“I beg your pardon,” she said, with quiet bitterness, “it is what you do not see—what is gone!”

“What is gone?” I said with a great fear in my heart.

“Do you miss nothing?”

How had I been so blind? The little wharf was steaming in the sunshine, but the yacht was nowhere to be seen.

“She has gone up the river to coal,” I suggested.

“She has gone—to sea,” she answered, positively.

“And your father?” My voice trembled. She turned towards me with a dull, pitying look.

“And your mother.”

What caused the sickening fear that came over me? I knew nothing to account for my agitation. Was there anything I did not know? Or was it the mere sense of mystery that daunted me? Her father—my mother—fled—by night! That was all I knew. Where? Why? These were the questions my heart asked and feared to have answered. The sunlit river showed no track. What lay beyond? Crime? I shuddered, but denied stoutly, angrily in my heart. Shame? My face flushed. God forgive me, for an instant I doubted even my mother’s purity! The kiss I had witnessed—the flight—the mystery—but no, it could not be! My mother—my beautiful mother—my adored, my peerless mother! The shadow of imputation could never rest upon her! Then I remembered the signature of the note I yet held in my hand—“M. F.”

My heart leaped with gladness. I held it up before her, pointing to the initials, and said, gleefully,

“She is *your* mother too! They have gone on a bridal trip!”

She smiled a weak, sad smile that renewed my fears.

“What is it, Edith? What do you know?”

She pointed to a letter on the table and sank wearily into a chair, while I read.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

My dear Daughter :

I can imagine the consternation you will feel on reading this letter ; yet I hope you will bear up bravely as becomes the daughter of one who, though unable longer to resist, is too proud to surrender, even to fate. I would rather be nothing than remain among our people and be less than I have been.

At one time you no doubt anticipated trouble and loss ; but I do not suppose you ever looked upon absolute impoverishment as a possibility, or dreamed that your father's name might be associated with crime as well as misfortune.

Long before you read these lines I shall be a fugitive—a fugitive from justice, the newspapers will say—without anything I can call my own except the yacht and her equipment. Even these are really the property of the noble woman who is the companion of my exile, and who has robbed herself and her son to lighten my misfortune and relieve my present exigency. We thought to surprise you with a double wedding, and hoped until almost the last moment that this exodus might be avoided. Finding that we must choose between two evils, we decided to take what seemed the least. Detectives have been upon my track for some time, and an indictment was found against

me on yesterday. But for this fact, the lapse of time would have barred prosecution on the offence charged, to-day—for it is past midnight now—and I should have been able to observe your birthday to-morrow without apprehension—once more a free man, released from the horrible possibility which has hung over my life so long.

I have suspected that my enemy would take this course, and with the aid of Mrs. Owens—now Mrs. Fairbanks—have arranged to meet it and baffle those whose malice has followed me with such persistency. Under pretense of preparing for your fête the Wanderer has been fairly well victualled for a cruise. Osborne, whose faithfulness can be relied on, will take on coal enough for a voyage to-night and be at the wharf at two o'clock. If nothing prevents, we shall board her then, and “they’ll have fleet steeds that follow.” I think my enemy has been thrown off his guard by the preparations for your birthday. Instead of confectious the boxes contained substantial stores. The yacht, you know, stands very near the head of her class, and as it is the last time she will carry American colors, I mean that she shall do credit to the flag at her peak.

It is strange that I should feel exhilaration at the thought of leaving my native land under such circumstances, but I have watched the toils that have been woven about me so long, that I am almost gleeful at the thought of escaping from them. I know it will leave a terrible burden of sorrow and humiliation for you to bear, but it

would have been even worse had I remained without the hope of retrieval that we now have. If we succeed—and I think we shall—in eluding our enemy, I hope yet to recoup my fortune and more than repay you for any sacrifice you may have to make on my account. Some investments made almost as an act of charity some years ago in a foreign land promise rich returns. I go to give them my attention. Should I succeed, you will see your father again; but I doubt if Ambrose Fairbanks is ever heard of more. I have determined to sink my individuality, and under another name either win a new success or hide the shame of failure.

I do not care to return here to defend or justify my past. All my pride and ambition are gone—even my patriotism is dead. I could never again be anything in my native land but an object of suspicion to the people whose esteem I have prized above all other things. I should be a stranger in the nation for whose life I freely offered my own. You will, of course, not think of remaining here to face the storm of obloquy and derision that will greet the knowledge of my departure. You will not wait to hear your father denounced as a miscreant by those who have claimed to be his best friends—aye, by those who owe to his favor all they possess of fortune or repute. The letter General Owen left for Ryal first opened my eyes to the fact that the South will offer a refuge to you from the relentless



scorn of a people to whose favor access is obtainable only by a golden key.

You will have but little, when you have redeemed my name from the odium of insolvency, but with Ryal's profession it will be enough. I shall always think of you as living contented and happy upon the embowered hillside whose beauty even the storm of battle spared. The power to indulge in unlimited luxury is not there the sole test of social merit, and as the wife of Ryal Owen you will be the peer of the highest and proudest, though you may have no surplus thousands at your disposal. It is strange that what we have been accustomed to consider the stronghold of aristocracy, should be the only portion of our land where society is not built on a purely monetary basis. There it is still possible, not merely to be poor and also respectable, but to be welcome in society without being rich.

My bitterest regret is that you will be involved in my misfortune. I have striven not without success to preserve the estate inherited from your mother from depreciation. You will find it—one half the Mills and Sagamo Lodge, with certain stocks—ready for your disposal on coming of age. It will be for you to decide, when you read the statement I shall leave, whether you will retain it for your own use or devote it to the payment of the only debt for which I am liable. I do not doubt that you will choose to extinguish the debt even at the sacrifice of the greater part of your property. If so, I have arranged a sale by consum-

mating which on Monday, you will secure the necessary funds. It will only afford you the barren satisfaction of saying that your father owes no man a farthing, but I think you will not hesitate to do it. I have arranged for my lawyer and the party who wishes to purchase to come out on the eight o'clock train Monday morning. The papers are all ready for your signature and the money will be paid over on their execution. The note for which I am liable falls due on the same day. I understand that it is the property of Mr. Stoningham, or of the Rock Oil Trust Company, of the president of which he is a relative. Mr. Martling will bring it and the hypothecated securities when he calls on Monday. Should you conclude to pay the same, my legal adviser, Mr. Alson, an old comrade and a most worthy man whom I would advise you to retain, will transfer to you certain properties you will find mentioned in the enclosed statement. I trust they will sometime remunerate you for the sacrifice their possession will cost.

In regard to the matter which will, no doubt, affect you more deeply than the fact of my insolvency—though you will find that the society in which you have been accustomed to move would forgive it far more readily—the fact that I am fleeing as an indicted criminal. You will see by the enclosed statement that the act of which I am accused, at the worst, was without purpose to harm, and, if you shall pay the debt to which I have alluded, no one

will have sustained loss by any act of mine except ourselves. All the rest I have made good. Mr. Alson may tell you that I am not even technically guilty of the charge against me. He has so advised me, but I think it not wise to remain and fight for my good name with a power so malignant and omnipotent as the great monopoly which is the real prosecutor.

It has been intimated to me that if I would part with the rights Mr. Alson will convey to you, and consent to your marriage with Mr. Martling, the debt would be forgiven and the prosecution dropped. I have managed to postpone any consideration of this until your birthday, and by assuring Mr. Martling that you would not enter into any matrimonial engagement until that time. This you know I could safely do, having your promise to that effect.

You will pardon me, Edith, for having seemed to make traffic of your future. I could not well do otherwise. If I had refused to listen to this proposal it might have precipitated my misfortune before you were able to act for yourself and perhaps have led to hopeless sacrifice on your part. Besides, I will confess that I was in hope my enemy might relent or become careless, so that his opportunity to prosecute would be lost. Then we could have paid the debt and eventually have retrieved our loss, without any impairment of personal character or prestige.

Mr. Martling will, no doubt, inform you that he has my leave to address you as a suitor. I did promise him that

I would put no obstacles in his way. He will tell you that he alone has power to quash the prosecution against me. In this, too, he no doubt speaks truly. His master, Stoningham, has been willing to favor him thus far in his wooing. He is not a bad man, neither is his master. In love and in business they count everything fair—that is all. They do not see why you should not be coerced through your filial love. Such things are not so very infrequent either. If you loved Mr. Martling I would make no objection to the conditions offered. I will not, however, permit you to be constrained to marry any one out of consideration for my safety or advantage. I have promised not to interfere with your choice, but you must be allowed to choose, not terrified into compliance by the fear of untoward consequences to me. The course I am about to take will at least leave you free to consult your own happiness. It will be impossible to shield me from suspicion. To sacrifice yourself for me would be in vain. If I can not save you from humiliation, I can at least leave you free to seek what happiness life may bring without fear of any one's ability to work me harm.

You will, no doubt, blame me for not sheltering my good name behind your love, but you must remember that to have done so would have been the most ineffaceable dishonor. Flight or death were the only alternatives. I chose that which I am about to attempt, knowing that I had the other always in reserve. Ambrose Fairbanks

will never stand in the prisoner's dock nor plead to a felonious accusation. That I live and hope, you will remember, is in a great measure due to the courage and devotion of that noble woman who has sacrificed her own and her son's fortune hardly less for your sake than for mine. That she is willing to unite her fate with mine gives me hope.

Trusting in her cheerful presage of happier days, I remain with unabated love,

Your father,

AMBROSE FAIRBANKS.

P. S.—Remember, that however unfortunate I may be, no man can claim that I have purposely done him wrong in any matter, great or small.

A. F.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

“Well, I’m glad he got away,” I said, heartily, as I finished reading. I had never had a warmer feeling for Edith’s father than at that moment. “I am sure I wish them a pleasant voyage.”

“Oh Ryal!” Edith spoke reproachfully.

I looked at her in surprise. She was folding between her fingers an end of the wide ribbon that confined her morning robe at the waist. I noticed that, despite what had happened, the bows were tied with the utmost precision. Her hair was parted evenly on her forehead, and nothing but the weary, distressed look and the unconscious action of her hands revealed any excitement.

“Why not?” I asked.

“Such a disgrace!” she exclaimed, letting the plaited end fall loose upon her lap.

“He says he has done nothing dishonorable.”

“Oh—of course.”

“Have you read the paper he refers to?”

“Yes.”

“That explains everything, I suppose?”

“It tells the whole sickening story”—with a sigh.

“Am I to see it?”

“I—suppose so—some time.”

She plaited the ribbon again, held the folded edge between thumb and finger, and spread it out in fan-shape with the other hand, quilling the ends over her fingers.

“There can be nothing wrong—no fraud—nor anything of that kind?”

“No, nothing but failure; owing money one cannot pay”—bitterly.

“You speak as if there could be nothing worse.”

She shrugged her shoulders.

“There are not many things more—annoying.”

“Honest poverty is not a crime.”

“Not poverty; but inability to pay—that is worse than a crime.”

“Worse?”

“Yes, indeed, it is a sin. ‘Pay that thou owest,’ that is the scriptural rock on which respectable society rests.”

“But you will pay this debt?”

“Oh, of course—I hope that is all.”

“But you know it is. Does he not expressly say so?”

She held the fan-shaped plaiting up to the light, touching it here and there to make it even and turning it back and forth as if studying it artistically. There was the slightest possible movement of her shoulders. She made no other reply. Among this people insolvency breeds distrust even among kindred.

“If that is paid I see no disgrace.”

“There is the running away.”

“He made a hard fight and lost. It is merely a change of base.”

“In the presence of the enemy—to avoid arrest!”

“On a malicious prosecution.”

“Between two days.”

“Why not, when there were detectives on his track?”

“With a woman, too!”

“My mother, remember.”

“Yes, my father and your mother!”

“His wife, however.”

“A private marriage—worse and worse!”

“I suppose there is no harm in that—they were of age,” I said angrily. I was horrified at her heartlessness.

“There is some consolation in that.” She laughed nervously. “Oh Ryal, what a terrible mess! What will they say?”

She smoothed out the ribbon, tossed it down at her side, and then drew it through her fingers to remove the plaitings.

“Nothing disrespectful of my mother!” I answered hotly.

“Not those who knew her, of course; but—the papers!”

“What of them?”

“Oh, I can see them,” she moaned, twisting her inlocked fingers together hopelessly. “I can see the headlines and hear the newsboys shouting, ‘Another Good



Man Gone!" "Gen. Ambrose Fairbanks Leaves His Country For His Country's Good!" "A Woman in the Case!" "Romance and Rascality!" "One of Lee's Pursuers flees from the Sheriff!" "Amount of his Stealings Unknown!" "His Daughter's Fortune Swallowed Up!"

The perspiration broke out upon my forehead as I listened to her even tones. Did she think only of herself?

"I would rather have died," she continued—"rather we all had died! Why did he not tell me? Why did he not trust me?"

"What would have been the use?"

"I would have saved him."

"You?"

"Yes; I ought to have done it, anyhow!"

"But you did not know of his difficulty."

"Oh yes I did—that is, something of it. I—I—knew he was in trouble and that I could help him; but I—I hoped it might not be so bad. I could have endured poverty, I suppose—though that would have been bad enough—and I never dreamed of anything more. But to be poor and—and disreputable besides!"

She rose and began to walk back and forth across the room, twisting her fingers in a pathetic, helpless way.

"You should not blame your father, Edith. He could not prevent what has occurred."

"Oh, I do not blame him. I pity him. He has

fought so hard and been so true—"square," we call it. That is what he has always been proud of—"doing the square thing." That means paying a debt whether it is just or unjust—taking all the risk, all the blame, and suffering all the loss!"

"He has done all that."

"Yes, but he will get no credit for it. Nobody will believe it. His name will be bandied about the country as that of an absconder as well as a failure, perhaps a defaulter. Oh my poor father! How he has suffered—how he must still suffer!"

"But you will pay the debt. What more could you have done?"

"I might have saved the exposure."

"How?"

"Don't ask me."

She turned again to the window and stood looking out at the river over the lower blind, her back towards me.

"You do not mean that you would have sacrificed yourself?" I asked hoarsely.

She did not answer.

"You would not have married Martling!" I asked, huskily—venturing on what had been uppermost in my mind from the first.

She only shrugged her shoulders.

"Edith! You would not—you could not forget your love!"

“ I *did* forget—my duty ! ”

She did not look around.

“ But you would not sacrifice your life, your happiness ? ”

Then she turned.

“ What is my happiness to my father’s good name ? You do not understand me, Ryal— you do not understand us. You would die for honor, but you care little for public esteem. To us a good reputation is more precious even than a consciousness of rectitude—to be scorned, a bitterer thing than to deserve ignominy. If your father’s command had made it necessary for you to renounce my love you would have done it.”

I tried to protest.

“ Do not deny it. I know you would. I should have despised you if you had not. So I ought to have shielded my father’s fame at the price of my own happiness. That is all the chance a woman has to show herself worthy. A man can do; she can only suffer.”

I started toward her. She shrank away.

“ Don’t, don’t ! ” she moaned pitifully, putting up her hands to push me back.

“ But you will not think of such a thing—now ? ”

“ I don’t know—I must think. Please, Ryal— ” still shrinking back with the white palms turned towards me.

“ I will kill him ! ” I said hoarsely.

“ And me too ? That would be a fine climax. Oh

Ryal, you must help me. You are the only one I can trust!" She clasped her hands in pitiful, unconscious pleading.

"You love me, Edith?"

"Do you doubt it?"

"And you will not think—of—of leaving me?"

"Could you bear to have me pointed at as the daughter of a fugitive—a defaulter?" Her eyes fell as she uttered the words.

"You shall not be!"

"Oh—" with a sigh of relief. "How will you prevent it?"

"We will fight them. The law shall compel them to do justice!"

"The law! Can the law stop the slanderer's tongue?"

"It can at least make him retract his lie and smart for his wrong."

"Not here, Ryal, not here in our moral and intelligent Northern life, where the newspaper bears sway. No man's honor, no woman's virtue is safe from attain here."

"Then we will go to the South, where the child is not cursed by the father's fault—where there is still a law for the slanderer and where honor is accounted better than gold!"

"That would be pleasant," she said with a sigh.

I put my arms about her and drew her to me. She leaned her head upon my breast like a tired child.

“ You will not think of—of doing anything else ? ” I asked, kissing her hair.

She sighed again.

“ No—not if I can help it. Let me go now. I am so tired.”

She put her hands against me, pushed herself feebly from my embrace, smoothed her hair unconsciously, and stole softly from the room.

## CHAPTER XXV.

When she had gone I opened the window and sat down to think. The sunshine poured in, the dew sparkled on the leaves, and the soft morning breeze came up from the river. A boat shot out from the other shore and broke its way through the golden ripples. I watched it carelessly. A man with a low, narrow-brimmed white hat, carrying a small cane, stood upon the pier and watched it also. Presently the boat reached the landing, and its occupant stepped out and spoke to the man in the white hat. As he glanced towards the house I saw it was one of the servants. He came up the path after a moment. The other looked up and down the river for a little time and then sauntered away.

When he had disappeared, my thoughts reverted to Edith and her sorrow. Somehow I could not make it seem real. Her agony appeared extravagant, unnatural. It was like a remembered nightmare. I wondered if the sunshine would not dispel it. I knew she was proud and sensitive, but I had not looked to see her overcome by any such misfortune. It was not the loss of luxury, for her tastes were simple, and she had often spoken with admiration of our unpretending southern life. As I turned the matter over in my mind I found myself less and less able

to comprehend the unutterable agony she seemed to feel. Of course, it was unpleasant to have her father depart in a surreptitious manner, especially to avoid arrest on a criminal charge. But he had assured her that no wrong had been intended, and that, if she paid his debt, no one else would suffer loss on account of it. He had given all his estate to repair the fault and now his daughter would give hers. Surely the strictest commercial code could require no more. Instead of feeling any sense of shame I was inclined to exult both in his sturdy uprightness and in the resolute courage which refused to yield to fate and even braved the obloquy of the world rather than submit to the power of a malicious enemy.

It seemed to me a great and noble thing that this man, already past the meridian of life, should resolutely cut loose from a past which might well be accounted enough for one man's work, and start out under a new name in some unknown land to retrieve his fortunes. I did not wonder that my mother had felt the charm of such a spirit, and forgave her for loving him. When my father's ashes were brought to Ryalmont to be laid under the shade of its trees, I had noted casually her bright beauty as she stood one day by the new-made grave, and wondered if she would ever wed again. I remembered thinking that I would not object, if only she chose one worthy to fill the place of the dead. I felt that the unexpressed condition had been fulfilled and heartily wished them joy.

All this seemed so plain to me that I could not believe it would not be equally apparent to Edith when she came to look at it calmly. I was even inclined to make light of her dolorous premonitions. Alas, I had yet to learn the power of that terrible cult by which her life had been shaped. Despite my four years of residence at the North, I had learned little of the forces controlling its life. In a vague way I apprehended what is termed its enterprise, the restless energy and dauntless aspiration which have impelled it to such marvelous accomplishment; but I understood nothing of the spirit that underlay them. I did not realize the jealousy, the envious distrust and ceaseless yearning to outdo and outshine, that form the impelling motive and controlling sentiment of this life. We are accustomed to think of Yankees as fond of money, and to attribute their enterprise to the mere greed of gain. It is not so. Perhaps less than any people in the world are they inclined to prize money for its own sake. Neither are they generally inclined to luxury. They do not value wealth merely for what it will bring of personal enjoyment. They love it for the power it confers to outdo others, and, especially, because it enhances the appreciation in which they are held among their fellows. It is not exactly respect, much less is it esteem; but what the Yankee desires above all things is the *envy* of his fellows. To be looked upon as keener, brighter, sharper, stronger, richer, luckier than others—that is heaven to him.



To him all enjoyment is comparative ; happiness has no positive degree. So long as another excels him—or rather, may be thought to excel him—he is not happy. He may have all he needs and be absolutely indifferent to acquisition, but so long as there is any one richer, able to make more display, or even to outdo him in ostentatious charity, his possessions, however great, are but apples of Sodom. There is no fixed standard. All is competitive and comparative. Every man measures himself by another and is unhappy until he overtops all about him.

There is no common level, no unit of affluence which brings security, honor and content. Even their pride of ancestry is comparative. Brown boasts that his father was richer than Jones', though one may have been a butcher and the other a blacksmith. It is to this curious Moloch that every one offers sacrifice, and it is this pride in out-tying others that is the master-passion of every life.

This I began to understand when we met at breakfast and, under the external calm which marked her manner, I noted Edith's suspicious, stolen glances at her guests. My mother's absence was easily excused, and it seemed that General Fairbanks had said the night before that he would drive over early to the Mills, where he would probably pass the day. Nothing worthy of note occurred during the meal, yet when it was over, I somehow realized as I had never done before, that of all the company who offered the young hostess their court, hardly one would deem her

worthy of their friendship or seek her society should she be stripped of wealth. It was not the luxury of her surroundings, but the supposed ability to be luxurious if she chose, that gave her the right to be regarded as an equal. I could but think how the very misfortune that would rally a Southern man's friends most quickly and staunchly about him, here scattered them most completely; and began to realize why it was that the most successful sank in an instant from the crest of the wave into utter insignificance when deprived of superabundant wealth. I saw how real was the agony Edith endured, though I could not feel its force or sympathize with the sense of degradation she experienced.

After breakfast the company disposed themselves according to their several inclinations. Sagamo Lodge was a veritable Liberty Hall at all times, but especially so on Sunday. If "blue-laws" ever prevailed here they had been long forgotten. The summer Sabbath is not often devoted to worship by the society to which the Fairbanks belonged. They are able to feel the consolations of religion only in an imposing edifice where eloquence and art minister to their enjoyment and fashion makes its most dazzling display. They cannot praise God with any sense of comfort and propriety where poverty and the past season's styles abound. They pity the poor but do not like to have them near, and see no reason why saints in purple and saints in patches should kneel at the same altar,

Few of the company, therefore, attended church that day. Edith excused herself upon the plea of attendance upon my mother, and the little company of guests scattered about as comfort and inclination dictated. I went more from force of our universal Southern habit than impelled by any worshipful mood. To tell the truth, I thought less of the service than of my mother. I had never attended this church except in her company, and when I found myself alone in the pew I realized for the first time that a fate more inexorable than the sparkling sea which stretched between, had torn my life from its early moorings. I was alone in the world—alone with only Edith to serve, to guard, to love. Would I even be permitted to love her?

I was not in a very religious frame of mind, but somehow I felt soothed by the earnest words of the unassuming man who spoke to us of the "hidden way," which is lighted up for us only step by step as we advance. I have often thought of his discourse since that time, and have been encouraged to take steps I might otherwise never have attempted.

When I reached my room I found lying on my table a large envelope directed in Edith's hand. I opened it and read during the hours of the hot July afternoon,

THE STORY OF AMBROSE FAIRBANK'S CRIME!

It was addressed to Edith and read:—

## CHAPTER XXVI.

*“ To my daughter :*

“ When you read these pages you will have learned the need for their inditement.

“ The perusal of General Owen’s letter to his son, which I have just completed, has awakened a very unpleasant contrast between his situation and my own. He indited a letter of instruction and advice to his son ; I must write one of self-defence, almost of apology, to my daughter. He wrote upon the eve of his country’s downfall—an event he did not expect to survive. I am about to leave my country, because I am charged with an infraction of her laws. He wrote after four years of conflict to establish his country’s independence ; I after four years of unceasing struggle to save my good name and recoup my lost fortune. He foresaw the fate that awaited him—a soldier’s death upon the field of battle—and knew that whatever the result of the strife in which he was engaged, his name would be an inheritance of honor to all who bore it. I know that when the sun has risen and set once more, the name I shall subscribe to this paper will be ineffaceably stained. She who alone inherits it from me will flush with anger, if not with shame, as she hears it bandied about by jeering lips. He went forth to die for his country and her fame ; the glory

of her brief career shone on his honored grave. I, if I can balk the minions of the law for one more day, shall go away to predetermined self-annihilation. I shall not die, but simply fade out of the world's life. The honors I have won are forever blighted. My name will be mentioned only with qualified approval. He will be honored when I am forgotten. Yet he fought for the cause that lost; I for one that triumphed. My sword was as bright, my service as signal as his. But, alas, I did not die! The battle brought for me no flaming chariot of immortality! All that I had won in arms I have lost in the fiercer conflict that succeeded.

“I know my conduct will not need any defence so far as you are concerned, but it may be some satisfaction to know the causes that have led to the unfortunate circumstances which you will have to confront alone. You remember Collyer, who used to be associated with me in business. Just before the outbreak of the war he went to the newly discovered El Dorado, the oil regions of western Pennsylvania. There were great opportunities; he was young, active, ingenious and sagacious. Better than any other man, he appreciated from the first the immensity of the traffic that must result from the discovery, and with a sagacity altogether marvelous he marked out the lines of its development. I had the utmost confidence in his integrity and ability. After all that I have undergone I have only the kindest memory of him. If he did exceed the limit of legal right it was to save others rather than himself. If the re-

sults he anticipated were not achieved it was because forces were developed in the financial and political world which no foresight could have divined. Poor fellow, if my lot has been hard, his was infinitely worse. His children will never know the humiliation you will be compelled to face, because they never knew since they have reached mature years the affluence you will have to surrender. Of all our acquaintances, however, I doubt if there are any who will so sincerely mourn the misfortunes that have overtaken me as the widow and her little brood in the thriving Pennsylvania town, who do not know that the modest dwelling which overlooks the scene of her husband's triumphs was not saved for her out of his estate but given her by the very man who suffered most through his failure.

“Collyer saw that the great opportunity really lay in refining and transporting the new product. The world seemed to have waited as long as it could for cheap lights. We had gas in the cities, to be sure, but that was both a luxury and a burden. The poor could not afford it nor was it available in the country, where five-sixths of the population of the world is to be found. The supply of petroleum is apparently inexhaustible and it practically costs nothing. It is as if the basin of one of our great lakes was full of liquid naphtha free to all, requiring only to be refined and stored and transported. The average cost of getting a gallon of oil to the surface of the ground, taking all that has been produced since its discovery, has not been a tenth of a cent a gallon.

So, too, deducting for storage, piping, etc., the producer—that is the owner of the well, as distinguished from the refiner and transporter—has not averaged on his yield so much as a cent a gallon. Yet the average price to the consumer has up to this time been not less than forty cents a gallon.

“Something of this discrepancy was for a time due to the cost of refining the crude product. Collyer saw that this was destined to be a great industry and organized a company to engage in it. He also gave attention to improved modes of storing and devices for handling and transporting.

“He asked me to join with him in this enterprise, which I did and was made president of the company. As such I had to sign the certificates of stock of the corporation. Being absent in the army it was impossible for me to give the business my personal attention. Indeed, there was no need that I should. Collyer was the secretary and treasurer and entirely capable of managing the business. I signed the certificates in blank and left them in his hands. I do not know how many of them there were.

“You can readily guess what followed. Unfortunately the story is not an unusual one. The tragedies of commerce are not less pitiful than those of war and far more numerous. Before the war ended, it became apparent that a new economical, social and political force had been created and had become an important element of all business trans-

actions and every political movement. The states of the Union had for a quarter of a century been so intent upon a sudden development of their resources, that they had created a monopoly of the right to transport goods and passengers by steam of a singularly exclusive character. Quite unconscious of the importance and character of the new-born agency of traffic, they had used their power of eminent domain with a recklessness that left them, when the men and the hour came, the helpless victims of their own creatures. Instead of using the sovereign power for the public advantage and limiting the charters of the various railroads strictly to the uses and privileges appertaining to the public highway, they in effect gave the managers and controllers of these roads a complete monopoly of the right to transport goods and passengers by steam.

“It is hardly strange that such unlimited privileges were so freely granted, for no one was at that time aware of the immensity of the power thus placed in the hands of fictitious personages, created by law and existing only by the public favor, nor did any one understand what tremendous agencies they might become. No one knew at that time what we are beginning now to understand, that the business of transportation is by all odds the greatest of human industries, being the one on which all others are dependent. No one realized that within forty years after the first locomotive was set upon the rough track which the sovereign power of a state permitted to be laid, the whistle of the



engine would be the trumpet blast of a power to which all must bend. We did not dream that every business and profession would be dependent for its success, directly or indirectly, upon the will of those who should have the control of this terrible agency. No one imagined that within a single lifetime, agriculture itself would shrink into insignificance beside this marvelous force, and that even the farmer at his plough would be among the most abject subjects of its power. No dreamer was mad enough to predict that every pound of food the great West could produce and every article of manufacture the great East could devise, would be taxed to the limit of the subject-laborer's endurance to pay tribute to this mystic force, based on law, supported by the invincible power of aggregated wealth, guarded by cunning and protected by the weakness of its foes. No one even guessed that products of nature, which are almost as abundant as air and water and almost as needful to civilized existence, would be guarded, restricted and doled out by a fortunate few to the unfortunate many.

“We were blind, of course, but who could guess that six men would be able to put their seals upon the galleries that lead to God's great storehouse of warmth—the coal deposits that underlie His eternal hills—and compel the poor to buy at their own price? Who could have foreseen that a product, almost as cheaply secured as water, by the marvelous power of combined privilege should be held at the beck of one man? Who would have imagined that the

lightning, which hardly a quarter of a century ago was taught to do man's bidding, would ever become the slave of one man—the means by which a whole continent is compelled to pay tribute to his matchless hardihood ?

“ Too late we are learning the power of the demons we have evoked from nothingness. At the time of which I write we were taking our first lessons. Such men as Drew and Vanderbilt and Fisk and Gould had just begun to show what wonderful things the undefined conditions of our modern life are, for jugglers like them to conjure with; how the strong by combining could swallow the weak and the law be made the cover rather than the bane of robbery; how millions might be taken for nothing and hunger and cold be made the collectors of unlawful tribute. They were giving us the first lessons in debasing enterprise, suppressing competition and making the general aspiration subservient to their relentless greed. We ought to have seen what was at hand, but we did not, and I was as blind as my fellows—as blind then and as weak now !

“ So too, was Collyer. He saw—but it was too late ! In his efforts to save those associated with him he fell irretrievably. It was just at the close of the war. I hastened, as you know, to his aid. The glamour of military renown was about me. I was thought also to be far more wealthy than I really was.

“ Collyer's enterprises had been at first successful. He reaped the usual and just reward of foresight and sagacity.

Then the intangible force of unlawfully combined enemies, armed with public power and holding the avenues of ingress and egress to his works, was arrayed against him. The power of the State, the sword of the law, was thrown into the scales. He struggled bravely. If he passed the limit of legal right, let us not blame him. Perhaps my confidence tempted. It is certain that the law, which commanded his obedience, lent itself to his unjust slaughter. When I came he was hopelessly involved, and justice had laid its heavy hand upon him.

“I managed to save the company with which I was connected from immediate disaster. Collyer bequeathed me the knowledge he had gained, the titles he had acquired, the inventions he had secured, the forecasts he had made. He commended his family to my care and breathed his last in the confines of a prison. I took up the fight, confident of success. Creditors were lenient. The problem seemed easy. And so it was, but for the unknown and unknowable quantities which legal privilege had interjected into it. Had competition been open and unrestricted I could hardly have failed of success. So, too, if I had yielded to the demands of those who controlled the avenues of supply and demand—had surrendered to a band of arrogant conspirators the key of our works and accepted from them what they chose to give—I might have been permitted to continue as a tributary dependent.

“No doubt, it would have been wiser to have done so.

It is always folly to fight overwhelming odds. A man is powerless against the state or those armed with its authority. What then shall be said of a combination wielding the power of three States and backed by more than a billion of dollars? What merchantman shall resist a fleet of pirates protected by the flag of a sovereign? Collyer, in those last sad days, advised against resistance. Poor fellow! Experience had taught him wisdom. The accuracy of his forecast was amazing. He seemed to know every branch and armet of the subterranean sea which had been so opportunely tapped, and able to tell with unerring instinct the course of future events.

“‘These three roads,’ he would say, pointing to the combined lines, ‘command every avenue of approach to the enchanted ground. Every gallon of oil must pay tribute to them on its way to the refinery and again upon its way to market. By-and-by, other means of transport will be found. If they can be made free to all it is possible that the power of this combination may be broken. The danger is that they will control these also. Three gigantic railroads, owning and administering the power of three States, are not easily balked of their purpose. And the control of this wonderful product of nature is a prize that may well tempt men to any hazard. The treasures which Pizarro wrested from the Incas have dazzled the imagination of the world for four centuries. But the control of the petroleum product of America—the great empire of

Naphtha—for a score of years is worth a dozen times the plunder of Peru. They will buy voters, legislators, judges, governors, congressmen, senators—until the whole fabric of government is under the absolute control of them and their associates. They are just beginning to learn their own power. They will meet some reverses. They will seem to suffer defeats. Restraining laws will be enacted. The courts will fulminate against them. But the process of consolidation will continue to go on. The greater will swallow the less, and these will divide with each other the tribute of a subjugated people. In less than a generation the nation will be powerless in their hands. It will struggle ; it will writhe, but in the end it will yield.

“ ‘ Within a quarter of a century ten men will hold in their hands the fate of every business in the land. The success of every farmer, manufacturer and merchant, will be dependent on their pleasure. They will make the enterprise of the whole country subservient to their greed. You do not believe it, but you will see. You do not believe it possible to enslave the American people? There is no need. They have only to show them how to enslave themselves. They are not anxious for the show of power. All they want is the substance. They have only to humor the underlying tendencies, and in a few more years wealth will be the only test of merit and respectability and the millionaire or his creature, will be the only man selected to legislate or administer the power of government.

“ At the best, it is the few strong against the many weak. They will be in no haste. They know they have only to wait, and the wealth of the millions will surely find its way into the vaults of the few. A man with a hundred millions has only to be patient and the weak whom he holds in his power will in a few years make it a billion. We have yet no billionaire, but we soon shall have. A quarter of a century ago we had scarcely ten millionaires. Now there are hundreds. How have they grown? By feeding upon others. Every overgrown fortune in the land has come from swallowing up some hundreds or thousands of lesser ones. The whole philosophy of mammoth acquisitions is embraced in one phrase: ‘The big fish live upon the little ones.’ The true theory of success is not to fight the big ones but to pursue steadily after the multitude of little ones. Do not try to fight the sharks but chase the herring. Make your peace with the men whom I have antagonized. Help them carry out their plans; point their game for them; help them to run it down and—*get your share of the offal!*”

## CHAPTER XXVII.

“I used to smile at these tirades of Collyer’s and tell him that disappointment had made him cynical. A man in jail for the misuse of commercial opportunity may be forgiven for feeling envious. So I gave little heed to his words. He did not claim any merit, but said he would have done the same as those of whom he warned me. Perhaps he would. He worshiped success as we all do.

“I wonder that I did not take his advice. I had need of success, and did not think it very reprehensible to do almost anything the law permitted. Of course, we have, or profess to have, a standard of right and wrong outside of the limitations of the law, but it is a sham. What fails is wrong; what succeeds is right. That is our practical morality. In society, politics and business there is no other. In the church—well, there *is* a prejudice there against certain forms of money-getting; rather because they are vulgar than because they are wrong, however. The church objects to the dramseller but exults in the keen-witted believer who builds himself up on the ruin of others. He who has wealth, even though acquired by the most questionable means, is far more welcome there than he without pelf. This is not the fault of Christianity but of our education, training, development. We have

carried the slangy doctrine of 'Every man for himself' so far that its accustomed conclusion, "the devil for the whole," has become an accepted corollary. As a people, we delight in doing charity, but are ashamed to do justice. We would rather be swallowed by the strong than admit our inability to cope with them single-handed.

"I neglected Collyer's advice but did not forget his predictions. Alas, I have lived to see too many of them fulfilled. He confessed that he had abused my confidence. Of the stock of the company more than double the number of lawful shares were hypothecated for our indebtedness. For this I was legally responsible and addressed myself at once to the task of their redemption. It was not difficult, with the prestige attaching then to my name, by paying a part of them, to obtain extensions. The last of these expires upon your birthday. All the rest of the stock has been taken up and cancelled. The amount held for this is nearly equal to the whole number of lawful shares. The holders suspect an over-issue and have secured my indictment for participation in it. With this they hope to compel compliance with their wishes. They will not succeed. If the scheme on which I rely should fail, there is one other way out of the difficulty. Whatever happens, you will be spared the shame of seeing your father in the hands of the law.

"Yet the terms they offered were not so bad. If they had not included you I think I should have accepted them,



much as I hate the Rock Oil Trust and hot as the fight has been between us. They have only done what the times and public sentiment encouraged them to do. They may have taken undue advantage of the law's defects and paid little heed to its warnings, knowing that they had its administrators securely in hand. The head of the concern, Stoningham, is a very liberal, pious man. He gives away a great deal of money for charity and the church. They tell me he is very strict and fervent in his family devotions, and pretty much supports a theological seminary. I do not understand it, but I presume the man sees little if any wrong in what he does through this corporate agency. He is no doubt sincere in his religious convictions. That is the worst of it, that we have come to think there is no wrong in anything we do if it is only beyond the reach of the law.

“My fight has been a hard one. Despite the odds of the mighty combination against me, I succeeded for a time. It only shows the immense profits of the business, that I did so. Collyer's experience and advice helped me. As I said, he seemed to have foreseen all that has come to pass. His wise forecast enabled me to take advantage of the discovery of new oil fields. It was a wonderful thing. We came near overthrowing the power of the great monopoly, even with the great railroads at its back. Many of the associated producers and refiners thought we had done so, and they began to prey on each other. We soon saw our

mistake. It was a success that helped me out of our difficulties, however. I paid off all my debts except a note that falls due on your birthday. That I could not find. After a time I became aware that the Rock Oil Trust held it. I sent an agent to offer principal and interest, but they would not accept payment.

“Then came the new method of transporting—by pipelines. Collyer had foreseen it and bought some, perhaps all, of the patents that cover the simple process by which it is forced from station to station, half across a continent. It should stretch from sea to sea an unrestricted common carrier. We procured a charter; a short experimental line was laid, and we thought our great oppressor was vanquished. It was a foolish exultation. Hardly was the efficiency of the new system proved when we found it controlled by our old enemy. What else could have been expected? With three of the greatest railroad systems of the world combined against us, wielding the power of the three greatest States in the Union, why should they not prevail? Men are but human, whether they be shareholders, legislators or judges, and the law is very weak when it is confronted by a combination that controls a billion dollars and is able to make or mar the fortunes of three out of every five business men in the whole region lying along its lines. What is the use of talking of freedom and right and justice in a country where such power is controlled by one man, who is all the more dangerous because

he sincerely believes he has an inalienable right to do whatever he is able to do—that capacity to accomplish is the real limit of moral right ?

“Up to this time the conflict had been impersonal. That was a little more than a year ago. About that time an armistice was tacitly arranged and overtures for peace were made, at first vague and undefined, through trusted subordinates. Then the embargo was raised, and I was permitted for a time to see what would be the profits of my business if the hostility of the Rock Oil Trust was removed. Even I was surprised. I had never realized how vast its network of agencies and how great its army of dependents. I was amazed to learn that four-fifths of the retailers of the refined product throughout the country were subject to its control.

“Then I had an interview with Stoningham. He proposed an alliance—that they should be allowed to use openly—as I am assured they have done secretly—the process of continuous distillation which poor Collyer invented. By this the cost is reduced many fold. This alone had enabled me to continue the fight while scores of enterprising independent refiners were crushed by the power of the conspiracy. Stoningham had learned, too, the accuracy of Collyer’s predictions, and proposed that the options he had secured in regions not apparently productive of oil should be held for the joint benefit, that our works and facilities should be appraised and I be allowed a proportionate share

of the entire business with equal advantages in storing and transporting with the great Trust and its other dependencies. You will think them liberal terms for a defeated foe, and I am bound to admit that they were—so liberal that I was surprised until I found what they covered, or rather what was coupled with them.

“I made no response to these overtures, half-suspecting something beneath them. Even when Stoningham went off into encomiums of his lieutenant, Martling, I did not at first perceive his purpose. It was only when your name was mentioned that I understood it all. It was intimated that the note and the collateral might be made a wedding present. He deftly hinted that an over-issue of stock was a crime punishable with imprisonment. Then I saw his drift. The Rock Oil Trust had me in its power. They would crush my business, ruin my good name and imprison my body. All this I realized in an instant. If I would sell you to Mr. Martling and give up to them the secrets Collyer had bequeathed me for my own benefit and the comfort of his loved ones, they would make me their ally. That was the ultimatum.

“I am surprised that I did not once think of accepting these terms. I was only afraid the circumstances would come to your knowledge and that you would insist upon sacrificing yourself for me. Somehow the idea of disgrace had ceased to be terrible. I had faced it as a possibility so long, that now it came in the form of a covert threat I

scarcely heeded it. I only wished to save you. I knew your love but dreaded your pride. Once I would have died rather than leave you a dishonored name. Now I began to wonder whether it was dishonored—whether an upright life and honest purpose were really at the mercy of a vengeful enemy because of one unconscious act for which no one had suffered.

“So I merely sought to gain time. I said that I could not interfere with your preferences. A truce was arranged between us. I felt humiliated by the thought of having allowed your name even to be mentioned in the matter, but I was helpless before this mysterious enemy whose power I had so fully tested.

“For some months all went well. I knew it could not last, however, and was all the time planning to foil our enemies. I was conscious of being constantly under espionage. I knew that my clerks and employees were being tampered with. The Rock Oil octopus did not mean to let its prey escape. When at length I attended to negotiate means to pay the debt, intending to assent to your marriage immediately upon Mr. Owen’s graduation, and defy them to do their worst with the criminal charge,—then it was that I first learned the real character of the enemy with whom I had to deal. I was warned that your intimacy with Ryal must cease, that his mother must leave my house and that my efforts to negotiate a loan would be frustrated. As I paid no heed to these threats I soon be-

gan to find my business suffering in consequence. My plans were thwarted ; supplies were cut off so that it became impossible to fill my contracts. My shipments were delayed. The oil that passed through the pipes was adulterated or changed in transit. Leakage and waste became enormous. Suits were instigated against me. My works became suddenly unreliable and the product mysteriously diminished. Through an old army friend I negotiated a conditional sale of your estate to be consummated on your birthday, if you desired. Through him, too, I conveyed to you, under certain conditions, the valuable options and inventions received from Collyer. Then I began to feel secure. When the threats were repeated—vague hints coming through lips which were ignorant of the meaning of the words they uttered—I answered defiantly.

“Just at this time my works were burned. The loss was not so very great, only it happened to take about all that I had remaining. The fact of absolute financial ruin burst upon me. I saw with an indescribable terror the dilemma in which you were placed. I saw, too, my own peril. Should I refuse to sacrifice you, the fate poor Collyer had suffered seemed to recruit me. I knew that without money I should be without friends and, in a conflict with such an enemy, without hope. I knew the fire was incendiary and was satisfied that it was instigated by some one closely connected with the great Monopoly ; but I could prove nothing. My employees were untrustworthy. I

managed to get a hold upon one and he confessed enough to convict himself and set me on the track of others. Soon he came to me in terror. His life had been threatened. The next night he was fired upon. A few days after he had another escape. He seemed surrounded with enemies. Then he was charged with crime and thrown into prison. I bailed him out and procured him employment in a distant city. Within a week the house in which he lived was burned. His life seemed constantly in peril.

“Then the threats changed to promises. Golden lures were thickly spread along his path. He was offered fabulous opportunities by unknown parties. Strangers sought him out and offered him large sums to do the most simple tasks. All at once he was gone. I knew he had been spirited away. Whether he is alive or dead I do not know.

“Then I felt that I must, at all events, free myself from the toils surrounding me and leave you at liberty to secure happiness with as little opprobrium on my account as possible. To me there seems but one way out of the difficulty. If we succeed in eluding the vigilance of our enemy, they must either give up the prosecution they have set on foot or do without their money. If you offer to pay my debt, of course you will demand the surrender of the security they hold, and they cannot take advantage of your generosity without losing their revenge. In other words, if the Rock Oil people accept your money they will have to

give up the collateral, and the criminal prosecution must then fail. If they do not accept the money offered, it may be convenient, some time, for developing the great oil fields in which Collyer sunk his borrowed capital.

“The fact that Ryal’s mother goes with me will release you from any sense of public odium, should you fail to redeem my note. It will naturally be inferred that I have yielded to her fascinations and absconded with money improperly obtained. It will come out after a time that we were privately married some weeks ago, but the fact will be very little noticed, and the great mass of the people will always look upon it as an elopement as well as a defalcation.

“And now, my dear daughter, you will have to act for yourself. I do not doubt as to what you will do. As I have thought only of you, I know you will be inclined to think only of me. To a certain extent, I shall not object to this. I shall be glad to know that you have tendered payment for the last dollar I owe, that my honor has been protected though my reputation may be scotched. Farther than that I forbid you to think of going. I have sacrificed my pride to save your love. Do not think of sacrificing your love in a vain attempt to save my good name. Be content that your father has acted neither dishonorably nor cowardly, though he may seem to have done both; that he has contracted an honorable alliance with a noble woman, whose courage and devotion have not only won his love



but stimulated his determination to retrieve his misfortunes.

“I am, it is true, compelled to leave my native land—not self-exiled, but driven out by the fear of obloquy. That is the real fact. If one might really be poor and yet respectable within her borders, no enemy should boast of having seen my back. This is the hardest wrench of all. You know something of my adoration for our country—a worship not so much attaching to the realm or the nationality of the Great Republic as for that Northern life, the spirit of enterprise, individuality and equal opportunity of which we have so long boasted as the very essence of Americanism. I can not tell you how bitterly I suffer as I contemplate the fact that the ills of the present are a legitimate result of the folly of the past. We have carried our rage for liberty so far that it has become the apology and excuse for wrong; until the right to achieve has become inseparable in our minds from the right to destroy. Pride in individual success, in financial achievement, has grown to such a pitch that all else is counted dross. Excellence, virtue and honor are all measured by the dollar. Intellect is nothing unless gilded; virtue is without esteem unless securely placed on a gold basis. I do not blame others for this. All my life I have been, more or less, the slave of this impulse. At first it was half unconscious and had not then the opportunity for development that these later days have brought. I doubt if anything but misfortune would

have taught me its hideous character. Even Stoningham, with all the woeful acts that lie at his door, with all the poverty and shame he has heaped on others, and the wrongs he has inspired, is not only a natural result of our past, but really a product of its best and sweetest life. The purest blood of New England flows in his veins. He was reared amid the perfume of Christian charity and rectitude. He is even now a zealot who would suffer martyrdom for his faith. He loves his country, too, and upon occasion would no doubt do as much, perhaps a great deal more, than I have ever done for its defence. He considers it no harm—perhaps even not a matter of wrong—to thwart its laws, corrupt its officials or oppress its people. Perhaps I would have done the same in his place. I do not blame—I hardly dare to blame—I only mourn the shattering of my idol.

“I go away, but I hope to return. Some speculative investments in another land, made in the days of my prosperity, give a prospect of retrieving my fortunes. If that hope is justified, I trust yet to do something to awaken my countrymen from the lethargy which has overtaken their better natures, and release them from the fetters our own foolish pride has forged. The Rock Oil people will no doubt believe themselves to have ruined another presumptuous competitor and congratulate themselves that another obstacle to a complete monopoly of one of nature’s most abundant and beneficent products is crushed. I hope

to disappoint their expectations, not alone to avenge my own wrongs—though I would by no means deny the force of such motive—but in the overthrow of this mighty usurpation, to teach the peril of unguarded privilege. I do not expect to cure the evils of our civilization. I am neither a statesman nor a reformer, but as a great catastrophe very often points the way to the adoption of better methods, I hope to do something to make this giant wrong a notable example and a warning that will not soon be forgotten. For what I am about to do let this letter be to you my apology. Time alone can bring to the world its justification. If assured of your happiness, mine will be complete. Without that nothing can make tolerable the life I saved but for your sake.

Your father,

AMBROSE FAIRBANKS.”

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This, then, was the crime that had driven a brave and worthy man into exile.

If he had violated any law, it had been without intent, and no one had suffered so much as a farthing's worth by his act. He did not complain. The instinct of obedience to the law was so strong with him that even at the last extremity he did not murmur. Even in that supreme moment he thought of his country rather than himself,

and looked forward with curious apprehension to a future when the creatures of the law should control every function of government. The very prosecutor, whose hand was armed with legal terrors for his chastisement, was himself a notable instance of legal privilege supported and maintained in the pursuit of unrighteous ends.

Alas ! even his imagination, fired by the sting of his own agony, could not guess the height of insolence to which power, builded on a legal fiction, but worshiped as the holiest of holy things by a people with whom the right to gather and possess is accounted the supremest privilege of liberty, within a decade would exhibit. He did not dream that it would defy the will of its creator, mock at the sovereign power of a state, refuse to submit to the scrutiny of the national government, league itself with a hundred like organizations to control other and yet more wonderful products of nature, and form an unsanctified alliance by which hundreds of millions of dollars were placed at the disposal of a single man.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

I saw but little of Edith during the day. Towards evening I heard a knock upon the door leading into my mother's room, and, when I opened it, she entered. To the pallid dejection of the morning was added now a look of positive terror.

“What is it?” I asked in alarm.

She went to the window and pointed towards the river.

“The house is watched,” she said, as if the words were the very knell of hope. I looked towards the landing. The white-hatted man was there. A little way up the path at the side of the house another man was strolling back and forth.

“Much good it will do them,” I said, with some satisfaction in my tone.

“Oh, Ryal, how can you! What if the people in the house should find it out!”

“I think the best thing we can do is to tell them the whole story.”

“It would kill me!”

Looking at her strained face and drooping figure I began to fear it might.

“But they must know it sometime.”

“I shall not see them afterwards”—with a shrug.

“ Oh, I know you think me very weak and so I am. You must help me. If we can only get through this matter and get away before it is in everybody’s mouth! Do you suppose the morning papers will have it ?”

“ To-morrow ? I should judge not. If the Rock Oil people think your father is here, they will make no move until to-morrow. If they suspect his absence they will wait to see you before beginning operations.”

“ Do you think Mr. Martling will—?” She paused as if unwilling to proceed.

“ Do I think he will ask you for your hand ? There is no doubt of it.”

“ Could he stop this thing—hush it up—get those people away, I mean ?” with a disgusted gesture towards the detectives.

“ No doubt—if his terms were complied with.”

She turned towards the window so that I could not see her face.

“ And those terms ?”

“ You know them as well as I.”

“ You think he would accept no other ?”

“ See here, Edith,” I said, almost angrily, “ I know what is in your mind. You are wondering whether the prosecution against your father would be withdrawn and the matter hushed up, if you should promise to become Martling’s wife. You could never do such a thing if you tried.”

“I—might—*promise*.”

“Then you would have to fulfill.”

“I might not—be—alive.”

“Edith !”

“I shall not live—very long.”

“But, Edith, you can secure what you desire much more easily than by the means you intimate.”

“How ?” She turned towards me with a look of eager inquiry.

“I think your father has magnified the importance of Mr. Martling’s wish. What the man at the head of the great oil monopoly wants is not so much an alliance between you and Martling as the property and franchises your father holds. If you choose to surrender these—which I understand will be assigned to you—I have no doubt they will serve both as a ransom for yourself and a release for your father. If you pay the debt and assign to them what they think your father controls, the prosecution will be dropped and you will be allowed to do what you choose.”

“And Mr. Martling ?”

“Mr. Martling will do as Mr. Stoningham bids.”

“And you—you advise this course ?”

“Not at all. I would pay the debt, demand the securities and let them do their worst.”

“But then—?”

“There is no need to go over the ground again,” I interrupted. “That is all there is of it.”

“And they want to compel my father to give up these things—this property?”

“Of course. That is why they are pressing the prosecution.”

“And they think I will surrender them?”

“They probably do not know you are to have them.”

“But you—what do you think?”

“Oh, I think it would be a great deal better to give them up than to marry a man you do not love,” I responded laughingly.

She did not answer. After a time she said in a very different tone:

“Can I make a will, Ryal?”

I blushed. It was the first time my opinion on a legal subject had been asked in earnest. I tried to think what her rights—the rights of an infant *feme sole*—in respect to testamentary bequests were, but could not. Determined not to err in advising my first client, I replied cautiously:

“To-morrow you can.”

“Will you prepare a will for me as I may direct?”

She did not know how flattered I was by this display of confidence in my legal ability.

“Certainly; when shall I do it?”

“Now—if you are willing, that is.”

“All right.” I took out my pencil and sat down at the table ready to take notes.

“Well?”



“All that I have—all my estate, you call it, don’t you ?”

“Yes—real and personal ?”

“I suppose so—everything.”

“To whom ?”

“Can I leave it to any one I choose—my father, for instance ?”

“Anybody.”

“And if I should wish any particular thing to be done with it—or a part of it ?”

“You can either direct or request it to be done.”

“Yes ?”

“The one compels, the other leaves discretionary the application of the bequest.”

“Thanks. Let it be a request.”

“To apply as you shall otherwise direct ?”

“Yes. You may leave the name blank.”

“Very well ; you can write in the description.”

“The description ?” She turned towards me, but I was so intent on serving my first client that I did not look up.

“Yes; the full name and residence, you know; so as to secure certainty, as to the legatee.”

“Oh. That I can do any time to-morrow.”

“Any time after twelve to-night.”

“It must be witnessed, I suppose—or something ?”

“By three persons whom you must inform that it is

your will. You must sign it in their presence and they in yours."

"You will write out the directions, please?"

"All right. Is there anything more?"

"Not that I remember. I may be very weak, but I will not surrender what my father is so anxious to hold."

I looked up in surprise. She was standing at the end of the table at which I wrote, looking down at me with an anxious, troubled expression. Could it be that she was so mercenary that she could coolly think of sacrificing herself to secure immunity from scandalous aspersion, yet would defy public opinion for the sake of money? I could not understand her. For a moment I think my love faltered. Yet it was only the instinct of her people. The shame of failure completely overwhelmed her; the thought of defending her father's property acted as a tonic to her nerves. She would rather die than be talked about, but rather be talked about than yield to an unjust demand. She noted my hesitation.

"Ryal," she said, pleadingly, "you will not be angry with me?"

I took her hand and raised it to my lips.

"You have sworn to be my knight, you know," she added, with a little nervous laugh.

"And I will keep my oath."

"Then go away in the morning—please."

"Where?"—moodily.

“Why not ride into town?”

“For what?”

“I thought you might have—some—business—there.”

What was it in her tone that made me look up, and what was the new expression I saw in her face? A soft color had stolen over her cheeks, and her eyes had a tender, humid glow. What wild fancy possessed my brain? I could hardly command my voice to say,

“And I may return—when?”

“You could come by noon, I suppose?”

“Long before,”—with eager emphasis.

“No—that will be soon enough—soon enough—but Ryal”—she bent quickly over the corner of the table and whispered in my ear—“I shall want to go away from here at once.”

There was a quick rustle and the door into my mother's room was shut and the bolt shot quickly into place on the other side. I sat dazed, wondering whether I had had a dream or whether what had passed were simple fact.

That night I prepared the will and made my plans for the future, but slept very little. Before the guests were astir in the morning I was mounted and away. I did not see Edith, but as I galloped off I heard a shutter carefully turned and felt that she was watching my departure. The man with the white hat was strolling along the river bank.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

It was over.

The guests were gone—all but one or two of the humbler sort, who would not go while there was aught that they could do to cheer or serve. A pall seemed to have settled over the house. People were gathered near gazing at it curiously. I saw them point towards me and exchange comments as I rode up. The officials, who had watched the premises so closely during the Sabbath, had disappeared. Men with pencils in their hands were loitering about the gate, standing near the door—actually peeping into the windows. The thirst for scandal, which is a consuming fire in the breasts of the Northern people, had fastened upon Sagamø Lodge and its occupants as victims. The law had loosed its hold and the press had taken its place.

What did the law want? Who were the victims it sought, and for what offense? What heart might be torn? What reputation blasted? What hope blighted? These were the questions the harpies of the press asked themselves as they watched and pried and guessed and quizzed, as though in the performance of a solemn duty,—the exercise of an inalienable right.

The public conscience among these people has become

so debauched by daily doses of prurient and horrible detail that private right and individual character are without safeguard or consideration in that region. Woman's virtue and man's honor are no longer matters of any moment in the estimation of this singular people, who pride themselves upon a peculiar regard for morality and an especial devotion to individual right. Practically, there is but one kind of defamation for which the press is there ever held responsible—the imputation of a lack of financial ability to a man of wealth. This is counted an assault on the palladium of liberty. An employé may be accused of peculation or fraud or a poor man denounced as a trickster or a thief, in full-faced capitals, and if, by-and-bye, he is able to obtain a retraction in unleaded agate, he may thank his stars and the unforced courtesy of the manager. Of whatever affects the financial status or commercial integrity of the rich or supposedly rich, however, the Northern journalist is very chary. And well he may be, for he knows that the law reserves its Gorgon terrors for such offenses. All things else he may assail without fear of court or jury, law or bailiff; but let him beware how he touches the rich man's credit or impugns his power to pay. Ah, well; all peoples worship something, and it only happens that our brethren of the North exalt into the highest place the power to accumulate—the reputation of ability to pay—and naturally defend most rigorously what they prize most highly!

As I sprang from my horse I found myself beset by half-a-dozen of these importunate agents of the great news-mongering power.

“How much will it amount to?” asked one. The others listened, pencil in hand.

“What?” I asked.

“The defalcation, of course.”

“Whose?”

“Why, General Fairbanks’s.”

“Not a cent.”

“Isn’t he ‘short’?”

“Not a dollar.”

“Pay his debts?”

“All he owes.”

“Like to buy some of his paper?”

“All you will bring.”

“The devil!”

I smiled sardonically and started up the steps.

“Hold on a minute.”

One of them had stepped before me.

“Know anything ’bout this woman that went off with him?”

“She is my mother.” I heard a titter behind me.

“Married?”

“A month ago.”

“No mistake about that?” He looked at me with a significant leer. The next instant he was sprawling on the

ground. He had touched *my* idol and I had resented it in true Southern fashion. Then I turned upon the others, white with wrath :

“ Gentlemen, I have answered your questions frankly. General Fairbanks married my mother more than a month ago. If any one dares to write, publish or hint a word in derogation of her character I will kill him if I ever get within arm’s length of him.”

I spoke in a very low tone. I was too angry to speak loud.

“ Don’t blame you a bit,” said the one I had knocked down, scrambling to his feet, “ And you must not blame us. We have to do it. The worse the scandal the better the story. That’s business, you know, no matter whether it’s your mother or mine. I shall say they are married though. Can you tell me anything more ?”

He was brushing the dust off his clothes with a handkerchief as he spoke. I could not help smiling. He was, after all, a manly-looking fellow, about my own age. We were calculated for different meridians, that was all. I could not resist his imperturbable good nature.

“ Wait a moment,” I said, as I entered the house. They all sat down upon the steps and “ wrote up ” what had passed. It flashed upon me that it might be well to make friends with these purveyors for the public maw.

My mood changed as I passed the threshold. The few remaining guests were about to take their departure. They

were tearful, troubled, mystified. The servants were curious, wondering, but mostly faithful and sympathetic. From General Fairbanks's lawyer I learned, briefly, what had happened during my absence. The transfer of Edith's property had been made and the money paid over. Mr. Martling had called. What had occurred between him and Edith the lawyer did not know. He had been summoned to the room after a time and found Martling holding General Fairbank's note and demanding payment in a threatening tone. At Edith's request, he had examined the note and its endorsements and tendered payment, demanding the delivery of the collateral. To his surprise Martling had refused, with some hesitation, to deliver the collateral, and consequently the note remained unpaid. Thereupon Martling had been requested to leave the premises and had done so, vowing vengeance.

Immediately afterwards, officers, armed with a warrant for General Fairbanks's arrest, had presented themselves and insisted on searching the house from cellar to garret, which they proceeded to do. This indignity had completely prostrated Edith. She remained firm, however, in her determination to leave the house at once, and had given the lawyer full and explicit directions as to the removal of her personal belongings. I learned that the contract of sale contained a covenant for repurchase within a limited period of time. I could not understand it then. It was not till many years afterwards that I learned how



strong is the impulse of the Yankee towards the rehabilitation of his prestige when the same has been impaired by mischance. Subsequent success loses half its sweetness to him unless he can flaunt it in the faces of those who witnessed his downfall. Ambrose Fairbanks was not exempt from this almost ethnic inclination. It was not vanity, but the defiant pride of self-justification. Its discovery explained to me the myriad of hopeless, uncomplaining wrecks that lie upon the strand of Northern business life, utterly abject and pitiful, whose names were once talismanic in their golden potency. They would rather be nothing than be anything less than they once were.

\* \* \*

The blinds were shut close and the house was filled with funereal gloom rather than nuptial gladness, when the man of God, with sad and troubled visage, pronounced us man and wife. Edith, in her traveling suit, was tearful and dejected. The few friends who witnessed the rite wore dolorous faces. Without consulting Edith, I went and invited in the bevy of reporters. They were fair-minded fellows, willing to do a good turn when their professional duties permitted. I am confident that this act of courtesy drew the sting from the tail of many a paragraph. The brave old lawyer gave us a cheerful greeting and foretold for us a happy future.

\* \* \*

The great Metropolis had begun its holiday when we drove through its crowded streets, at eventide. The guns were thundering forth the national salute and the bells were greeting the anniversary of a nation's birth when, at midnight, we passed through the city where it was cradled. The flags were tossing gaily in the morning breeze when we reached the National Capital.

Though it was her wedding journey, Edith's tears flowed afresh at each of these manifestations, as if they were the harbingers of woe rather than the notes of exultation. It was no longer *her* country. Her pride in its glory was dead. The sight of the flag brought a flush of shame. The father who had fought for it had fled from its shadow. Whether he had acted rightly or wrongly mattered little. His name was to be thenceforth a mark for jest and scorn. She put her fingers in her ears and my hands clenched involuntarily when the newsboy leaped upon the train, as it slowed up on entering the station, shouting a name whose renown gave pungency to the story its glaring head-lines made prominent.

I no longer marvelled at her suffering. I wondered if any of the passengers would recognize her. Ah, no, they talked and laughed of the new sensation, while she wept behind her veil and we sped on, away from poisoned tongues and prying eyes. I was never before so glad that the South remained the South, despite all that had occurred

as on that day. For the first time my father's prophecy of ultimate separation seemed to me a desirable result.

\* \* \* \*

A few short years of quiet happiness and ever-hoping hopelessness, and then I laid the gentle Northern wife beside the stern, poor-white grandmother, the gallant Confederate father and the sunny-haired sister, slain by the barbarity of strife, on the shaded slope of Ryalmont.

She never rallied from the cruel stroke that shattered her pride and hope. Even my love was powerless to woo her back to the full enjoyment of life. Weakened by the shock, and prostrated by humiliation, the scourge of her native region claimed her and crowned her last days with that peculiar loveliness which only comes on earth to those to whom it opens the portals of eternity.

This was the legacy of her love, written on the dark yellow sheets which contained my father's last behest :

“I heartily approve what is herein enjoined, and trust that every memory of me may be an added incentive to its fulfillment.

EDITH.”

## CHAPTER XXX.

The sheets are creased and worn. The paper is of that dull yellow which was all the kind we had within the lines of the Confederacy. The ink is blurred, and the pages are unevenly written as if done at different times. The sheets bear the printed official heading of the Army of Northern Virginia; and the first is dated from the camp on the line at Petersburg, hardly a fortnight before the end came. It bears my dead father's signature and my dead wife's indorsement. Two loved spirits joined in beckoning me along the path I took—the extremes of our western civilization united in commending the duty it enjoins. There was little to prevent my acceptance of the task, yet there seemed nothing for me to do.

So in the years that followed I read and re-read the fading lines, like a fakir meditating on his chosen text. With assiduous care and unflagging zeal I verified its premises and noted the indices that strengthened its conclusions. Perhaps it would have seemed to another the rhapsody of a mere visionary. To me it was the thought of one greater than his age—one who lived before his time—who made me simply the instrument of his will, the agent of his prophetic forecast. I have done little but learn its significance and apply its precepts. For years I could do

no more than strive to grasp its reason and spirit—to rise to the level on which it was written. The task was not easy. All around was chaos: the strife of party and faction and greed. Passion and prejudice hid the face of truth. Now and then came a gleam of light, then darkness. I gave myself to meditation as the saint devotes himself to prayer. I studied the North and the South, the rich and the poor, the black and the white. This missive from the grave—the posthumous teaching of a noble spirit—was my guide. Because I had fully learned the truths it set forth I was enabled, when the occasion came, not indeed to effect or even to precipitate the great result, but to determine in some degree the character of the means by which it was effected.

I have read it so often that my eyes need not the aid of the fading lines to determine its contents. These are the words my father wrote for me to read upon the threshold of manhood and which love reaffirmed as a last behest:

“MY DEAR SON:

“If you have obeyed my injunction you will have reached an age when you should be competent to decide important questions without having assumed obligations which will prevent your undertaking the work I shall indicate, should your judgment and inclination lead you to do so. I have prescribed this delay because not only

is a man's judgment often warped by his individual interests, but because the happiness of those he loves is apt to incline him to a middle course rather than induce him to devote himself wholly to any great purpose.

“ I do not wish to take from you the right of self-direction. I know that every life must shape its own destiny. What I shall write herein is intended to appeal to your brain, not to your heart—to be advisory, not mandatory. What will occur in the years that will have intervened between the inditement of this missive and its perusal by you I cannot tell. What I may write you will understand is based solely upon deductions from the past. When you shall read this, knowledge may have overturned hypothesis and you may clearly perceive me to have been as much at fault in my prognostications as were those worthy spirits of our early history who vainly hoped to limit and confine all coming time to the narrow lines of their own preconceptions. As I perceive their errors, now clearly outlined on the background of the past, so you may take note of elements I have not been able to forecast which may render my premonitions vain. Should such be the case, I am sure you will kindly cover your father's error with the mantle of oblivion. If, however, your judgment shall approve my words, I submit to your conscience, your patriotism, your duty to humanity and the love for true and enduring fame which I trust you will

possess, what shall be the course you will pursue. If the dead may touch the living consciousness, I shall be beside you when you read these words!

“Almost four years of war should teach lessons of wisdom. As you know, I have never been one of those who count such convulsions the mere fruit of accident. Whatever be the power that controls the universe, to-day is irresistibly unfolded out of yesterday, and not more surely does the bud contain leaf and flower and fruit than is to-morrow to be found in embryo within to-day.

“During these years of conflict, while I trust that I may not be held to have been deficient in action, I have found time to meditate upon the causes and consequences of current events. The camp, the march and even the silent battlefield, lying beneath the stars with its burden of stark and cold humanity, not only afford ample opportunity for thought, but stimulate to the highest pitch the inclination of the philosophical mind to call upon the present to stand and deliver up the secrets of the past in order that we may thereby unlock the mysteries of the future.

“War is but a crisis in the eternal conflict between the opposing forces of humanity. Folly may precipitate such a crisis, or wisdom may avoid it. In this sense war has been well defined to be a game of fools. But neither wisdom nor folly can prevent the collision of hostile forces. The struggle may ripen into one of mere brute force and be called war, or result in a general recognition of a tendency

too strong to be resisted and be called progress or peaceful revolution. Of course, one is foolish and the other wise, but in both cases there must be conflict—triumph and defeat, establishment and overthrow. This endless strife we call civilization. The soldier is as much its instrument as the statesman. Neither creates—only represents. The one is the product of latent savagery ; the other the outcome of a refinement that prefers cunning to force—strategy to assault. We soldiers of the great republic now severed in twain, who have for four years faced and fought each other, are not mere creatures of intrigue and chicane. We have not slain each other to attain favor or to exalt party leaders. We are simply the contrasted types of the past, developed along opposing lines. We are representatives of two distinct and mutually repugnant civilizations.

‘ Of these I do not doubt that ours of the South is as yet weaker in the elements that win battles under the conditions of modern warfare, but I believe it to be much the stronger in its distinctive character and harmonious development. We shall be conquered in war but not overcome in spirit. When our banner trails in the dust—as I am sure it will before many days—the South will still be the South. Our enemies may hold it as conquered territory, but they will never be able to assimilate its people. The distance between them and us will really be no greater than it was before war intervened, but it will be infinitely more distinct. It will be *termed* the results of war ; it will really



*be* a result of peace. Paradoxical as it may appear, we should be much more closely united as two governments than we can be as one. What may happen I cannot tell. Resistance may cease. Submission may be complete. The very hope of political separation may be abandoned. Yet the two will never be one people, animated by one impulse, governed by one idea! One in name though they may be, they will continue two in spirit. As we have been in the past so we shall be in the future, two peoples under one name—two nations under one form.

“ This will not last. In your day, as in mine, it may be necessary to elect whether you will serve the form or the spirit—whether you will follow the impulse of separation or yield to the sentiment of union. Wisdom and patriotism may direct that you shall take a course in formal opposition to that which I chose. I cannot tell. I hope you will act wisely and am sure you will act bravely. I have tried to leave you an inheritance of honor, and feel assured that you will not cast reproach upon your father’s singleness of purpose, however you may regret his conviction.

“ History teaches, if I read it aright, that such a people as ours may be overwhelmed but cannot be transformed. On the contrary, one of three things has invariably happened in similar cases: either the struggle has been renewed with fresh ardor within a generation; the power of the victor has been relaxed and peaceful separation

ensued, or the underlying impulse of the people making the appeal to arms has so impermeated and transformed the opposing mass as to be accepted as the dominant and controlling idea of the whole people.

“ In our case I see no possibility of this latter result occurring. The North has hitherto yielded to the domination and control of the South, not because it approved our ideas, but with a curious hesitating forbearance for them. It is natural to suppose that this will disappear with victory. Hitherto the South has attributed such forbearance to fear, and will be likely to regard its absence as resulting from hate. At all events, it is hardly possible that the South will be restored to its old political supremacy and the nation quietly submit to its demands as before the severance of the federal relation. The tie, though it may not be entirely broken by the conflict, will be so seriously weakened as to be unable to bear any similar strain in the future.

“ It seems most probable that a state of suspended animation will supervene at the South upon the overthrow of the Confederacy, and if it were not for the presence of the colored race, assimilation would no doubt rapidly ensue. Slavery is, of course, already doomed. As a form of society it has served its mission and cannot longer be kept alive ; but the vast number of blacks, together with their poverty and inaptness for self-control, will prevent their expulsion from the South or gradual distribution over

the whole country and consequently prohibit the influx of laboring masses either from the North or from Europe. In fact, the weakness of the race will really constitute its strength and our peril. We have shaped their past for our own advantage and must shape their future for our own safety.

“The abolition of slavery, which must follow the overthrow of the military power of the Confederacy, instead of bringing the South and North nearer together in purpose and character, it seems to me, must inevitably leave them farther apart in sentiment and interest. What will be to one meat will be to the other poison. Differences are sure to arise and conflict or separation must ultimately come. The North is certain to look with jealousy upon the relation of the races in the subjugated dominion. The white people of the South must govern and control without dictation and without regard for the wishes, inclinations and aspirations of the Negro race, or abandon the territory to anarchy, barbarism and decay.

“So the white people of the South will be forced to face the alternative of another struggle for separate existence or the abandonment of their supremacy and control over the Negro. There is no middle ground. The latter it is hardly necessary to consider. Whether the former shall be violent or peaceful will most likely be the real question.

“The outcome I do not regard as at all doubtful. The

destiny of the South is fixed and certain. Whatever be the right or the wrong of the past, the South must control the destiny and development of the Negro race in America, until it stands on a level in intelligence and power, man for man, with the Anglo-Saxon. It will have to govern with a rod of iron to save itself from annihilation—its liberty and civilization from destruction. You will perhaps be surprised to read these words, but sitting in my tent, with the roar of the enemy's guns in my ears, I seem to see the future more clearly than ever before, and feel impelled as if by the presence of death to speak freely. Do not be misled by the prejudices of the past, my son. The Negro, who has been our bondman for two hundred and fifty years, will sometime be our peer—not in name merely; *that* the Washington government think they have already made him by the edict of emancipation—but in fact. I do not know how long it will require—generations or centuries, it is all the same. The South must meanwhile be his guardian, guide and teacher. It may have to restrain harshly for its own salvation. It may even attempt to destroy. When I think of the madness which hurried us into the present conflict, I cannot but tremble for the future.

“It is this which impels me to write—to warn, to entreat! Oh, my son, whatever be your inclination, however harsh may be the lesson of submission you may be called upon to learn, whatever may be your decision in

regard to the request I shall prefer, I beg you, above all things, to remember that the race we have kept so long beneath our feet ; the race which has toiled and suffered in our service ; the race whom we have forbidden to drink at the fountain of knowledge ; the race which has dumbly borne our sins and shared our adversities ; the race which is bound to us by every consideration of justice and humanity ; the race whose veins are already swelling with Caucasian blood until hardly a white man or woman lives in the South who has not a brother, a sister or a cousin of dusky hue—remember that this race, now at the bottom of the ladder, will some time stand beside us at the top. Remember this, as the last injunction of one who will have given his life for his people, before you read these words, and whose dying thought will be of you and them. The South must freely permit and wisely direct the development of this new people born of her civilization, or perish by their barbaric strength !

“ It is because I tremble at this prospect that I give it you sacredly in charge never to omit any influence you may be able to exert to incline the hearts of our people to this great task—this overwhelming duty. By its performance they will achieve unrivalled glory ! By its neglect, they will deserve eternal shame and undying execration ! ”

## CHAPTER XXXI.

My father's letter continued:

“ You will observe it to have been the almost universal course of history that the struggle for autonomy on the part of an oppressed or subjugated people is recurrent rather than continuous in its nature, and that the period of its recurrence may usually be stated with sufficient accuracy to be the average life of a generation. It is rare, indeed, that two great uprisings, having the same underlying cause, occur within the active limit of a single life ; yet how often an unsuccessful revolution reappears in practically the same form twenty or thirty years after. Not infrequently this periodicity has been almost as exact as if human events moved in an orbit of thirty years. In our own English history may be found more than one instance where the historian's dividers need to be parted only the average term of life to mark the recurrent intervals of strife, based substantially on the same causes.

“ The reasons for this are not far to seek, though they are rarely accounted worthy of attention. It has grown into a maxim that the sword never determines the right. The overthrow of an armed insurrection does not eradicate the cause of revolution, except under two conditions. The first of these is when the struggle has been so long and

exhaustive or the repressive measures are so severe as practically to eradicate the dissatisfied element. The second is the very frequent case in modern history where the suppression of a rebellion is followed almost immediately by the redress of the specific grievance which lay at the bottom of the attempted revolution. The number of those occurring within the last half of the last century led a philosopher to denominate it 'the bloody seed-time of liberty.'

“ In the present case, the former course seems to me very unlikely to occur. Our government does not appear to be of a character to inspire resistance to the bitter end. There is no lack of devotion among the people, and except individual cases of desertion, the army, despite the privations it has needlessly been called upon to bear, is as loyal and true as when the shouts of victory first went up from the hills of Manassas. Thus far not an officer has gone over to the enemy or failed to resist until the utmost limit of endurance, save in the one unaccountable instance of demoralization and disgrace at Donelson. Even then there was no treachery or desertion, only incapacity and perhaps cowardice. This amazing fidelity to our cause is in striking contrast to the stampede which occurred at the outbreak of hostilities, when fully one-third of those bound by military oath to the service of the Federal Government made haste to throw off the tie of allegiance and seek service under the flag of the Confederacy. Though this has been

one of the most expensive and stubbornly contested civil wars in history, we have had no traitor. No southern leader has sought to make terms and gain advantage or emolument for himself by betraying his command to the enemy. No traitor has opened our gates, no coward has debauched our soldiery, no mercenary has sold his country for gold.

“ This is a proud record for our glorious but doomed Confederacy. I do not remember any parallel to it in history. Even the year of hopelessness which has ensued since the relentless Grant assumed command of the enemy's forces has not induced any officer to open negotiations for the surrender of his command or the betrayal of our cause. This has not been for lack of opportunity. The millions of the North are known to be at the disposal of any general who will deliver an army into their hands. More than once the emissaries of the North have conveyed to our leaders a knowledge of great personal advantage to be gained by such a course. More than one safe-conduct has covered such a proposition. It is said that a civilian prisoner—a man high in the counsels of the enemy—offered one of our great captains a million dollars if he would so handle his command as to render it useless in a great emergency. This officer was so humiliated and alarmed that he made haste to release his prisoner under the threat of instant death if ever captured again, fearful that he might find an ear not so safely guarded by honor. The North



has been willing at any time to pay the most extravagant price for treachery, but no southern leader has yielded to temptation. This fact itself is proof conclusive of the distinctive character of our people.

“ Despite all this, however, we are likely to be overwhelmed partly from inherent defects, such as a lack of mechanical skill and aptitude, and partly from the fact that our government seems to be without capacity or genius for supplying the wants of our armies. All winter we have almost starved and frozen in the sight of abundance. Meat and forage enough for years are within a hundred miles. Any other people after four years of war, with our supply of native textile material, would have made tents and clothing enough to have enabled us to bid defiance to the storms of winter as well as the columns of the enemy. We have had to capture the better part of our camp equipage. Thus, while the confidence of the country in the army and of the army in the country is undiminished, the confidence of both army and people in the government is well-nigh exhausted. I judge, therefore, that when this army is destroyed or disintegrated, the country will submit without further contest.

“ In that event I do not anticipate a wholesale proscription. A few will no doubt be punished. I do not see how anything less can be expected. Right or wrong in principle, if unsuccessful in fact, we cannot anticipate entire exemption from retribution. I do not think, how-

ever, that the North is vengeful, and anticipate instead of severity a lenity of disposition and laxity of control that will leave our people very nearly in the position they occupied before the outbreak of hostilities. The people of the North are essentially mercantile, if not always mercenary, in character. Cost is the great bugbear of their patriotism. To them the cheapest way is always the best. They would rather be misgoverned at half-price than pay a higher rate for good government. They are willing to tax themselves extravagantly for schools and internal improvements which add to the value of houses and lands and open new avenues for business; but they regard war as a terrible extravagance and will never consent to feed and clothe an army in order to maintain their power in the South for any length of time. It seems probable, therefore, that there will be some sort of constitutional restoration of our former relations at an early day. The prevailing impression among the officers of this army is that we shall be restored with slavery prohibited. Some of them still hope for gradual emancipation, but that is generally thought unreasonable. No one looks for success now. We only hope the struggle will end with honor.

“It seems also unlikely, if not impossible, that the ordinary course of statesmanship can be adopted in our case. The South cannot be placated by granting its demands, for those demands are destructive of the existence of the government as well as repugnant to the underlying principles

on which the war has been fought by the people of the North. The South demanded two things and has based its appeal to arms upon its right to enjoy the same. First, a separate organic existence, and second, the continuance of slavery. Of course, neither of these demands can be granted by the enemy and nothing less will satisfy our people. I anticipate instead a period of anomalous, undetermined relations, during which the feeling of oppugnancy will grow stronger but be less apparent than before, until some new occasion for its display arises. Then it will be found that the fate of the Confederacy, instead of being an effective antidote for insurrection, will have been but a stimulus to the heroism of our people. Rivalry of their fathers' glory will impel our sons to redoubled exertions to accomplish what we failed to achieve. I deem it certain, therefore, that within the period of your expectancy of life, the struggle for separation will be renewed. I do not desire such a result and would do nothing to promote it; but deeming it inevitable, I wish to do all that lies in my power to deprive it of the barbarous and sanguinary character it may possibly assume.

“ I dare not attempt to picture the horrors I apprehend. Remember, my son, that Washington's fevered visions on his dying bed are said, by reliable tradition, to have been of a war of races in our beloved South. Even now, while the bonds of slavery are yet undissolved, this most terrible of national woes is ever present to the appre-

hension of our most thoughtful and sagacious. If the period of uncertainty which must follow our overthrow shall pass without such conflict, I apprehend that the peril may be enhanced by the less clearly defined but subordinate relations which the race must sustain to their former masters. This fact is certain to complicate the relations of the South with the country and at the same time infinitely enhance the perils and horrors of war.

“The experience of the past four years has only strengthened the conviction with which I espoused the cause of the Confederacy, as to the inherent and ineradicable incompatibility between the civilization of the North and the South and their inevitable tendency to divergence and separation. There is no possible solvent that can permanently and peacefully unite such hostile and repugnant elements in one healthful and harmonious development. Paradoxical as it may seem, the only hope of permanent union lies through temporary but organic separation. Besides the polarizing instincts of the English race, the clash of conflicting interests and the subjection of great classes to irksome and perhaps injurious restraint at the hands of majorities ignorant or apathetic in regard to their special needs, must sooner or later of necessity produce organic separation. At the same time the necessity of self-protection, pride in the American name and the boundless confidence of the English-speaking peoples in the honor and good faith of each other, will no doubt incline them to

such federated union as will make the allied republics infinitely stronger, more harmonious and prosperous than the original nationality could ever hope to become.

“ This inclination to separate organic nationality, accompanied by even closer and stronger alliance, is already showing itself among English-speaking peoples. Canada and Australia are infinitely stronger props to the English throne in a half-dependent relation, than they would ever have become as purely subordinate colonies with a central government.

“ The South is homogeneous. If you take your map and draw a line westward along the northern boundaries of Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, you will have to the southwestward a body of people essentially one in their instincts, prejudices, interests and traditions. Practically, this whole region was a unit in the support of the Confederate cause. The two sections merely dropped apart along this line. The conflict has been in no proper sense a civil war. Except in a limited region along the Appalachian range there has been no discordant element in the South and no really internecine strife. The enemy has waged a war of invasion from the outset. Their armies have been on foreign soil and among hostile people. Except the colored race, whose hopes and interests incline them to the enemy, it has been almost impossible for them to obtain information of our movements, no sort of inducement proving sufficient to obtain reliable spies among our

people. It is true that the sagacity of the man so greatly misappreciated by us—the President of the United States—has subtly contrived to make it appear otherwise. Of the handful of malcontents in some of the border states, he has made a host, by the simple process of organizing regiments of volunteers bearing the names of such states and professedly recruited from their population. This showing is specious but effective. Most of these men and nearly all the officers come from other states. The muster-roll of one, which was captured by our forces, contained the names of less than a hundred natives of the state it professed to represent. It was a shrewd artifice and a most effective means of deceiving other nations and keeping up the courage of his own people. It was a fair stratagem, too, and ought to have taught our leaders long ago that they could not afford to despise the head of the Federal Government. Long before you read these lines, however, I doubt not the fallacy of the claim will have become apparent. You will readily perceive that the South is and always has been homogeneous and united on all matters touching its interests, fame and destiny.

“ While I have become still more thoroughly convinced of the truth on which the movement for separation was actually based, I have also become more fully convinced of the foolish and needless character of the war that has been waged to secure this end. Had the executive head of the Confederacy been anything like a match in diplomacy

and statecraft for the shrewd and cautious western lawyer who has directed the course of the government at Washington, I fully believe that separation might even then have been achieved without the shedding of a drop of blood. The only real obstacle to its consummation was the unexpectedly fierce and almost universal hostility of the North to the institution of slavery. Even this sentiment, however, on the part of the more rancorous and active wing of our opponents would have favored our project. If we had merely refused to coöperate in the government, had withdrawn from all participation in its affairs, peaceably but firmly protesting our right to organize a government for ourselves and prepared diligently to resist encroachment but studiously refrained from provoking conflict, I believe it quite possible that we might have secured organic independence without the bitter scath of war.

“ It is because of these convictions, my son, that I have determined to write these things to you. If you have complied with my request, as I do not doubt that you have, you have been an observer but not a participant in the greatest war of modern times. You have seen, and in your own person as well as in the persons of those you love, have been taught how terrible a curse it is. You are now arrived at an age when you ought to be able to weigh and estimate the truth of my prognostications. You are encumbered by no domestic ties, other than the duties you owe to

the widowed mother whom I charge you never to forget. You have an honorable name, and will, I trust, be in possession of a fair estate. If I am correct in these anticipations, and upon weighing and considering what I have written you shall believe it to be a true and reasonable forecast, I charge you as a son who would make glad the spirit of his father, as a son who remembers the flame that consumed the roof-tree, from which his loved ones fled, as a man who recognizes his duty to humanity, as a patriot who would serve his country and as a Christian who would serve his God, that you devote yourself to do all that lies in your power to make the inevitable separation bloodless, peaceful and just, as becomes the solemn convention of two free and enlightened republics.

“ I charge you that you undertake this work if it seem good and feasible, and that you allow no personal interest, no desire for wealth nor inclination to ease, to divert you therefrom until you have achieved the end or seen your most earnest efforts fail. Your father’s fame has been won in war. Because he has learned its folly and its woe, he consecrates you to the service of peace. If he has won honor in arms, may you win a far richer fame in the prevention of strife ! Be thou, my son, indeed a knight of the Holy Cross, which is forever consecrated to peace, in order that you may save your country from the woes that impend !

“ If this task seems to you a proper undertaking, I



desire you to know that so far as the powers of the unseen world permit I shall watch over and aid you in its performance. Should it prove impracticable or beyond your power, I desire that you will some time make this public as your justification and defence. With this purpose in view I have had the same attested by the signature of the commanding general and one of the corps commanders of the Army of Northern Virginia, whose verification will establish its authenticity beyond all question.

“As one who goes forth to die, I salute you, and implore the blessing of Heaven upon you and the faithful wife and loving mother, whom I commend to your care, as I devote you to the country for which I go to render up my life.

Your affectionate father,

“GODSON OWEN.”

## CHAPTER XXXII.

I was the sole devisee of my wife, but I cared nothing for the wealth at my command. The money which her father's enemies had refused had been transmitted to him and became the basis of his subsequent financial success. Every one knows the history of those remarkable achievements by which an unknown adventurer subjugated the realm Pizarro conquered and made the whole business of the Western slope of two continents tributary to a single will. Under half a score of names, one mind seemed to be at work to achieve a single purpose. When this force was withdrawn from any specific enterprise it visibly languished and usually failed.

It was not long after his departure that a force hostile to the great Rock Oil Combination began to make itself felt. Most unexpectedly, new fields in which it had little or no interest were discovered one after another and put in operation with an exactness of anticipation which several times threatened its supremacy. As a result more than one who had been wrecked by its rapacity became suddenly rich. Men found themselves unexpectedly possessed of rights which they had long forgotten—some were unable even to recall how they had become possessed of them. Among

these was the widow of Collyer, while others were men to whom General Fairbanks had owed favor. It is strange that this fact did not attract attention; yet the lynx-eyed managers of the great company whose ramifications were becoming so infinite that every man, woman and child upon the continent paid enforced tribute to its power and greed, failed to note the force that was so relentlessly pursuing them. Neither had I any suspicions. Indeed I paid little heed to matters of that sort.

During Edith's life my existence was bound up in hers, and I have always been unable to find place in my heart for many things at one time. The tender beauty of her nature subjugated my entire being, and I had little thought for anything except to add if I might a few days to the span of her existence, and to meditate with something close akin to hatred upon the mysterious force which had shaped and shattered her life. While she lived our intercourse with the self-exiled pair had been constant. Only the fact that, as usual, the end long expected came unexpectedly, prevented their standing beside her grave.

Her death gave General Fairbanks a still more unconquerable aversion to his native land. In our correspondence nothing was ever said as to the ventures in which he was engaged. We knew that comfort and even luxury surrounded them. A thousand evidences of luxurious taste and tender remembrance found their way to Ryalmont. Strange flowers of tropical magnificence came to the conservatories that

stretch along the hillside above the resting place of the hallowed dead. Hammocks and awnings of curious texture and wonderful vividness of coloring were scattered through the grove, and the quaint old home became a treasure-house of rich and rare decoration.

As to the source of this wealth we asked no questions and received no information. Edith was content to know that her father had retrieved his ill fortune and again conquered financial success. She lived to know that the last stain had been wiped from his commercial honor, and that no claim of loss by any action of his could be truthfully made by any one. She even lived to hear his integrity commended, and his ability and indomitable energy applauded as an honor to the nation whose spirit and enterprise he so well represented, by those who had so recently heaped reproach upon his name. All this is a matter of common fame, and I will not dwell upon it.

It was not until many years afterward that I learned how potent had been his influence in shaping the forces upon the action of which recent events have so greatly depended. It was known that in the neighboring republic of Mexico there existed a sentiment bitterly hostile to the United States, and yet keenly sympathetic with Southern hopes, prejudices and ideas. When the great chief of the Federal armies went there as an envoy extraordinary, representing the capital and enterprise of the North, while he found himself received with distinguished honor in the

ancient city which he had once entered as a conqueror, he soon became aware of a secret, indefinable influence which constantly thwarted his plans and rendered abortive his expectations.

He did, indeed, obtain concessions permitting the unlimited investment of capital, and conferring valuable privileges; but when he sought for guaranties for their protection he was unable to obtain the least favor. Capitalists were permitted to come and invest. They must take the chances, however, of the future of the government. Everything that was granted was revocable, and every concession obtained had in it an express relinquishment of all claim for international interference. No loophole or pretence for national action in regard to them was left. They were to be Mexican companies, subject to Mexican control, under Mexican laws, and liable to change by Mexican authority. The boasted sagacity of the North found itself not only baffled but absolutely overreached by a nation it despised.

It is true that these concessions were accepted as satisfactory. The adventurous syndicate which had made the great soldier their innocent instrument in what they intended should be a mighty scheme of international spoliation and subsequent conquest, had been too sure of their prey, and had invested too much on the chances of success to be able to retract. They simply changed their strategy, going on and completing the work agreed upon, trusting to the

spirit of lawless rapacity which infects the civilization of which they themselves were significant products, to support and maintain their claims, even by force of arms. It was this fact that led to the systematic development of an anti-Mexican spirit, not only along the borders, but also throughout the great states of the North and West. When these great combinations had fastened their clutches upon all that was most valuable and desirable in the weaker nation, they looked for this spirit of conquest and absorption to come to their aid by overthrowing the restrictive power and making permanent and irrevocable the conditional grants they had received.

What the real power was that foiled these expectations they did not know until long afterwards.

Partly from a sense of duty and partly as a tribute to my dead love, I began to speculate upon my father's injunctions. Little by little they became clearer to my mind. During the years when the forces of civilization were taking shape after the disastrous close of the War for Separation, I saw little hope for the fulfillment of his desire. The South was yet prostrate under the foot of a victorious foe, or seeking by shameful and unmanly violence and hateful conspiracy to relieve herself from subjection. The North, surprised at its own success, was more overwhelmed by victory than it would have been by defeat. It would have resisted a victorious foe no doubt longer and

more desperately than any people ever did; but what to do with a conquered enemy it could not tell.

Through years of subterfuge and vacillation the shameful spectacle dragged on. The North would neither rule the subjugated realm nor permit its people to rule themselves in their own way. They proposed instead that the South should be controlled, not by those who had made its history glorious nor according to the traditions of her people; but that master and former slave should form an equal partnership, and that both should govern according to Yankee ideas.

As soon as the South began to recover from the prostration of war, her people were prompt to resist and overthrow this weak and silly fabric of sentimentality. They declared that the South had always been "a white man's government," and must always remain such. Unfortunately the worst of counsels prevailed. If our people had stood defensively upon this doctrine, the sentiment of the North would no doubt soon have accorded to them all they asked. Despite the strange infatuation which made the North the champion of the freedom of the slave, the people of that section had no real interest in the negro as a man. They gave him freedom in order to punish the South for rebellion and to satisfy the intellectual pride which had so long insisted on the absurdity of slavery in a nation boastful of its liberty. They conferred equal rights upon him, not merely as a further demonstration of the fact

that their ideas had prevailed, but also as an affront to the white people who had fought so long and gallantly in useless protest against notions so abhorrent to their traditions.

Instead of waiting patiently for this gross injustice to right itself, the people of the South, defiant of the forms and restraints of law, attacked the anomalous alliance of the North and the negro in its weakest point. In so doing they showed the military instinct which pervades the whole body of our people; but needlessly exposed themselves to assault upon grounds well-nigh fatal to their hopes. They knew the negro was more easily controlled by the lash than in any other manner, and so appealed to the lash to restore their supremacy.

It was a foolish and unnecessary defiance of an enemy anxious only for the name of victory, and very willing to forego all its substantial fruits if permitted quietly to enjoy its prestige. At very slight expense the same result might have been achieved by catering to the pride and cupidity of the negro rather than to his fears. The North is so accustomed to the corruption of the ballot by bribery and cunning that she would never have felt aggrieved if every colored voter between the Potomac and the Rio Grande had been bribed to vote against her candidates and theories.

One of their own writers has said of this singular people, that "nothing but material prosperity has ever been dreamed of by them as a possible object of national ambi-



tion." They were anxious to get back to their farms and markets and factories, their stocks and other forms of legalized gambling,—the business of money-making. They had no more time to give to the negro and his newly conferred rights and privileges, and would have been entirely willing to have seen him shorn of both, if it could have been done without abrading his skin or shedding his blood. They are singularly consistent in their non-resistant ideas, however. Individually or collectively they will submit to any sort of outrage so long as it does not touch the person. No amount of insult and hardly any form of wrong can stir the Northern man to self-defence or personal resentment. One may exhaust the vocabulary of abuse upon him or with entire impunity ascribe any sort of dishonor to those he loves. Except in the far West, he will rarely raise his hand to punish the aggressor unless he first feels the sting of a blow—the smart of physical pain.

The same quality attaches to him collectively. Dogmatic and contentious as he certainly is in an intellectual sense, politically he is the meanest and most contemptible of forces. The people of the North will submit to wrong and oppression longer than any people in the world, if only it does not affect their individual advantage or is not characterized by personal violence. If the revolution which occurred at the South, between 1870 and 1876, had been prudently managed so as not to have shocked the pre-notions of the North by the appeal to physical violence,

that strange people would no doubt have counted themselves well rid of their dark-skinned allies and would gladly have allowed us to shape their future on the lines of our past traditions.

While this error did not wreck the policy of non-resistance it made its further assertion at that time a matter of extreme difficulty, although it demonstrated most convincingly the truth of my father's forecasts. The "New South," which sprang up out of the *débris* of conflict was no less distinctively Southern than the old one. Its lines were obtained by a simple protraction of those of its predecessors. It no more resembled the North in sentiment, aspiration and character than did the South of 1860. It subsisted under new conditions, and its life had assumed new form, but it still represented the antipodes of Northern thought and regarded with vague wonder the refinements of Northern sentiment. This spirit was strengthened by the complete success of the revolutionary methods adopted. The South, which had been prostrate in defeat, soon raised its head in triumph, its old contempt of its antagonist intensified by unexpected immunity from punishment.

When, therefore, in 1884, the Democratic party came into power by virtue of the undivided Southern support, a spirit was at once developed which seemed to prohibit all reasonable anticipation of the result my father had predicted. The people of the South for the first time began to realize the advantages of their position under the Federal compact as

modified by the reactionary legislation of the reconstruction era. Politically, the negro was as much a nonentity as he had been in the days of slavery. His personal and civil rights were as absolutely in the hands of the white people of the South as they had formerly been under the control of his master. He was paid for his labor, it is true; but all the land, all the factories, all the capital were in the hands of the whites. So were the courts and the legislatures. It was difficult to move public opinion in his favor while suspicion was awakened by his every act. A single unguarded speech by a man of color was sufficient to call out the power of the county and sometimes was thought to justify an appeal to the governor and the ordering of a military force to the scene of anticipated revolt.

As a political force, the negro was nullified with an ease that was both laughable and incomprehensible to one not familiar with the antecedent condition of Southern life. The North has not yet been able to understand it. The result was that the comparative political strength of the white population of the South was immensely increased by the abolition of slavery and the enfranchisement of the blacks. Our people were not slow to realize this advantage, and the inherent thirst for rulership which characterizes them soon gave rise to an almost universal desire to remain in the Union, both as a measure of self-defence and with the idea of ruling and controlling the government, as

they had done previous to the outbreak of the War for Separation.

This feeling was the chief obstacle encountered in the promotion of the movement for peaceable disruption and seemed for a time insuperable. Indeed, I am inclined to the belief that a display of either reasonable firmness or ordinary wisdom on the part of the North would have compelled me to forego all hope of fulfilling my father's behest.

As time went on, I strove with heart and brain to answer truly and well three great questions :

*Can* the Nation remain "one and inseparable" for any considerable period ?

*Ought* it to remain undivided, considering its various elements and the true interests of all its people ?

Can it be broken in twain by any *peaceful* means ?

I had little difficulty in answering the first two in the negative. For many years it seemed as if the third must be answered in the negative also.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

It was fortunate for our cause—indeed it would seem to have been nothing less than providential—that the efforts of certain fanatics to have the Federal Government appropriate large sums in aid of education in the Southern States did not prevail. The scheme was a magnificent effort to induce that government to do by indirection what it ought no doubt to have done without any subterfuge long before, to-wit, make some provision for alleviating the evils resulting from slavery, and made more apparent by emancipation. If it had been coupled with a proposition to pay even a tithe of the value of the slaves set free by the exercise of a doubtful authority, I doubt if our people would have been able to resist the tempting lure. As, however, the chief part of the benefit would inure to the negro, who might thereby be strengthened and encouraged offensively to assert his equality with the white race, it was but natural that the controllers of opinion and manipulators of power at the South should set themselves against it.

From the Northern point of view, it is difficult to see how the Federal Government could escape the obligation of providing in some manner for the education and

development of the former slaves. As a mere question of pecuniary justice it would seem that a nation which encouraged and perpetuated slavery and grew rich out of its profits, in emancipating the slaves ought to have made provision for their future. The profits of their bondage had inured quite as much to the North as to the South.

For a hundred years slavery had crowded manufactures out of the South, while the tariff provisions of the Federal Government compelled us to buy all manufactured articles at the shops of the North. This was a wise provision for the nation, though in no sense a profitable one for the South. It enabled the delicate moral sense of the North to shield itself under a film of indirection, so that while they shared the proceeds of our moral obliquities they were without apparent responsibility therefor. This state of affairs exactly suited the genius of this people whose chief aspirations are to seem incomparably good and to be thought incomparably rich. In the case of the negro, a way was found to reconcile these impulses. Instead of providing for the welfare of the emancipated slave, either materially or educationally, they decided to confer on him the ballot. This they loudly asserted to be a priceless privilege and it had the overwhelming advantage of costing the donors nothing. It was a method of discharging such obligations characteristic with them and much preferred to the Czar's foolish plan of compelling the Russian nobles to give a portion of their estates to the serfs he had freed.

It should in fairness be remembered, however, that there was another reason why the proposition to extend national aid to public education failed. As I have said it was merely an indirect method of appropriating national funds for the education of the former slaves and their descendants. Ninety per cent of the blacks were in the States of the South. In eight of them, they constituted twenty per cent of the population; in the other eight, fifty per cent. In three of these, they numbered two-thirds of the entire population. Of the whole, seventy per cent were admittedly illiterate,—practically ninety per cent of them were profoundly ignorant. The plan which was devised was simply a scheme to give money for the education of the negroes under pretence both of charity for the whole South and anxiety for the cure of ignorance everywhere. It was a farce. There was no such mass of ignorance in any State of the North as to require any such remedy, and we of the South were quite able to educate our white illiterates. It was evident, therefore, that the real purpose was to benefit the blacks especially, without appearing to have that purpose in view.

The fact is, the North had become ashamed of the company it had chosen. While the negro was a slave, it suited its vague ideas of wholesale philanthropy to make him a martyr and his liberation its special mission. In this it gloried and this was the actual motive of the war it waged against the Confederacy; for in spite of their boasted

practicality, they are the most sentimental and unpractical people in the world. In carrying on this war they appealed to the negro, then a slave, with a tropical wealth of promises which must have dazed even a less fervid imagination than that of the unfortunate African. They agreed, not only impliedly but explicitly, to stand between him and his traditional and natural controllers—oppressors they termed them—the whites of the South. When the war was over, however, when the slave had betrayed his master, had guided their armies, fed their fugitives and served with indefatigable zeal the cause of the enemy; when a quarter of a million of them had offered their bodies as a bulwark for their white comrades and been accorded the place of honor in every assault, until their losses were proportionately greater than those of any other contingent of like numbers—after these things had occurred, the North became ashamed of its allies. In the day of triumph these were thrust into the background and, as time passed on, were year by year more and more sedulously secluded from public regard. The most unyielding of our Confederate chieftains stood proudly about the bier of Grant, but none of those degenerate sons of the South who had bowed obsequiously to his power, nor any of those black hands which had done so much to put the laurel of victory on his brow were allowed to touch his sacred cerement. Only a few colored grooms were permitted to lead the horses harnessed to his catafalque.



Such things will seem almost incredible to the historian who hereafter shall seek for the causes of the downfall of the Federal power, and I cannot but think they were indicative of a lack of moral stamina which had much to do with the national decadence. They resulted not from any failure to comprehend of the true relations subsisting between the Nation and the negro, but from two singular characteristics of the Northern mind, to wit: the fear of ridicule and the lack of any sense of personal obligation not of a pecuniary character. Business is the life of its life, and its boast is that there is no friendship in business. Its philanthropy is unbounded, but it is without any sense of gratitude. The Northern man will lavish money upon a friend who does not need it and refuse aid to one who is in difficulty. He prefers to give to the poor rather than prevent one to whom he owes the obligation of favor from becoming impoverished. He prides himself upon his unselfishness and impartiality. He does no more for his friend than for his foe. The ties of blood even are little regarded. It is an instinctive appreciation of this fact that lies at the bottom of the Northern man's boast that the last person of whom he would ask a favor is one of his kindred. He knows that as a rule they are the last who would grant him aid. It was the negro's misfortune both to have served this curious people at a critical period of their history and to have sustained them afterwards the relation of "poor kin,"—the two relations of all that could

exist which they were the most unwilling to acknowledge.

As I have already said, the sense of respectability is the most potent impulse of Northern life. The most charitable and philanthropic people in the world, they have an unconquerable aversion to rags and grime. They are willing to relieve the poor—to give them alms, that is—but they do not want them near except as servitors or duly labeled samples of their own charitable inclinations. They cannot meet them, mingle with them or admit them as equals to their life. The gulf between affluence and indigence is bridged by charity, but between superfluity and scantiness it is impassable and unfathomable. For this reason the Northern man is very shy of his associates. No man's merit is great enough to be visible under a shabby coat.

The negro was a most uncomfortable *protégé*. He could not be wined or dined to any extent. He could not be made a lion in the drawing-room or a companion on the street. The North admitted its duty but it could not endure our gibes. Even the old taunt of "Abolitionist," still had a sting. Her people were afraid we of the South would call them "negro-lovers" and "miscegenationists," if they attempted openly to reward their allies or protect their friends. If, however, the people of the South could be made co-recipients of their bounty, the sting would be removed. So the bolus was shrewdly concocted and some of our people were silly enough to swallow it; but the more far-seeing apprehended the danger of

bringing the National Government nearer to our people in a beneficent guise—especially to that moiety of our population who were of the colored race. To educate them was evidently to increase their power of resistance to the white man's control and so provoke unnecessary conflict. These raised the cry of pauperization. It was an attempt on the part of Northern zealots, they said, to pauperize and degrade the people of the South. With its usual subserviency the greater portion of the press of the North caught up and repeated this cry, all the more readily no doubt as it offered a way out of the dilemma, whereby they might excuse their inaction and at the same time save their ducats. While they would gladly have done full justice to the negro the South requesting and assenting, yet they would rather abandon their former allies than face the sneers of their former foes. Such a feeling is almost incomprehensible to a Southern man, but these singular people think all the world is animated by the same whimsical motives.

All this was made the more manifest by the fact that the people of the North as individuals had recognized their obligation to the negro in an unprecedented manner. In the twenty years succeeding the surrender of the Confederate armies they had contributed individually not far from twenty millions of dollars for education at the South, principally among the colored people. This, however, was but an evasion of the public duty which rested on the people and the party that during all that time held control of the Fed-

ederal Government. The opportunity passed, and after a quarter of a century the colored people lost confidence, not in the future, but in their professed friends, and turned toward those allied to them by nativity and oftentimes by blood, as not only the natural but the only possible promoters of their future prosperity and safety.

The Cadets of the Order of the Southern Cross were the result of this tendency on the part of the more intelligent and patriotic of the colored people. They were not many, as it was necessary to move very slowly in this direction. Besides, there are not many, and will not be for generations, who are worthy of such exaltation. It is by no means certain that the blacks will ever as a people reach the present level of the whites; but whatever progress the race is capable of achieving must, no doubt, be made under careful supervision and restraint. It is possible that, in some far future, the colored race may be safely and properly admitted to that equality of power in the government which the later Amendments of the Federal Constitution foolishly and vainly sought to confer, and from which the people of the North expected miraculous results without providing instruction, protection or encouragement for the weak and ignorant whom it thus enticed into a perilous experiment. In nothing has the wisdom of what has recently occurred been so thoroughly exemplified as in the good order, peace and contentment of the colored people since the establishment of the new government.

They realize that their time has not yet fully come and are willing to wait until it does—it may be a century; it may be a cycle. They have gained much. Their freedom is secure. Their most important civil rights are recognized. Others will follow; but time alone cures the evils which grow out of untoward destiny.

All these things contributed to the success of our plans. The people of the North, conscious of injustice to the negro, yet unwilling to recognize him as a co-ordinate in political power (though they had been ready enough to thrust him on the people of the South as such) were in reality very glad to be thus easily rid of their troublesome *protégé* who had ceased to be interesting as soon as he became free. They were glad enough, therefore, to accept the representations of some few hundred Cadets as really the voice of their race, and having thus eased their consciences, they felt little inclined to carry resistance to our demand to extreme lengths, but with creditable unanimity exclaimed, after a little decorous remonstrance :

“ Oh, let them go ! The South is always stirring up trouble anyhow. Let them go and fight it out with each other ! ”

This feeling was greatly strengthened by the prevailing idea that the South would still be dependent on the North for its manufactured products. They did not seem to realize that we would import capitalists and manufacturers instead of their wares. In framing the “ Articles

of Separation," they only insisted that in regard to exports and imports they should always be on the footing of "the most favored nation," deeming themselves well able to compete with any foreign power on that basis, as no doubt they are. Long before the imposition of our recent tariff, however, which was purposely made peculiarly favorable to our sister republic, it was estimated that more than two hundred million dollars of Northern capital had come across the border to take advantage of such an unprecedented opportunity for manufacturing investment. Men of northern birth will no doubt be our chief mechanical producers for many years; but their wares will be Southern manufactures. This is one of the chief advantages the South derives from separation—a development of her resources to supply her own markets. It brings to us, too, the very cream of Northern life—her successful manufacturers and capitalists. The privilege of supplying a market of twenty millions of people, wisely protected against foreign competition by a universal patriotic sentiment, is one that does not often present itself to commercial enterprise.

The North saw too late what they had lost; but their most sagacious manufacturers perceived at once how much might be gained by removal hither. While the shops of New England are running on half-time, those of the new republic find the day all too short to supply the demand for their wares. As a result it is believed that the wealth of the South will be doubled within a decade. Such are the fruits of patriotic patience and outspoken sincerity!

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

“This is the most glorious Easter since Christ rose from the dead!”

Thus shouted an impassioned orator, and the heaving multitude responded with the shrill, wavering cry whose plaintive cadences had so often been the prelude and herald of victory. Twenty-one years had elapsed since the land had echoed with the thunders of Federal triumph, since the flag of an extinct nationality had been folded away and the South had bowed her neck to the conqueror's yoke. Proudly and haughtily, yet without open defiance, she had obeyed the mandate of her hereditary foe. Out of the wreck of conflict the genius of her sons had saved more than they had ever hoped to recover when the knell of hope was sounded and the pall of despair cast about the bier of the Confederacy. The sons of those who shed their blood in her behalf had grown up to manhood; new States had been builded on the soil of the old, and a new form of society was struggling for a precarious existence amid the fragments of a shattered civilization.

For the first time since the sun of Appomattox set in blood and lamentation, the children of the South met to greet and honor the chief of the Confederacy. Nature

had hidden the footsteps of war. The battlements were up-grown with verdure, and the plow passed unheeded back and forth where the cannon had belched forth its fateful flame. The Queen City of the South had given way to one grander still. Even the lone chimneys that marked the path of the destroyer's hordes had almost disappeared. A new era had come. Yet the old was not dead.

The quarter of a century which lay between the inauguration of the President of the Confederacy and his first return to the scene of his exaltation, was unquestionably the most remarkable that the world has ever known. The conflict which followed, notable enough in its character—the heroic attempt of eight millions of freemen to create a new empire and at the same time defend it against the assault of three times their number, armed with the power and prestige of organized and established government was as nothing in comparison with the events which followed. A civilization which was the growth of two hundred and fifty years had been swept away and the forms of another distinct and contrasted development were imposed upon a conquered people, who were then restored to power and expected to operate successfully the strange machinery so foreign to all their preconceptions, so hostile to all their cherished ideas.

The result was both amazing and ridiculous. The



new forms remained undisturbed, but the old ideas reasserted their power. Slavery was destroyed, but subordination remained. The freedman was a voter, but the white man controlled him in the exercise of the power of the citizenship. Force and fraud and terror had deprived the system imposed by force of all its vitality. Even the forms of law themselves were invoked to defeat the purposes of law. The slave had served his master with his hands. The freedman yielded to the dominant race the power a victorious enemy had vested in him, to exercise as suited their good pleasure. The North was disgusted and astounded at the result of its philanthropic experiment. The South exulted in its triumph and laughed at the curious confusion of its ancient enemy. "Reconstruction" became a byword of reproach to its promoters and of exultation to its intended victims. What was meant to be tolerance and mercy came to be regarded as tyranny and oppression. Those who were at first stigmatized as "rebels" and "traitors" posed, even in the eyes of their triumphant enemies, as patriots and martyrs.

So, after twenty years of waiting, the South was "again in the saddle." Her influence in the nation was again dominant; her interests were still distinct, and her counsels even more undivided than ever before. Though using the name of a national party, the South was solidly "Southern" rather than solidly Democratic. Politically there was no division of sentiment. Every governor, every

judge, every senator save one or two, every representative in Congress save five, every State officer, almost every county officer, the mayor and police of every city, more than nine-tenths of the inferior magistracy and the inferior administrative judicial officers; at least four-fifths of the white population, and probably a still greater proportion of the wealth and intelligence of this region—all these were what was well termed “Southern” in every impulse and motive. They were Democratic simply because that party was deemed favorable, not so much to Southern interests as to Southern sentiment.

Even after the downfall of the Confederacy our people had retained the instincts of loyalty to its sentiments, traditions and martyrs. The heroes of that conflict were the heroes of its civil life. To those who defended it on the battlefield it intrusted its destiny in peace, with unflinching confidence in their fealty. Into the halls of Congress it sent the soldiers who had upborne its flag; and into the seats of honor and emolument, throughout its whole extent, it inducted those who had been faithful to its behest in the hour of peril and humiliation. The South was indeed “in the saddle” throughout all that region over which the “Stars and Bars” had spread their consecrating folds, while in the national government she exercised precisely the same percentage of authority as before the attempt to break the bonds that bound her to an unsympathetic, if not hostile, yoke-fellow.

This power it exercised with far greater unanimity than it had ever done before. But would this predominance be permanent? Once she had controlled the exercise of national authority for a generation. Could she do so again? This was the question our wisest and best were asking themselves. It is said that blood makes a very strong cement, and the sentimentalists of the North were never tired of boasting how much stronger the Union would be after it had been cemented with blood. Our people at the South did not deny this; but it was a conundrum many of them tried in vain to solve. Why the blood of *our* heroes, shed in a futile attempt to sunder this relation, should tend to increase its strength was a question which only the metaphysical acumen of the North could solve. Yet for a long time there was no sign of weakness—no visible lesion.

“This is the most glorious day since Christ rose from the dead!” repeated the impassioned orator, trembling with excitement as he spoke. Beside him stood a slender figure, pallid and gray, showing the weakness of age in every gesture, yet with something left of that graceful pride which marked his mien when he took the oath of office, while the cannon thundered and a new nationality was born, a quarter of a century before. The shrill tremor of the “Rebel yell” our enemies learned so well to dread, rose again on the air. The early summer sunshine was

eluded with the heavy, acrid powder smoke, while the morning air palpitated with the echo of the welcoming guns. Gray-bearded men shouted and wept. Hot tears flowed down the matrons' cheeks. Maidens waved their handkerchiefs, while flushed face and flashing eye told their exultant joy. Young men shrieked themselves hoarse in greeting to the leader at whose command their fathers had gone forth to die. Around the leader stood the veterans of the army of which he had been the official head—maimed and whole, officers and privates—their hearts swelling with unutterable memories of the days of battle and victory, of trust in the new nation's future and sorrow in its overthrow. The "Stars and Bars," after twenty years in hiding, flashed forth into the light, and the multitude redoubled the fierce acclaim.

"Glorious day—Christ—resurrection—dead!" shrieked the frantic orator in half-intelligible staccato. A people were greeting the incarnation of their thought—the one martyr of their cause, which, though accounted "lost," must forever be loved! Since the American Colonies were founded no such ovation had ever been offered within their limits to living man or dead hero as that which greeted the aged President of the Confederacy in his triumphal procession through the two greatest States of the South.

Why was it? The cause he had represented had failed. The war waged under his direction had impoverished the entire people. The negro, whose enslavement it

had been fought to perpetuate, because of it had been made free. On all that had been undertaken under his auspices hung the corroding rust of failure. As the administrative head of the Confederacy, there was little in his history to appeal to pride; as the commander-in-chief of her armies, his interference with the plans of his subordinates had been an almost certain presage of disaster. There are many, even of our foes, who believe that if the civil administration of the Confederacy had been a par with its military achievements, the bright banner would never have kissed the dust. As a man, Jefferson Davis was by no means worthy of the veneration offered him. As an official, his record was marked by incapacity and vacillation, and his subsequent life by evasive and querulous accusation of his subordinates.

Why did this man's coming make the day "the most glorious since Christ rose from the dead" and impel a people to give him a welcome never before accorded to any? Flowers lay thick along the path he had come, their petals crushed by his carriage like bleeding hearts beneath the chariot wheels of Juggernaut. Children lined the way chanting his praise. Mothers leaned over the heads of their offspring to catch a sight of the face which loved ones, now dead, had pictured for them in the days of hopefulness. The schools were empty, and their bells joined the exultant clangor that rang from all the city's spires. Even the children from the colored schools were

there, bearing floral offerings and gazing with wide-eyed wonder at the man who represented the cause which meant their continued enslavement. And with them were their teachers, too—Northern born men and women—who for the sake of their daily bread graced the Southern leader's triumph. What did this spontaneous ovation mean? It meant that the Southern people were free again to do honor to the one martyr for their cause. The marks of the shackles were upon his wrists! The curse of exclusion rested upon his brow! In his native land he was an exile—the one man punished for a people's fault!

No wonder they wept! No wonder they shouted! No wonder the heavens throbbed with multitudinous acclaim! A people who had risen triumphant from defeat; a people who had transformed the conqueror's lash into the scepter of victory; a people who for a score of years had spoken only with bated breath of the glorious days enshrined in their memories—such a people offered honor and sympathy and gratitude to the one man who had suffered in a felon's cell for their transgression! No wonder the fervid orator could think of nothing but the primal Easter morning as he looked upon that sea of upturned faces and felt beside him the trembling form of that martyr to faith that would not die, who for twenty-four years had slept in the sepulchre of unjust oblivion!

It was this spectacle that banished doubt and brought inspiration. From that day my life was transformed from

one of patient, hopeless waiting to one of confident, un-resting effort. That night the Order of the Knights of the Southern Cross was formed. The venerable President of the Confederacy held the hilt of my father's sword while a hundred fervent young patriots kissed with reverent lips the blade. Ah! many thousands have kissed it since, and not one has proven recreant to the oath thus solemnly attested.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

The Indian jugglers make a tree grow from a seed while the spectator stands gazing in wonder at the spreading leaf, the springing buds, the unfolded flower, and before he can recover from his surprise the necromancer hands to him the perfect fruit, plucked before his eyes from the branches. It is said that one who has witnessed the marvel of necromantic skill feels forever after doubtful whether an hour or an age elapsed while he watched and wondered.

Not less marvelous to me was the growth of the new Order. I had planted the seed half-unconsciously, hardly expecting any fruitage and anticipating at least a lifetime of delay. But events spring rapidly when the soil is well prepared, and the blood of our fathers had not sunk into the earth in vain. Their cause had failed, but their holy teachings had fallen on willing ears and found lodgment in earnest hearts. The long fallow had not been unfruitful. The sons had not only inherited their fathers' devotion, but had learned wisdom from the lessons which their fathers' failure taught. They were ready for the new dispensation of liberty which had come from the last



blood-stained field of the great War for Separation. They were ready to believe that

“Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war.”

So, even while I wondered at my own audacity in planting the seed at all, the tree sprang up and over-shadowed me with its branches. Before another sunset came a thousand lips had pressed the war-worn blade; before the moon had waxed and waned again the iron cross with its white stars flashed on manly bosoms in every State hallowed by the blood of Confederate heroes. In less than a year the names of half a million knights were on its muster-rolls. Before yet another twelve-month had passed three-fourths of all the white men of the South were numbered among its members, and nearly half the youths between the ages of fifteen and twenty were enthusiastic novitiates.

Much speculation has been indulged in with regard to the origin and character of the Order, and I have been greatly praised and greatly blamed for the part I took in its establishment and dissemination. As has been seen, its origin was due to accident rather than design. I was made its first Commander. Indeed, until its funeral rites have been performed about my bier I shall be its only head.

After that, if my wishes are regarded by my brethren, the Companions of the Order, as I trust they may be, it will be forever dissolved. I do not say this that I may

have the honor of having been its sole Grand Master, though I confess I should prize such honor very highly, but because I am thoroughly satisfied that however valuable such organizations may be in the formative period of a nationality, when that has passed and questions of policy and administration begin to arise on which individual opinions may differ and personal interests may clash, they are not only of doubtful value but actually perilous to the public peace. The Knights of the Southern Cross have done their work. Our native land has taken her place among the nations of the earth. Henceforth her destiny is in her own hands, and depends upon the wisdom and justice of her people as expressed through their chosen representatives. It is not to be supposed that any people will always be free from the malign forces of ambition, or that honor will always animate the hearts of their leaders. I trust, however, that there will be no unnecessary opportunity offered to the ambitious leader or the crafty conspirator, and that the instrument which was employed to create the new Republic will never be the weapon used to destroy it. Such extraordinary combinations of individuals are adapted to do good only at extraordinary times. The crisis for which the Southern Cross arose has passed. I would fain believe that its setting light may shine upon my grave and that its starry cross may be preserved only as the glorious emblem of our bloodless victory.

To say that I have devoted myself to the extension

and establishment of the Order is only to aver that I have fulfilled the mission of my life. As reverently as He who sorrowed in Gethsemane do I believe that "for this thing came I into the world." If I have been unselfishly devoted to its prosperity and success, I have only done my duty.

But let me not even by implication claim too much. With all the advantages in its favor it is doubtful if the Order of the Southern Cross would have spread so marvelously or have attained its purpose with such remarkable facility had not an unknown ally mysteriously upstayed my hands. Until that time the estate left me by my sainted wife had been untouched. I used it freely to promote the interests of the Order. When this fund was nearly exhausted I was notified that a large sum had been deposited to my credit in one of our banks. I sought in vain to discover whence it came. The donor had taken good care to conceal his identity. The deposit was always in the form of Bank of England drafts to my credit, and "the old woman of Threadneedle street" never babbles the secrets of her patrons. In the grim silence of her walls the clue was lost. Yet from that hour my account was like the widow's cruse of oil, in that it never failed. First and last, the sum which came from this mysterious source was immense, and yonder, in those volumes of stubs, each of which represents a check drawn for the good of our cause, is the record of my stewardship. I knew noth-

ing of the source of this supply until I learned it from my mother's lips when she came to my bedside clad in the weeds of her second widowhood.

The organization of the Order of the Southern Cross was of the simplest character. Its purpose was undoubtedly revolutionary, but it aimed at revolution by legitimate and peaceful means.

The Federal Government is organized upon a singular principle. Undoubtedly intended to be national in character, its powers were so restricted as to permit the utmost liberty of thought and action upon the part of its people, even so far as regarded its own maintenance and continuation. Rebels themselves, its founders had more than once been in peril of life and limb from constructive treason. They knew that the form of government they were devising was not perfect, and desired to put no obstacle in the way of needed change. They provided in the Constitution, therefore, that no action or utterance should be accounted treasonable, except the actual levying of war against the Government. It might, indeed, punish sedition; which, however, could only be construed to be a violent interference with the public peace or counseling armed resistance to its authority. Under the Constitution of the United States, therefore, it was perfectly lawful to support, counsel and advise any conceivable change in the form or character of the Government, or even the disruption of the Union *by peaceable means.*

This is precisely what the Order sought to accomplish. It advocated peaceful revolution. There had already been *three* attempts on the part of the South to escape from the control of the Federal Government. It is a notable fact that none of these looked to a subversion of that Government or a usurpation of its powers. This fact alone deprived these attempts of a strictly revolutionary aspect. The people of the South have never been the enemies of republican government. On the contrary, they have been its truest and staunchest supporters. Even in the hour of their sorest extremity, when confidence in Lee was unbounded and in Davis well-nigh destroyed, they did not do as any other people would have done in like extremity, give dictatorial power to the trusted general, but staunchly adhered to the constitutional forms they had established. They did not wish to conquer, control or subvert the Government of the United States, but merely to establish for themselves a government better suited, as they conceived, to their local needs, leaving the Federal Union intact as far as those to whose conditions it was still adapted were concerned.

The first of these attempts, known as Nullification, simply asserted the paramount sovereignty of the State within its own limits by denying the validity and threatening to resist the enforcement of Federal enactments by State authority. This movement was strictly in accordance with the political view of the Constitution known as

the "State Rights" doctrine, which regarded the Federal Union as a voluntary league of constituent republics rather than a consolidated nationality. The movement failed in its incipency. The people of the South, while approving the doctrine by a large majority, did not deem the occasion one of sufficient general importance to warrant an appeal to arms.

The next attempt was that resulting in the War for Separation. If consisted, in its last analysis, of a denial of the right of the Government of the United States to subvert the sovereignty of a State—or, in other words, was an assertion of the right of the people of a State to elect their own form of government and their own political affiliates. The appeal to arms in support of this theory resulted in unprecedented defeat.

The third was an unformulated assertion of the power of the people of the State to render inoperative the laws of the United States, not by denial of their validity or by seeking to impair their sanction, but by compelling those in whose behalf they were enacted to abdicate and renounce the rights intended to be conferred thereby. The chief of these were what seemed to the people of the North mere incidents of the overthrow of our armies, but which were regarded by the people of the South as subversive of our civilization and society, as well as inconsistent with their rights as citizens of the several States. As they could not successfully resist the power of the Nation, nor dispute its

right to make the negro a citizen and a voter, they appealed to force and terror to compel the Negro to refrain from exercising the right thus conferred. The States were prohibited by the constitutional amendments from restricting or denying the rights conferred upon the colored man by any statutory act, but there was nothing to prevent its being done by voluntary coöperation of the whites.

In this attempt, therefore, they were entirely successful. The million or more of colored voters at the South were rendered as powerless in a political sense as when they were mere chattels in the eyes of the law. This was done by means of various allied secret associations, which came to be known under the generic term of the Kuklux Klan. These kindred organizations numbered more than half a million in the different States of the South. Their final suppression was due to the fact that they had foolishly and needlessly infringed the law ; but the same influence was continued and the result perpetuated by the organization of "Rifle Clubs," "Red Shirt Companies," and other bodies of white men, who, without disguise or specific threat, deterred the inferior race from exercising the rights conferred upon them by the display of overwhelming force and unmistakable innuendo. Against such combinations the Federal Government was powerless to protect the new-made citizens to whom it had guaranteed equal political privileges with the former ruling class. By this means the people of the South re-

conquered from their conquerors the power to control the government and destiny of the South. It was a remarkable triumph. They simply rendered the right of suffrage a curse and not a blessing to the Negro by making the security of his person and property dependent upon the completeness of his surrender of the governing function to the white race. Even those of the dominant race who had favored the conqueror during the conflict or counselled a peaceful submission to the degrading terms imposed upon a subjugated people were put under an irrevocable ban. When their power had become so slight that it might safely be despised, they were tolerated; up to that point they were rigidly proscribed. Throughout the entire South, in fact, every function of government and the absolute control of public sentiment were in the hands of exactly the same men who would have exercised them if the War for Separation had never occurred.

This undivided and indivisible force, allying itself with the Democratic party of the North, secured at length absolute control of the Federal Government and the South was once more "in the saddle." Thus the curious spectacle was presented of the party which had preserved the Union from disruption excluded from its direction by the combination of the two elements which had resisted and opposed its course in coercing the sovereign States of the South to submit to the yoke of Federal dominion.

While it was evident that this remarkable state of af-



fairs could not long exist, it showed, better than anything had ever done before, the distinctiveness and solidarity of the Southern people as well as the amazing tenacity with which they adhered to ideas and principles once thoroughly established among them. It showed, too, a remarkable power for organization and coöperation in matters of a public nature—in other words, that thorough and complete crystallization of sentiment my father had so clearly prevised, which is the unmistakable index of separate nationality. Especially notable in all these movements was the fact of loyalty to one another as a popular sentiment. No Southern man was ever a traitor to the South. During the War for Separation even those who were lukewarm were looked upon with suspicion, and no subsequent submission to the popular will was ever sufficient to restore them to popular favor. In the last of these movements their secretive power was especially revealed and tested. More than half a million of men belonged to the secret orders mentioned, and their existence was well understood by several millions more; yet the whole power of the Government was hardly able to establish the general fact, and very few were ever convicted for participation in even the most indiscreet and criminal of their acts. The people of the North can never be relied on to stand by Northern men, Northern ideas or Northern interests, as such; but the South raises no traitors and breeds no “dough-faces.” It may have enemies, but tolerates no neutrals.

With these facts established, it was nearly impossible to have erred in the organization of the Order of the Southern Cross. It was merely an order of voluntary knighthood, pledged to perpetuate the memory of Southern heroes, preserve the purity of Southern ideals, and promote in every lawful manner the best interests of the Southern people. They were especially bound not to take up arms, nor counsel, advise or approve resistance to the Government of the United States; but to promote in all peaceful, honorable and constitutional methods the separation of the South from the Federal Union as a thing essential to the peace and prosperity, not only of the South, but of the Caucasian race in America. They were bound to do all that might lawfully be done to prevent the negro, or any individual or party through him or with his coöperation and assistance, from obtaining, holding or exercising any political power or control in any city, county or State, or in the Federal Union, while the South should continue a part thereof. Beyond this the Order was pledged to exert no political influence, and to take no political action. It had no candidates, held no conventions, and expressed no preferences as between the true sons of the South.

Our Order was of course secret; but its organization was so unique that this statement gives no key to its character. Now that its work is accomplished, I may without impropriety indicate the mechanism by which it operated.

It had no lodges, camps, degrees or stated meetings. Any five members of the Order might examine, test and initiate a new Companion. They had only to notify the Grand Secretary of the Order of the name and residence of the initiate and the names of the knights present at his confirmation. On receipt of this the Grand Secretary forwarded to the new member his badge, properly engraved. By this simple means a perfect roster of the organization was kept, showing at a glance the exact number in each county and the name and post-office address of each.

The Supreme Council was composed of one member from each state, chosen by the Grand Master. They met only on the call of the Grand Master. No record of their action was ever made. They were known only to each other, the Grand Secretary and the Grand Master. They were advisers merely, the Grand Master taking all responsibility for the acts of the Order; though it is to their wisdom and prudence that the success of our plans is chiefly due. I speak of these things in the past tense. The Councillors handed in their resignations on the day of our great Jubilee, and it was my intention to have published the fact, destroyed all the records, and declared the Order dissolved upon the next day. In view of what then occurred, I have summoned the Council to meet once more—when I am dead. I trust it may be for the last time.

Meetings of the Order were as a rule discouraged; and could not be held without leave of the Grand Master

except in case of an emergency. I was fully satisfied that frequent meetings and too cumbrous an organization had been the bane of all previous organizations of similar character. The uniform was simply a short white tunic, very full upon the shoulders, buttoned at the wrist, bordered with blue and belted with red. Its cost was strictly limited to one dollar, so that the poorest might be as well clothed as the richest, and the tendency to pomp and extravagance be repressed. There was but one general parade ordered until that which was called to celebrate the complete accomplishment of our purpose. This was just previous to the presidential election in 1888, when there were signs of a determination on the part of the colored people to oppose our purpose and precipitate a conflict of races by insisting upon an independent exercise of the power with which they had been legally clothed. This it was found necessary to suppress, and a formal parade was ordered at midnight in every city and village of the South. As soon as the hour had struck the signal was given on the church bells—three quick strokes, three times repeated—and silently and swiftly the Knights stepped out of their homes and, two by two, sought the appointed rendezvous—more than a million white-robed minute men mustering at the same instant in the villages of fifteen States! It was enough. There were no masks, no threats, no acts of violence—but no colored man ever afterward proposed to act in opposition to the decrees of the Order. Indeed,

very many hastened to put themselves under our protection and guidance, by joining the corps of Colored Cadets. As membership therein was limited to those who could read and write, or had acquired a specific amount of property, and whose applications were approved by at least a hundred Knights, it soon became practically an order of nobility among them to which the best aspired. To the influence of our Cadets with the people of the North we owe in a very considerable measure the fact that our great object was attained, not only without bloodshed, but without any serious danger of conflict.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

The credit of having devised the plan by which the autonomy of the Southern Republic was finally secured has been generally, but quite unjustly, accorded to me. As has been seen, I was responsible for the establishment and character of the Southern Cross. While the Supreme Council has loyally supported, and in many instances improved upon the plans of the Grand Master, it is yet true that it has kindly, and no doubt wisely, refrained from any important modification of the same which might have fettered my activity and imperilled our success. In the ability to follow intelligently yet trustfully a leader in whom they have confidence without interfering with or revising his plans, the people of the South undoubtedly excel all democracies known to history, offering in this respect a striking contrast to their congeners of the North.

Beyond the extension, consolidation and general oversight of the work of this Order and the initiation of some movements following upon the success of our plan to prevent an election of President and Vice-President of the United States, I am not entitled to any special credit for the result. Singularly enough we are indebted for the main

features of this plan to one of those singular products of Northern life—the leader, I might almost say, the brain, of our Northern allies.

That we had allies at the North without whose assistance we could not have succeeded is very well known, as well as the fact that both extremes of Northern life—its wealth and its poverty—the Labor Reformers and the combined Monopolists—at one time or another coöperated with us in our movement for separation. The former have, indeed, openly alleged that the Order of the Southern Cross, or rather I as its representative, broke faith with them in regard to the election of a President. The charge is entirely without foundation. I did agree that a sufficient number of Southern electoral votes should be thrown for their candidate to prevent the election of the Democratic nominee, a pledge which was faithfully redeemed. It was made with the full knowledge and consent of the Monopolist “pool,” and in pursuance of the very plan suggested by its head. Beyond that I held out no inducements and the Labor Party had no reason to expect any farther assistance from us.

The fact that I did not disclose our alliance with their special enemies does not render me liable to the charge of duplicity, since they well knew that the votes thrown for their candidates were given not to promote their interest but our own. The truth is that the leaders of both these elements were anxious that separation should take place, pro-

vided only it could be effected without their direct and visible support. The reasons for this, though apparent enough at a glance, I deem essential to my own justification to set forth. Each was aware that the time was near at hand when there must be a trial of strength between them, and each felt confident of success in this trial, if only the doubtful and uncertain element of Southern votes and Southern influence could be eliminated. The labor element felt itself hopelessly weighted with the eight millions of weak, ignorant and dependent colored laborers of the South; while the Monopolists dreaded that spirit of fair play and an equal chance to all which has been so peculiarly characteristic of our Southern society. They felt that associated capital, despite the prevalent idea of aristocratic inclination among us, was hopeless to influence or control the political action of a people impatient of all leadership except that which follows rather than prescribes their inclination. So each of the opposing elements of Northern life desired to be rid of a force possibly hostile and certainly unreliable because it was affected by conditions too dissimilar to permit of thorough sympathy with either.

Hardly had the existence and character of our Order become known, therefore, when I began to receive overtures from both these sources. Its simplicity and effectiveness awakened the distrust of the representatives of both. The labor organizations of the North were little more than clamorous cabals, united by a mere sense of individual ad-



vantage and likely to be broken up whenever any clique or faction conceived it to be profitable to them as individuals to withdraw from their control. In fact they were only a loose agglomeration of societies having a common purpose but no common method or design. The excessive individualism of the North in truth prevents all compactness and harmony of association, since there is not, as at the South, any common bond of loyalty to an ideal or devotion to a sentiment to insure subordination on the part of the masses. An organization without ganglionic branches and semi-independent heads was to them very naturally a surprise. The Federal idea has in truth infected everything connected with the life of the North until an organization not composed of successive representations seems to them hardly less than incredible.

To be referred from all quarters, not to some local council or chapter but always to the Grand Master for information, seemed to the half-authorized delegations who sought our aid an anomaly, and their surprise increased when I informed them that we could not treat with them since they were not authorized to promise anything more than a vague endeavor; while whatever I might covenant to do in the name of the Order would certainly be performed. Afterward, however, I was present during certain negotiations carried on between representatives of the Democratic party and the leaders of the Labor movement, to which allusion has already been made. In this

case I insisted upon explaining to the Labor delegates to the conference that I did not speak as Grand Master, or promise anything within the gift or control of the Order. For the fulfillment of the conditions agreed upon they must rely entirely upon the pledges of the Northern Democrats, whom we had no power to coerce or control, and who, I was bound to say, had always proved false to the people of the South when an emergency had arisen. In this case the agreement was faithfully carried out on both sides. At that time there was no intention of giving them the votes of Kentucky and Texas.

But if the Labor forces of the North were but loosely organized we had another ally whose discipline was such as to throw even that of our Order into the shade. So far as I am aware, the combined Monopolists of the North consisted of one man only. Who he represented, how they were organized, and what the extent of his power, I never knew. One thing is certain, whatever this man promised, that he did. Another thing is equally sure, they were united together simply by a common bond of material interest, which constitutes the strongest ligament with which an average Northern man can be joined to another. Friendship, honor and even kinship, are weak and frangible ties compared with the bond of mutual interest which they call business.

The circumstances of this alliance were of so singular

and striking a character that I feel not only justified but required to state them in detail, since they were known to me alone with one other. If, in so doing, I am compelled to refer to certain matters of a private and personal nature concerning this other, it is only because another chose his own house as the theatre of negotiation with regard to public affairs. Besides, the chief incident was long ago made public by the press of the North, which leaves nothing hidden which can be found out.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

It was something more than a year after the organization of our Order that, happening to be in the city of New York, I received a call from Mr. Stoningham, the President of the Rock Oil Trust, whose kinsman had been a neighbor of General Fairbanks. The ostensible object of his visit was to confer with me in regard to Sagamo Lodge, which General Fairbanks had re-purchased and held in his own name. It was the public ownership of so valuable a property that had directed attention to the rehabilitation of his fortunes, though he was still effectually hidden under the *alias* he had assumed in his foreign home. Mr. Stoningham had communicated to me his desire to secure this property as the location for a girl's school, or college. The purchase had been made through me, and it was natural that the offer of Mr. Stoningham should be made to me. Upon my communicating this offer to General Fairbanks, he at once notified me of his willingness to give the property for the purpose indicated under certain conditions. It was in regard to these that Mr. Stoningham came to confer.

The result of these negotiations was the establishment of Fairbanks Seminary, a sum equal to the estimated value of

the property being given by Mr. Stoningham for its improvement. Its buildings are palatial in character. Above the marble entrance are carved the words : " In memory of Edith Fairbanks-Owen." The father meant it for a monument which would preserve his daughter's memory among that very class who had been so ready to denounce and disown when misfortune fell on him and his. It was a curious impulse, but I do not doubt that the man who devised it took great delight in contemplating the fact that by establishing a school beyond the means of all but the daughters of the very richest, he was avenging the slights his daughter had received at their hands. It was a unique revenge, but a life made up of such contradictory elements as that of the North necessarily becomes a hot-bed of idiosyncracies. I did not wholly approve of what was done, but the father had an undoubted right to erect such a monument as he might choose to his daughter's memory.

To Mr. Stoningham the matter bore a very different complexion. To him it was an act of wise and judicious beneficence.

" We think too much of the poor and not enough of the rich," he said. " The day of cheap things and pauper institutions is about over. That is, the supply is equal to the demand and more too. By herding rich and poor together, we are making paupers of the poor and destroying the spirit of the rich. It is no crime to be poor, but a rich man is just as good as a poor man, and our children should

be taught to respect themselves. After all, it is to the rich, the actually or potentially rich, that the country must look for prosperity. I wish General Fairbanks would return. We have need of just such men at this time in public life. What with Socialists and Anarchists and Knights of Labor threatening the peace of society, we need men of wealth who have the qualities and experience of the soldier. I misunderstood General Fairbanks once—or rather our interests clashed—and he went under.” (The keen-eyed little man corrected himself with a smile which had in it more exultation than he was probably aware.) “I am sure we should get on better now. At one time it was hard to tell which would come out ahead. If it had been my luck to be the under dog, I doubt if I should have shown the nerve he has displayed. You see it is hard work for a man to get up when he falls so far—not that the load is so heavy; often it is not half as hard as trying not to fall—but he has no help. Rich people are very credulous. As long as a man is thought to possess millions, he can control millions more—as many as he likes, almost. But as soon as he needs help, no one would let him have a thousand. Even I would rather help a man who is coming up the first time than one who has been down once. I don’t know why. I am sure I pity the other fellow; but perhaps it isn’t pity—perhaps it is only instinct.”

“Or policy,” I suggested.

“No, it isn’t policy, Mr. Owen. You’ve heard what

is said of me, I suppose, and no doubt think I am hard and selfish; but I am not—that is, not more so than other men. My wife used to say, when I was making my fight and getting up the hill, that she never knew a man to be made better by being rich. She don't say it any more and I don't believe it ever was true—as a rule, I mean. Of course a rich man may be bad, but what would he have been if he had remained poor? That is the question. The fact is, it is a great deal easier to be good when one has everything he wants; just as a child with a houseful of playthings is apt to be better natured than one that has only 'an old shoe, nine oyster-shells, and a dead kitten by way of toys,' as Hood says."

I laughed and he took up his hat to go.

"By the way," he said, as if he had just thought of it, "my friend Martling tells me you have gotten yourself a toy lately."

I looked at him inquiringly.

"The Knights of the Southern Cross—is that the name?"

I bowed with a smile.

"You are the—Chief Mogul, or whatever it is, they tell me."

I nodded assent again.

"Ah, indeed—very sentimental."

"Not at all," I answered quietly, "very practical."

"What!" he exclaimed, throwing his hat upon the

table and sitting down opposite me again. "You do not mean to try to break up the Union?"

"Not at all."

"What then?"

"Only to take care of the pieces when it falls apart."

"Yes; very good—very good," he repeated absently, looking as if he saw beyond me, yet without removing his eyes from mine. "When it falls apart, eh? Then you think it will fall apart?"

"Unquestionably."

"How soon?"

"That I cannot tell—very soon, I think."

"So. And you intend to take care of the South?"

I bowed.

"How many are you?" he looked keenly at me as he asked the question.

"Why do you ask?"

"Because I wish to know. I sent Martling South to ascertain that and other things about the Order. He went everywhere and tried every means to find out. I am not sure that he was not initiated."

"He was," I answered quietly.

"Ah, you knew that!" I could perceive that I had risen in his regard by the tone he used.

Yes," he continued, with an amused smile, "he was initiated and found that he knew just exactly as much as he did before. He could tell another Knight when he tried him.



but that was all. No one knew any more than he. He had run against a stone-wall. It is not often that Martling is beaten. Finally he wrote to the Grand Secretary, by whom he was referred to you."

"And I refused to see him," I interrupted.

"Exactly, and Martling had to come home just as wise as he went away. I think this is the second time you have got ahead of him. But you might have seen him; he is not such a bad fellow, after all.

"There can be no communication between us," I answered. "If you wished to know anything you should have asked yourself."

"Well, I will," said he, facing suddenly toward me. "How many Knights—as you call them—are there? Do you know?"

"I know how many there were last night."

"Is report made to you daily?"

I bowed. As I did so, I saw a gleam of light flash into his eyes, and smiled as I read his thought.

"You think you will soon know my secret?" I asked. He answered with a shrug.

"The gain each day is reported in a cipher, which even with this explanation you could not read in a hundred years. There is yesterday's," I added, handing him a dispatch, "if you like to try."

"Never mind," he said, glancing hastily at it. "What I want to know is, can your Order control the South?"

“The South is always ‘solid’ in her own interests.”

“By George!” he exclaimed. “You are right there! But who controls the Order?”

“The Grand Master, by and with the consent of the Supreme Council.”

“And they are—?”

“Even the Grand Master is not allowed to reveal their names.”

“How many know the number of the Order?”

“The Grand Secretary, the Grand Master and those to whom he may choose to reveal it.”

“And you have revealed it to—how many?”

“I have not yet found it necessary to reveal it to any one.”

“Indeed? Not even to your Council?”

I shook my head.

There were a few moments of silence.

“Mr. Owen, if one wanted to communicate with this Order confidentially and on matters of great importance, how could it be done?”

“Through the Grand Master,” I replied.

“In no other way?”

“None.”

“Verbally or in writing?”

“That would be as he might desire.”

Mr. Stoningham rose from his chair and walked hastily once or twice across the room. Pausing he glanced keenly down at me.

“Mr. Owen, how do I know you are to be trusted?”

“You do not doubt that I am the Grand Master?”

“No, indeed. That I *know*.”

“Through Martling’s report,” I said with a sneer.

“Through your own dispatches, hundreds of which I have read,” he answered quietly. He evidently expected that I would show surprise, but I did not. I had long suspected such scrutiny of my telegraphic communications and had taken measures to baffle it.

“What more do you wish to know?”

“Only whether such communication would be regarded as strictly confidential. I know very well that you *can* keep a secret; what troubles me is whether you *would* keep the one I might entrust you with.”

“I am a gentleman,” I said somewhat pompously.

“Which means—?” he queried.

“That I will always do whatever a gentleman ought to do.”

“And that is all you will say?” he asked uneasily.

“All.”

He walked across the room again, very slowly, with his hands behind him and his head thrown back as if examining the ceiling. Turning suddenly, he came and said, with a quick nervous manner, while his eyes flashed under his dark down-drawn brows,

“I will risk it, Mr. Owen. I have an important communication I wish to make to you; but this is neither the

time nor the place. Have you any engagements for this evening?"

"None of importance."

"Good. Can you dine with me at six? Then we can have a long evening to ourselves."

I assented.

"Very well. I will call for you at four-thirty and we will drive out. Good-bye."

He had seized his hat and was gone almost before I realized his intention to take his departure.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

I am not easily awed by contact with greatness, for I have found in a life which has brought me close to many great names, that few lives at all come up to their renown. I could count upon my fingers, and have some to spare, the men who have not shrivelled upon near approach. Great soldiers, great statesmen, great authors, great artists --I have seen them all on closer scrutiny reveal themselves as little men or only great accidents. But this man, with the fixed, remote gaze, calm, impassive face and flashing dark eyes under his smooth brow, impressed me as the greatest I had seen since I rode across the hills with my father when a nation's life hung in the balance.

Somehow the two men affected me in much the same way. They resembled each other not only in form and feature, but even in voice and intellectual character there was a likeness. This impression was all the more surprising as I had distinctly made up my mind not only to distrust but to dislike him. When I had time to analyze my feelings after his departure, I began to understand why it was that this simple, unpretentious man was to the world of finance precisely what Napoleon had been to the

political world—the greatest of his age if not of all the ages. I no longer wondered that in twenty-four years he had risen from a clerk's desk to the management and control of more millions than any one ever had at his disposal before. He was simply a plain, direct, earnest man, who believed in himself and his fortune; was without envy; cared nothing for parade; held himself no whit above the multitude whom he overreached and plundered, but had the utmost confidence in his divine right to overreach and plunder if he could. I did not approve of the man's work any more than when he had entered my room an hour before; indeed I dreaded his power a great deal more; but I respected his manhood and felt that I could trust his word. I do not hesitate to say after all that has occurred that I regard the President of the Rock Oil Trust as one of the most upright, reliable and conscientious men, when speaking and acting for himself, that I have ever known—and by all odds the ablest and most dangerous.

It was characteristic of this man that on the stroke of the hour he had named he called for me, in a light, open vehicle—"rig" it would have been called in the vernacular of that region—driven by himself. I found him waiting at the edge of the curbstone in front of the hotel, his shapely hands clothed in tawny driving gloves, holding the reins over a pair of impatient roadsters. Even before he had spoken, with an inherited instinct I had taken in the ensemble of the turnout. To my eyes it was an exquisite

picture—a span of blacks, unclipped and glossy-coated, showing the unmistakable marks of speed, bottom and spirit which go to make the perfect roadster; the harness black, almost without a hint of glazing, and with just a touch of gold on the headstalls; the wagon light—too light I thought at first for the rough streets we had to traverse—but one of those marvels of strength and elasticity which only American skill has ever put into wheel vehicles.

“I beg your pardon,” he said as I approached. “I took it for granted that you liked a horse, and as I always drive home from the office if the weather is fair, my man took the cars as soon as I took the reins. So I had to send for you, as I did not care to let a stranger hold them.”

He nodded toward the horses as he spoke, and when I had taken my seat beside him he continued:

“They are as gentle as kittens to one who knows them, and might take kindly to another’s ways; but I always like to drive my own horses and have them handled by the same man. I am not a horseman in the usual sense of the word. I know a good animal—at least one that suits *me*—and, like all farm-raised boys, know how to manage one; but I am not a turfman, do not care about the track, and would rather bet on oil or stocks than on a race. Even that I do not like, strange as you may think it. I had to do it once, but now it is unsatisfactory. I like better to deal with products than with possibilities. That is trade—commerce in its true sense; this down on the Street

here is gambling—gambling in its worst sense, where no one knows who deals, or whether the cards are ‘stocked’ or not. But I do like to drive about town, especially in crowded streets, where it seems that such a spider-web affair as this road-wagon would have no more chance to come out whole than a birch canoe in a battle of ironclads. Look there, now!”

The gloved wrist made a sudden turn and the wagon slid between two lumbering drays, just grazing the axle of one and quivering like a frightened thing as it sped from a blow from the huge spokes of another. So we threaded our way for nearly an hour through the rumbling, jostling mass that filled the great highway—now dodging a car, a dray, a cab, but always escaping from seemingly inevitable destruction. Then we turned down a quiet street where the hoofs strokes were muffled by concrete pavement and the wagon rolled on as noiselessly as if its tires were cushioned, till we reached a stately mansion and alighted at the house of this man who was many times a millionaire.

“I had quite forgotten this,” he said, pointing to a solid looking box that stood in the hall as we entered. “What do you think it is?” he asked with a laugh.

Of course I could not guess. He sent a servant for a couple of men and directed them to place it on the landing of the third story. After they had passed out of hear-



ing he said, as we entered a comfortable but somewhat ornate reception room,

“No, you would never guess what is in that box, and now that you are here I am sorry it was sent. You see this is my wife’s birthday, though I am ashamed to say I had forgotten it until I saw the box.”

“I hope I do not intrude?” I hastened to say.

“Oh, not all,” was his hearty response. “But you may think the little affair that has been planned a matter of foolish ostentation, perhaps. But it is not—I assure you it is not. It is only a child’s fancy. I like a good horse, it is true—as good as money can buy, and am glad to have the money to buy him; but I would not give a cent more to see him go a second below the record. So, too, with a house, I like a good one—just as good as can be made. I didn’t make this—it is a little too showy for me. My house is in the country. There is where I like to live and have my children live. But in country or city I have no use for a house made to look at or in competition with some one else’s. I want it to live in—I want the maximum degree of comfort with the minimum degree of show. In other words I want the best things and enjoy knowing that I have them but I do not care for display.

“There is my watch now—just illustrates what I mean.” He took from his pocket a plain silver watch as he spoke. “Why do you think I carry that?”

“Partly from whim, partly to prevent being robbed.”

“Not a bad guess,” he replied laughingly; “but you are wrong in both suppositions. I wanted a watch made according to my own notion. The jeweller said it would be difficult to put so much machinery in a gold case without making it too heavy. I told him to put it in silver, then; I wanted it for use, not ornament. I suppose it is the most valuable watch in the world, but you would hardly look at it in a pawnbroker’s window.”

“Perhaps not, without your explanation,” I said.

“And I gave that to make way for another. As I told you, it is my wife’s birthday, and I was at my wit’s end to know what to get her for a present. I never know what to do in such a matter, especially for one who has everything, as of course my wife does; for all I have is hers, and more, too, if she wants it. I love my wife and children, sir,” he said, turning earnestly toward me. “All I have done has been for them, and I would throw it all away and begin over again if it would do them any good, or even give them any pleasure; but I can’t buy presents. So I was glad when my youngest asked me if the children might have a novel sort of entertainment for their mother’s birthday—a queer sort of surprise party, in fact. Well, that box contains the material. If you feel like ridiculing the performance by and by, don’t let the children see your mirth, please. We are plain people, Mr. Owen, if we do happen to be rich; and I never expect to get over my old-fashioned notions.”

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

I shall never forget that birthday dinner in the home of this noted cento-millionaire. To speak of it as plain would be incorrect. It was abundant rather than sumptuous—a well-cooked, well-served, wholesome family dinner. The family including a bevy of children, the paternal and maternal grandmothers, a brother and sister with their consorts, a schoolmate of Mr. Stoningham's, the pastor of the church and his wife—this was the company. With these I was sandwiched in, through the forgetfulness of the master of this peculiar feast. It was a phase in high life that was new to me—an aristocracy not altogether devoted to eating and drinking, nor absorbed in what are usually termed "social duties." To my surprise I did not find myself at all *de trop*. It was as informal a dinner as ever was served in a Southern gentleman's home and enjoyed with as hearty zest. There was abundant evidence of unbounded wealth, but no trace of efforts at display.

During it all I could not realize that outside was the glittering, lamp-lit city, and scarce a mile away the pur-  
lieus of that mighty mart through which the commerce of

a nation flows—the heart of a continent's throbbing life ! The schoolmate, a grave earnest man—a professor, I think, in some western college, escorted the wife to dinner; the pastor took the paternal grandmother, and the host gave the place of honor at his side to *his mother-in-law!* It was my privilege to sit at his other hand. Much as I deplore the fact that men of such enormous wealth have been developed by our civilization, I could but admit that here was one not given to ostentation or snobbishness. There was no hint of wealth, its woes or conveniences, except when the classmate made an allusion to some of the host's recent benefactions, which he characterized as princely.

“ Ah ! ” said the wife, with a touch of sadness in her tone, “ I am afraid we do not give as much as we ought. When we were first married William used to give one-tenth of his income, and really we were very happy on the remainder, though it wasn't very large. But now we have so much we do not think of giving nearly as liberally in proportion.”

She glanced half-reproachfully at her husband as she spoke.

“ My dear.” he said laughingly. “ It wouldn't do. People would claim I was going into the philanthropic business on borrowed capital—booming my profits—‘ bulling my luck,’ as they say on the street. Besides that, you know they would claim that my donations were but a mere conscience fund. Why, last year I gave a trifle—forty

thousand, I think—to help a college out of debt, and when the fact was published, a witty fellow said, ‘Why shouldn’t he give forty thousand? He has stolen forty millions!’ That’s the thanks I get. You see, Doctor,” (addressing the divine) “they think I’m robbing Peter, not to pay Paul, but to make him a present.”

“It is a hard thing,” said the pastor gravely, “for a rich man to do his duty. I have often wished I had more of the world’s goods, and perhaps as often have been glad I had not. I would not have your responsibility for the world, and I thank God that you carry it as unpretentiously and humbly as when thousands, rather than millions, not only measured your possessions but bounded your hopes.”

“William is always the same to those he loves,” chimed in the mother-in-law. “I used to be afraid to have him grow rich, but I think the richer he has become the better he has grown.”

“Thank you, mother,” said the great financier. “You see, it’s a great deal easier to be good—or good-natured, which amount to the same thing, in common acceptance—when one has all he can reasonably wish without effort or sacrifice. I have had so much good fortune that I hardly know how to get along with it, and am constantly afraid I shall get the fidgets, as some men do, lest I should lose some of it. Of course I don’t want to lose any of it, but I wouldn’t mind giving half of it away,

if I knew what to give it to; or sharing it with those who have not enough, if I knew just how to get at them—who they are and where they are. But when anybody comes to claim it as a right, simply because I have more than they, then I am going to fight for it—and fight to the death, too. I got it lawfully and they would take it unlawfully. I won't be robbed nor will I be compelled to be generous. What I have to give I will give in my own time and in my own way, because it is mine. I don't care much for money—as long as I have enough, that is—but I do like the struggle of getting it and don't mind fighting to keep it. I'm not entitled to any credit for being kind to my friends, since it costs me nothing, and I suppose I do it for my own pleasure.

“I like the struggle for profit, much, I suppose, as a gladiator would a fight. It is just standing up, giving and taking, but never squealing. I hate a man that squeals and enjoy a man that picks himself up and goes in for a fresh chance. I make no pretensions to merit except in two directions—no man ever knew me to betray a friend or turn my back on an enemy. I want my children to be brave and strong and honest, and I mean to set them an example they will not be ashamed of. Then if they have to begin where I did they can fight their own way. I don't mean that they shall, but I should be ashamed of them if they tried and failed.

“I don't think I am any better than any one else or

any more entitled to good fortune. A poor man may be a great deal better and wiser than I. He may have cultivated virtue and devoted his energies to getting knowledge. That is all right. It is his and I do not want to take it from him. I set out to make money—not for the sake of money but because I like the struggle. What I have I won in a free fight and the man who thinks he can get it away from me is welcome to try it. That's fair; and that's all the good I lay claim to. Now and then, I give to somebody or something that needs help and may do more in that line, if I feel inclined; but it is not because I feel any sort of compunction for getting together what the law allows and in fact encourages me to acquire—for it is a fact that everything is in favor of the successful man in business. I can go in debt a million dollars and no one will ask for pay simply from fear of offending one who can pay. The law, society, everything, favors him who has money and cramps him who has not. After a man gets a fair start there is no limit to what he may do. Given a million dollars, and a man ought to be worth ten millions inside of ten years without much effort or half as much genius as is needed to enable one who has only a thousand to add as much more to his little pile. I am not any better than I was when I was poor, mother; I doubt if I am as good; but I am probably better natured, as I do not have to work so hard or to sacrifice at all."

Such was the tone and substance of his conversation—

modest, self-depreciating, charitable to others, in fact, what his countrymen would call sensible. To me all this was a revelation and a surprise. Never have I shared a family dinner in which the virtues of American domesticity were more perfectly illustrated than in this luxurious home of the prince of millionaires—the most daring and successful of those buccaneers of finance who are destined to be the nobility of the new civilization which is crystalizing at the North.



## CHAPTER XL.

After the dinner there was a buzz of preparation. The children, big with the self-importance of a well-kept secret, flitted back and forth and from father to mother, from cousin to aunt, impatient for the expected moment to arrive. It was a pretty scene—so pretty that I grew ashamed of the feeling I had entertained toward the tender-hearted man who had achieved so much for those he loved. I had wondered at his achievements hitherto; from that moment I respected his motives, after a certain fashion, and felt an honest pride in his marvelous capacity. He stood revealed to me a modern Midas with the virtues of the Puritan, a marvelous product of a wonderful era—how marvelous I was yet to learn.

The father and mother withdrew with their children with pleasant apologies to prepare for the spectacle we were to witness. No wonder there was a look of pride in the mother's eye as she followed her husband with the pretty, clamorous group around her!

We waited, loitering about the softly lighted rooms, chatting pleasantly and noting the luxurious surroundings. I had just become absorbed in conversation with the pas-

tor, a quiet, earnest man, to whom the task of ministering to such souls as composed his congregation seemed by no means to have lightened the sadness which the world's woe unfolds to men of his calling, when the door opened and a little maid, with flushed cheeks and beaming eyes, called to us:

“Come quick! Come and see!”

We did not wait for a second invitation. I gave my arm to the most infirm of the grandparents and, with our impatient herald clinging to her other hand, we followed the little company to the spacious hall. Seats were provided in the vestibule—itsself a room of no mean proportions, modeled on the Roman atrium, whose brazen sides swung back and made a stage of the hall beyond. This had been transformed into a dungeon, dimly lighted. Bronze doors with ponderous locks, such as the ancient treasure-vaults disclose. We waited, charmed by the realism of the fair picture, while from the shaded stairway above a lisping voice began in childish verse the story of Danae in the dungeon of Argos, bemoaning the sad fate the oracle had decreed. One and another childish voice took up the pretty argument till the darkness above was animate with the tender plaint. There was something very charming in the idea of utilizing the strophe and anti-strophe of the Greek drama in their childish sport and crowning their mother's birthday with a representation of an ancient myth which had already been enacted in her

life. I had been told that it was entirely the work of the children, and as we listened in the dim light I wondered if a poet had indeed sprung from the loins of Cræsus. While I mused the moment arrived for the coming of the god in the shower of gold. Suddenly a thousand electric lights flashed out, the host came striding from the door of the elevator at the other side of the hall and the laughing cherubs above sent down a shower of gold that fell like a sheet of yellow light between the spectators and the dungeon doors. How the yellow coins shone in the glaring light as they fell upon the place prepared for the expected shower or rolled and settled on the marble floor! The brazen doors flew open; the blinding light showed the prisoner sitting dazed and wondering on the rugged couch. The fetters fell from her limbs; the golden shower abated and the resplendent god led away his willing captive. The guests clapped their hands in approval. The childish voices burst into a confused chorus of laughter. Bright faces were for a moment visible over the balcony, then came the clatter of childish feet and the fable of Danae and Zeus had been enacted before our eyes with a splendor probably never known before, save in the dissolute court of the French king.

There were tears in the mother's eyes as she came towards us a moment afterwards.

"I am sorry," she said, "it looks like ostentation. I knew nothing about this shower of gold. The children devised it to give me pleasure. Our eldest is named Perseus

and is naturally attracted to this golden myth. My husband says we are to have the money for our winter charities. Will you help us to use it in that way, doctor? It is to be put in the bank, and the children are to draw all the checks, hear all the cases presented, and decide how much shall be given to each. We want to teach them to do right. Will you help us?"

"Indeed, I will, madam," said the divine, his voice choked with emotion, "and on behalf of the poor whose suffering this money will alleviate, I invoke God's blessing on your munificence."

"Not our's, doctor—*not ours*," said the simple-minded woman, clasping her hands in earnest denial. "It is not *ours*. We are only almoners of what God has given us but too abundantly. I do not know how we shall do our duty. I try to teach the children—perhaps they will be able to do better than we. You must not blame *us*," she added with tender pathos. "We are like the poor man—who was it, sir?—who found a diamond of priceless value and learned to love its glitter so well that he could not bring himself to part with it, and so died—starved, with a king's ransom hidden in his rags. We wish to do right, but the care of what we have rests so heavily on my husband, and he is so good, that I dislike to trouble him with my fancies."

This woman's heart had not been seared with the molten drops, and the life from which she had sprung had not been effaced. She retired to remove the habit she had

worn just as her husband, already disarrayed, came forward to hear the comments of his guests.

“Pardon me,” he said, addressing himself to me last of all. I am afraid this has seemed to you very crude. The children proposed it, and as it was easy enough to gratify them, I did not refuse. Besides, we did not expect any strangers.”

Barbaric as the spectacle had been, it had shown me a better side of the rich man's nature, and I replied truthfully enough that I did not think the marvelous display would do the children any harm but rather good, as they would learn from the disbursement of the money that wealth was given not merely for their own gratification, but to relieve the needs of others.

The gold was gathered into rouleaux which, after being counted with habitual care, were placed in two canvas bags, and our guest invited his classmate and myself to go down with him in the elevator and inspect the vault in which it was to be stored for the night.

“Here we are,” he said, flinging open an immense iron door, showing a vault as large as an ordinary room, brilliantly lighted by electricity. “Here we are, thirty feet below the level of the sidewalk in probably the most thoroughly protected treasure-vault in the world. Waterproof, fire-proof and—”

“Burglar-proof, I suppose,” said his old friend, as he paused.

“I don't know about that,” was the reply. “I often wish it were not here. You see, the man whose shell I bought was not only a millionaire, but a scientist, and believed in such things. I don't. To tell the truth, I am half afraid it will yet prove our undoing. I fear the idea may get out that immense treasures are concealed here, and men be tempted to secure them by violence. We hardly ever keep anything of any great value here. Of course, our plate, some jewelry and other valuable articles used only on special occasions are stored here; but nothing commensurate with its capacity. It never contains money, stocks or bonds to any considerable amount. The steward comes here when he chooses, and the understeward when he is sent. Both have the combination and the keys except of a few small drawers. Both know there is nothing here worth the risk of a great crime and sure detection. Both think they know all its secrets; but, bless you, they do not know a quarter of them. Do you see that grated column? It connects with the street main, and by turning a handle in my room I can flood this vault in ten minutes. You observe that there is an open space between the outer and the inner door. By touching a knob in my bedroom I can drop another iron door into place, which can be raised only by hydrostatic means.”

“If it would suit you as well,” said the classmate with a shudder, “I believe I would as soon stand outside the door. Something might happen, you know.”

“One minute,” said the host with a laugh, “and we will all go. Here is one thing that is really interesting, and I am inclined to put a good deal of confidence in it. If you will note the bars of this door you will observe that each passes, when it is closed, along the face of an immense soft magnet. When the coil is not attached these turn noiselessly and easily. Two fingers, you perceive, slide them all back and forth. Now by touching a knob inside the vault and turning another outside, a powerful current of electricity is sent through the coils and the bolts are as fast as if welded to the iron loops, so that the door cannot be opened until the circuit is broken, which can be done only by cutting the wires somewhere outside. I myself would have to telegraph to the dynamo station miles away to loose its grip. By another device any one entering the door of this room rings an electric bell both in my room and the nearest station house. I shall put these safety wards on to-night. The servants know that a large amount of coin is in the house and I should not be surprised if the butler or his assistant sought to make use of their privileges to turn an honest penny. In that case I think I will let down the door and perhaps turn on a little water. It may be well enough to let them know what they are fooling with.”

He quickly made the connections and we entered the elevator. His friend stopped at the parlor, while we went on up to the smoking room in a quaint Moorish tower that overlooked the lights of the city. He told me afterward

that he caught his man that night, but made no further explanation. Whether it was the butler or his assistant I do not know.



## CHAPTER XLI.

“Well, here we are,” said Stoningham when our cigars were well alight, “and now I am going to tell you frankly why I have sought your acquaintance and arranged this interview. I think we understand each other, and if we have not the same ideas, we have in part at least the same interests. You represent this curious Order, the Southern Cross. I don’t mind saying to you that it has been a surprise to me. A year ago I should have pronounced it impossible that such a thing should ever have a beginning, let alone making such progress. I begin to understand it now. You want a separate government and mean to have it if you can get it.”

“If we can get it—peaceably,” I corrected.

“I understand—peaceably if you can, forcibly if you must.”

“By no means,” I replied. “Peaceably or not at all. In other words, if we cannot convince the people of the North that they ought to let us go in peace, we will remain.”

“Well,” he said after a moment’s thought, “it’s a queer notion; but I am frank to confess I think you will succeed. That is why I wish to talk with you.”

“You do not mean to say that you are in favor of our success?” I asked with a smile of incredulity.

“Well, yes and no—I am and I am not. As an American—a citizen—I would like to see the country as big as we can make it. I am fond of big things—great enterprises and great nations. If I were an Englishman I should favor the “Jingo” policy. I think Disraeli was a greater man than Gladstone. I believe the best cure for the Irish trouble would be a foreign war—or would have been at the start. Abstractly, therefore, I ought to be opposed to your notion of dismemberment. But there are other things to be considered here at the North, as well as at the South. You want to pry the Union apart because you have got the ‘nigger’ and think you must deal with him in your own way.”

“Well, not that alone,” I began, “there is—”

“Oh, I understand,” he interrupted. “There is a lot of what you lawyers call ‘feigned issues’; but this is the kernel of the matter. In other words, if there were no ‘nigger’ there would be no Southern Cross.”

“Well, no—I suppose not,” I answered frankly.

“Oh, I don’t blame you. I suppose I should feel the same way in that latitude. It’s a little hard to own it. My father was an Abolitionist, you know—one of the original ‘Old Guard,’ and such inherent notions die hard. He almost worshiped the slave; but I haven’t found much to admire in a ‘free nigger,’ as you call them. But did you

ever think, Mr. Owen, that we've got something worse than the 'nigger' to deal with here at the North?"

"You mean the Labor Movement?" I asked.

"I mean this infernal notion that is spreading among the people of the North like rot in sheep, that one man has a right to another man's property. Sometimes they call it Socialism, sometimes Anarchy, and sometimes Labor Reform. It is all the same thing and always—Robbery. It is simply collaring the man who has been successful and making him 'divvy' with the one who has been unsuccessful. That's what we've got to fight; and it's a fight for life. Now, we're on your side simply because your success helps us. See?"

I confessed my inability to do so.

"You don't? Well, there it is. You can see that?"

He took from the wall a map of the United States and threw it on the table before us. A heavy black line was drawn along the Southern border of the Northern States, running down to the Potomac. The District of Columbia was surrounded by a blue line. New York and Atlanta were designated as capitals.

"There," said he, as his finger traced these boundaries. "You want that part. You claim it as yours—Southern territory you call it. From my standpoint, I think you are foolish. I think you had better stand the 'nigger' and share our money. In a little over twenty

years we have paid you in river and harbor improvements and consolation purses of one sort and another several hundred million dollars, just to induce you to forgive us for whipping you back into the Union. Now it seems to me that if I had as good a cow as that I should just hang on to her and keep milking. Why, the country would be perfectly willing to give you ten or twenty million dollars a year just to make your niggers a little more endurable—educate them, you know.”

“But, my dear sir—” I began.

“Oh, I know,” he said continuing his impetuous discourse. “You have thought that all over and made up your minds. You don’t want them educated, except in your own way, and you don’t want the country to interfere with their condition at all. Well, it’s your own job; but to my mind, mighty poor business. If I didn’t think you were past changing, however, I wouldn’t be talking to you now.”

“How so,” I asked.

“Well, you see, all this country is *our’s*—Yankee-land.” He passed his hand across the Northern region as he spoke. “Here Yankee notions abound,—Yankee ideas prevail. We are not as sentimental as you, but we are practical. Our Yankee idea of freedom is ‘Every man for himself;’ and in order that he may be encouraged to do his best, we assure him the possession and enjoyment of all he can get, and expect him to be content with what he can

acquire, and not try to get what another has without earning it or winning it in lawful trade.

“What is the result? Here are forty millions of people, owning twenty billion dollars of capital and paying five hundred millions in taxes annually. The bonds of every one of these States are at par. Several of them are without a dollar of indebtedness. Every child lives within sight of a school-house, the door of which is open to his feet. Less than six in a hundred of the people are unable to read and write. Here are fifty thousand miles of railroad worth six billions of dollars, and coal, iron and petroleum enough to supply the world. More than two billions of dollars are invested in manufactures. Here are a hundred thousand miles of telegraph and half as many more of telephone wire. One-third of the world’s surplus food comes and must come from this region.

“What does all this mean? It means unbounded wealth, and consequently unbounded power. This belt from the Atlantic to the Pacific is the richest and most powerful region on the globe—if only the same common sense that produced these results is applied to their administration. This prosperity is the product of brain and must be controlled by brain. Now, who own the brains? Evidently the men who have the money. Brain power, under our system, is measured with unflinching accuracy by the figures in Bradstreet. A man may have knowledge, scientific attainment, technical skill; but unless he has

money you may be sure he lacks grip—power, brain. We measure men by the value of their signatures on promises to pay, and it is the only true measure of power. Government is nothing but business on a large scale—the most work for the least money. That is all there is of it. Sentiment has no place in it. Our people are pretty much a unit on that idea now, and capital controls our government, just as it ought. We have twenty-three Senators worth over a million dollars each, and several worth from ten to fifty millions. A poor man now and then slips into Congress from these States, but the chances are that he is the mere attorney of some great interest, which he is chosen to protect from public encroachment. This accounts for our prosperity. We make politics a business and not a sentiment.

“This was well enough until the new craze came up. Now the people are going wild over the idea of robbing the rich—directly or indirectly. We have temporized with the thing for years and it has grown worse and worse all the time. It is getting so that the men who do not pay a cent of taxes want to run the government; say how much our railroads shall charge for passengers and freight; fix the price of coal and iron and kerosene; the rate of wages and the hours of work—in short, run every man’s business for him and tax him for any shortage that may result. The time has come when we must stop this thing or be ruined, and we are going to stop it. We are all in the same boat, you

see; every manufacturer, transporter and telegrapher, every holder of bonds and employer of labor. We have got to fight, and whip, too, or be wiped out and let Socialism or Anarchy prevail. So we have made a blind pool to see what can be done about it."

"A what?"

"A blind pool; that is, a group of men—I don't care to say how many—have agreed to stand by what I may determine upon as best thing to do. There are not many of them and yet not a pound of freight, nor a single passenger, nor an express parcel, nor a telegraph message, can get from the West to the East, or from the East to the West, without their leave."

"But the Mississippi?" I ventured.

"Oh, yes—the Mississippi! The father of waters and hobby of fools! It will do for you Southern sentimentalists to prate about and for Northern sentimentalists to squander money on. But let me tell you one thing: you may put a thousand dollars on every mile of its length, and then there is not force enough in any government on earth to drive trade down its current. Time is money now, and nobody can run a line that means months or weeks against one that means hours. I would not take the Mississippi perfectly equipped as a gift, unless I had rice lands in the delta I wanted overflowed, or was sure of a big appropriation from the Government every year for levees. That is all the crooked old ditch is good for. As a traffic

route it is as useless as Noah's ark would be for ocean travel.

“Now this ‘pool’ will do just what I say. They ask no questions—don't want to know what I am doing or how I do it. They merely do what I require. We haven't any politics or sentiment. We don't care who rules or pretends to rule. We are willing any party that chooses should have the administration. In one State we are Democrats, and in another Republicans. All we want is to control the men who are elected, so as to be sure that the solid men in this country—those who have made it what it is—shall govern it. This we are going to do anyhow; but I think you can make it easier for us and we can make your job easier for you. I am willing to admit frankly that we think separation would be a good thing for us. You have only a few things we shall ever want and those you will be glad enough to export. The laws of trade settle all that. Except in form, you would be just as much a part of the country as ever. Now if we had only the West to deal with we could settle all this labor matter in just thirty days. If the people knew just how weak they are in this fight with combined capital they would give it up at once, and then everything would go on peaceably and fairly as heretofore. We only want a fair show—to live and let live.

“Just as long as the South has more than half the power of government—more than half of a majority, you understand, and a majority is the government—we never



know what we can do. You have your own notions, your own grievances and your own inveterate sentimentality. You do not divide along the same lines, reason from the same premises, or recognize the force of the same arguments as we of the North. You are as foreign to us intellectually as we are to Prussia or Italy. Now, you want to go out; we can help you if you will help us. What do you say?"

"What method do you propose?" I asked, cautiously.

"Oh, as peaceable as you wish. Capital rarely wants to fight, except to 'bear' a country's bonds sometimes. We don't care how you go, nor much about the terms. You cannot assume any of the debt, for your own debts are not worth quoting in the market."

"That's because the basis on which they were contracted was destroyed by emancipation," I exclaimed.

"No matter; it's the fact. I think you might take the territory including Texas, we will say, leaving us all North of that and West of Missouri, the debt and the government. How would that do?"

"I should think that would be satisfactory," I said. "Quarrels generally arise over trifles, and I am not in favor of quibbling about details."

"Good! that is the first business-like idea I have heard from your side yet. Now what is to be done?"

"A good deal," I answered incredulously.

"In detail, yes," he replied, beginning to walk back

and forth and knit his brow ; “but not so many things, after all. Let us see, we have to manage the President, the Congress, the army and the navy.”

“You forget the people,” I suggested.

“Bah !” said he contemptuously. “The people ! Let me tell you, Mr. Owen, if it was not for the name of the thing, ‘the people,’ as you call them, would be as glad to have you go as anybody. They are sick of the ‘nigger’, —sick of the South ! It is only when the eagle squawks especially loud that they think of the last twenty years without nausea. Besides that, these Labor fellows dread the ‘nigger’ as bad as you. Not that they are afraid of his color or care about his fragrance; the trouble with them is that he will work for a sixpence if he can’t get a shilling, and can’t be organized for a strike. ‘The people,’ Mr. Owen, can be managed. In fact, it is probable that two crises will coincide.”

“What do you mean ?”

“Well, you know, we are to elect a President pretty soon. The Labor party will have a candidate, of course. I do not know what will be his strength; but the probability is that a great strike will follow unless he is elected, which is not likely to be the result. That’s what we are looking for. Now, if the people of the South are out of the way, we can manage them, and if such a thing happens they will be very glad to get rid of you, too.”

“I do not see how it is to be accomplished,” I said doubtfully.

He opened the door and peered out upon the landing before answering. Returning he sat down near me and said in a clear whisper :

“See here ! We are to elect a President. Suppose the people do *not* elect ?”

“Then the House of Representatives elects ?”

“By States ; yes.”

I started. The idea had never occurred to me before. He drew a paper from his pocket and pointed to a row of figures.

“Now that this Labor party is in the field, I can make it sure that *the people* will not elect. Then, as to the Senate and House, if you can manage the Southern members I can manage enough Northern ones to prevent a quorum in either branch. What will be the result ?”

I confessed that I did not know.

“Well, *I do*. I have not only taken good legal advice upon the matter, but have looked it up myself. There will be no President—and nobody authorized to act in his place. The law provides for everything else—death, disability, removal of both President and Vice-President, but *not* for a failure to elect either.”

“And then ?” I asked, almost breathless with surprise at the possibility before us.

“Then ?” he echoed in astonishment. “Why then

the Government will have no legal head, and if you Southerners cannot effect your purpose you have sadly degenerated since your fathers' days. Then the Union is dissolved, isn't it? No Executive, no government—that is the legal status. Who is to hinder you from making a new government to suit yourselves, while we patch up the old one to suit ourselves? In whose name will any one interfere, and by what authority? It seems to me to be exactly the opportunity you want. How does it strike you?"

## CHAPTER XLII.

“How does it strike you?” These words were in my ears as I returned to my hotel—the old-fashioned downtown resort for Southern men at which I always staid. How did it strike me? The plan struck me dumb—by its novelty, its simplicity, its audacity. Its feasibility was as apparent then as now. All that remained was the question of power to secure the results indicated. I had no doubt that the Southern Cross could make good its part of the bargain. From the knowledge Mr. Stoningham had given me I did not question his ability to perform whatever he undertook. And if this were accomplished—if the government were once deprived of a legitimate and recognized executive head—what might not happen afterwards? The Order of the Southern Cross was pledged to peace—peace at any price and under all circumstances. So large an organization of earnest non-combatants had never been heard of before. This was not because of any inclination to the doctrine of non-resistance on the part of our people, but to a singular and abiding faith among all classes that by this method we could more certainly, readily and easily succeed.

It was an admitted fact that only a thoroughly united

and compacted North could overcome the South in open conflict. It was doubted even whether this could be done again with the inducements that could be offered to the colored people to espouse the cause of the South. It was well-known that the tradition of Yankee kindness and consideration for the African had grown very weak among them. They had seen themselves abandoned in their hour of need. Their prayer for protection in their rights had been unheeded. Laws were passed indeed, but their administration was entrusted to the very men who had violated these rights. When they asked for bread they were given a stone! When they cried for knowledge they were referred to the will and pleasure of their old masters, who, nurtured under the conditions of Slavery, were doubly disinclined to educate out of the poverty that remained to them those whom they thought to have been wrongly freed. However, they did something—much more than could have been expected—while the National Government did nothing.

As a result the race was learning very fast that the whites of the South were their real friends and the people of the North hardly less than their real enemies. If worst came to worst, we had no doubt that the race might be so thoroughly attached to our cause by judicious management that three-fourths of them would be in our favor, and once fully committed in our behalf we knew that no more faithful and devoted allies could be found. There was something absolutely heroic in the pathetic

steadfastness with which they had continued to believe in the sincerity of the North in the face of desertion, betrayal and contemptuous disregard, not only of promises written in blood and ratified by thousands of lives lost in the service of the boastful republic, but also of the rights, privileges and immunities the Nation had professed to confer upon them.

Not only had we of the South this opinion, but throughout the North there was a feeling not only that alliance with the negro was discreditable, but also that it was unprofitable, and profit and loss is the keystone of the Northern man's conscience. The Republicans not only felt a sort of sullen hostility to the negroes on account of the failure to maintain their supremacy at the South, but were beginning to allege that but for the discredit brought upon the party through them, it would never have lost its supremacy at the North. Indeed, its leaders were by no means oblivious to the apparent fact that if the South were really separated from the Union, they would have an overwhelming majority of what remained.

From all these considerations I was satisfied that if the plan indicated could be carried out—the country left without a recognized official head and at the same time torn by conflicting faction,—no attempt would be made to coerce the South against its will to accept the bonds it had so persistently and heroically endeavored to cast off. Already I could see our object attained, the South free,

united and prosperous beyond all previous conception! And for this plan so easy, so simple and so sure, we were indebted to another—a contemptuous enemy who threw it to us as a tub to the whale, in order to make sure of the success of a grand speculative venture! To him the aspiration of the South was a mere incident.

“We are willing you should control your ‘niggers,’” he had said. How hateful that common Southern term always seems in a Northern man’s mouth! It is like hearing a man in ministerial garb profane the name of God, and I suppose springs from the same feeling. The North profess to regard the negro as an equal, and “nigger” in the mouth of a Northern man sounds coarse, vulgar and self-degrading. The Southern man professes no such regard for his “Brother in Black,” or even in black and tan; and the term in his mouth becomes only a careless expression of good-natured contempt. I felt this and wondered at it when the term dropped from the lips of Mr. Stoningham.

Yet the plan was his, not mine. I had been groping for years after what he had found in a moment. I felt ashamed. It is true, he had approached the subject from another direction and was as helpless without our assistance as we without his; but I regretted that for once the South must follow rather than lead. Yet there was no doubt that in this way lay our hope of success. His words were like lightning flashes illuminating the darkness



in which I had groped so long in vain. It was clearly my duty now to coöperate with this strange ally and take advantage of the discovery he had made and the scheme he had devised.

After the luminous exposition he had given this did not seem a difficult task. There was no doubt that an election by the people could be prevented if the Republican candidate could be defeated. To render this certain our new ally proposed that a "deal" should be made with the combined Labor and Prohibition elements to return Labor Electors in New York and New Jersey. This seemed feasible and in fact was easily arranged, as afterward appeared. In order both to induce the Labor party to carry out this bargain in good faith and more certainly to prevent the possibility of a popular election, they were promised also certain electoral votes from the South. As a result of these negotiations the difference between the electoral votes which the three candidates received was much less than any one not informed of the facts could have anticipated.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

This conversation quite blotted from my mind for the time being the strange spectacle I had witnessed at the mansion of the millionaire. I confess that this impression it produced upon me was not at all such as the description of this unique affair in the morning papers of the next day would have induced one to expect. It was neither brilliant nor imposing. Mere masses of minted gold are not particularly attractive except to the miser's eye. It was coarse, garish, barbaric,—that was all. I would have said monstrous, but the word has too harsh a meaning. There was nothing horrid about it, except the contemplation it provoked of the causes of which it was a consequence.

I was given one of the coins and have kept it as a memento of that strange scene. It is still fastened by a silver link to the iron cross which is the symbol of our Order. They represent two contrasted civilizations, the one founded on sentiment and the other based on greed. They term us "sentimentalists," because we esteem the man above his possessions, they call themselves "practical" because a man's acquisitions are an accurate measure of the rank he holds in that society. The pinnacle of all their "practical" aspirations is the apex of a mighty pyramid of

golden dollars. One man sits alone upon its summit. He it is whom they all envy. He is not a king, but he controls all beneath him—not by right but by power. A score or two stand just below him. Some thousands a little further down. Some millions have climbed up a little way and other millions, outnumbering them all, stand shivering around the base, waiting for some little rill, some golden avalanch, to throw down those above and scatter some of the worshiped pelf within their reach. Their hope may not be vain. The man at the top may lose his head, or be undermined by those below, and through the gap his downfall makes one at the very bottom may climb to the very top. So the struggle goes on and they boastfully call it a civilization based on practical common sense and true liberty!

To the ears of such a people I do not wonder that the story of such a lavish display should prove irresistibly attractive. The power to scatter coin, to make display of wealth which is also to make a display of power,—this is the “practical” ideal, a government, a civilization, a society based on business principles. The story was repeated in the sabbath-schools, the fact being dwelt upon with especial unction that the surplus which had contributed to an hour’s amusement was thus withdrawn from the channels of trade and consecrated to the relief of the poor. It was a golden text of charity, the logical conclusion from which was that every one should strive to be as rich as this

man who held half a continent by the throat and compelled it to yield him millions in tribute while he scattered a few thousands among the poor whom his rapacity impoverished.

To me the picture was terrible. I saw a man with a noble nature and transcendent powers, debased, belittled and cut off from all real sympathy with his fellows by his load of useless wealth. I saw a fond mother and devoted wife, with the instincts derived from a Puritan ancestry, greedy of good fruits from her children's lives and anxious that men should love and honor her husband rather than envy his wealth—I saw such a woman drawn by the chains of her love to take part in a garish display of golden gains. Her love and her ambition were satisfied. Husband and children were all she could desire from a domestic point of view,—but her hope? Ah me! that was forever blasted. The world would never know the wealth of manhood hidden in her husband's heart. To others he was but a Stylites on a pillar of gold. He would never reach their hearts, gain their love or secure their devotion. Before the morning came his steward sought to rob him. His past had been given to gain and his future must be given to guarding his superfluity. Poor woman! I realized more clearly than ever the terrible weight that had rested on my Edith's life and thanked God that for a little time at least she found sanctuary in that sweet Southern land where insatiate greed and envy of another's possessions are almost unknown.

I esteemed this man, it is true, more highly after this than I had ever done before; but my dread of the class and tendency he represented was increased almost to positive terror. It is the most dangerous foe of Northern civilization and is all the more terrible because its representatives sincerely believe that they have a right to get all they can through impersonal agencies, and hold the same for their individual behoof without blame.

This man was no doubt the soul of honor when acting for himself and in his own name. I do not doubt that as a man he is not only just but equitable in his dealings with his fellows. As the head of the Rock Oil Trust, he would coolly execute a plan that would beggar a thousand or ten thousand at a stroke, and draw his share of the dividends without a remorseful twinge!

Into the hands of such men the power of our sister republic is fast drifting, if they have not already secured full control of it. The conflict there is not, as so many shortsighted theorists have averred, between the capitalist and the mere laborer, but between the over-gorged capitalist and the great host of enterprising self-employers, whose hope is at the best to secure a modest competency. This class is rapidly disappearing and the alternative which the future presents is in most cases that of servitude or supremacy. The percentage of those who work for wages at the North is daily increasing, while at the South it is constantly diminishing. The proportion of independent self-em-

ployers at the North is decreasing with amazing rapidity; while with us it is as rapidly increasing. The tendency there is towards feudalism based, not on courage or descent, but on accumulated wealth. With us the tendency is as yet towards simple competency. The reign of exclusive privilege based on Slavery has disappeared. Competition is fast breaking up the old manorial estates, and opportunity has not yet been great enough to establish the rule of the millionaire. We have a few. God grant that the number may never increase! Pauperism and undue accumulation go hand in hand. A people that raises millionaires by the hundred will always have paupers by the hundred thousand. We have very few of either; may their ratio never increase!

## CHAPTER XLIV.

There was the usual clamor and excitement—accusation, defence and mutual malediction—attending the Presidential election of 1888. There were speeches and parades, fireworks, banners and unprecedented display. Importers and traffickers shouted for free trade; manufacturers, for tariff; workmen for shorter hours and more pay, and all for liberty and prosperity. Primaries were bought; conventions packed; parties organized; bets and predictions made. The North, as usual, had a host of parties and factions, each with its candidates. There were Republicans and Democrats; Labor Reformers and Prohibitionists; Woman's Rights, and—I know not how many more aspirants for favor and patronage. In the South there were Democratic and Independent electoral candidates only. How many of those who saw, or even were a part of this strange hurly-burly dreamed of the forces that lay beneath?

The Democrats were confident and the Republicans sanguine. The result surprised and confounded both. When the votes were counted at the close of the conflict it was found that no President or Vice-President had been elected! The House of Representatives would have to

choose a President and the Senate a Vice-President! It was a result inexplicable upon any theory of party relations known to the managers on either side. The Republicans attributed their defeat to an unprecedented growth of the Labor movement in New York and New Jersey. The Democratic leaders, knowing of the deal in those States, assigned as the cause of their defeat an entirely unexpected development of the Labor sentiment in Kentucky and Texas. Neither charged the result to either of the forces actually responsible for it—the Monopolists' "Pool" and the Order of the Southern Cross.

In the contest before the House, neither party was without hope. The members had been elected two years before and both the House and the Senate were so evenly divided—the one by States and the other in Members—that almost any result was deemed possible except the one that actually occurred. Indeed, it was thought quite probable that a President of one party and a Vice-President from the other might be the outcome. That neither would be chosen was never dreamed of as a possibility. By some curious fatality this was *the only contingency for which the Federal statutes failed to provide*. If neither President or Vice-President was chosen before the Fourth of March, there would be no one authorized to exercise authority or even to order an election! The line of succession would be broken without any established method of supplying the defect.



The election of the chief executive officers by the Legislative branch of the Federal Government was a function which had been so seldom exercised that its forms and limitations were matters of tradition rather than knowledge. Not a man was living who had taken part in such a proceeding. The wisest knew only what the dullest might learn in an hour. The House of Representatives voting as States, was required to elect a President, a majority of the members present from each State controlling its vote. If they were equally divided, the State cast no vote. In other words, the Representatives from each State constituted an independent electoral college. It resulted from these curious conditions that a little more than one-fourth the Members of the House could elect a President, provided they were a majority in each of the smaller States, while two-thirds might be unable to do so if they happened to represent only the larger States. It required a majority of all the members present from each of twenty States to elect. If any State was unrepresented it still counted in the aggregate. A majority of members in each one of a majority of all the States was required to choose a President. In the Senate the process was simpler. Each Senator was entitled to one vote and a majority of the whole number of Senators was all that was required to elect a Vice-President.

These were the elements out of which the authorities of the Southern Cross and the "pool" of combined Monopolists had to organize success—in other words, to secure by

lawful and peaceful means an absolute failure to elect either of the two highest executive officers of the nation. The problem seems intricate; but, as will be seen, the means by which it was solved were of the simplest character. Its apparent difficulty has given rise to the wildest and most absurd speculation in regard to the methods employed in accomplishing this result. So far as they are known to me I shall relate them truly, both for the sake of my associates and for the instruction of the future.

## CHAPTER .XLV.

The idea is prevalent among the people of our sister republic that the then President of the United States and certain members of his cabinet were privy to our designs and lent themselves to their accomplishment for their own personal advantage. This rumor has brought upon these gentlemen undeserved odium. They were, of course, all aware of the existence of the Order of the Southern Cross, and the Southern members of the cabinet were entitled to wear its badge. Owing to the peculiar constitution of the Order, however, this did not imply any knowledge of its designs.

The President himself, like all the people of the North, no doubt looked upon our Order as a mere piece of Southern sentimentality,—a safety-valve, perhaps, for impulses which if unwisely restrained might prove dangerous. Certain it is, that until the memorable third day of March, when the absence of the Southern Representatives made an election of President impossible, there was hardly a suspicion on the part of those uninformed of our designs, of any purpose to execute a *coup d'état*. The President was indeed aware of the treaty made with the representatives of the Labor party, by which the Democratic vote in New York was given to men pledged to cast the electoral vote of that State

for the Labor candidates ; in return for which the Labor vote in Indiana, Connecticut and New Jersey was to be given to the Democratic electors. He supposed this arrangement, or "deal," as it would be termed in the political vernacular of the North, was intended simply to prevent the possibility of Republican success and make his own election a certainty, as it would no doubt have done, had not Texas and Kentucky chosen the Electors of the Labor party. The votes of our Order in the States named were given for the Labor party under the express advice and direction of the Grand Master, with the assent of the Supreme Council. This was done simply because it was judged expedient for our purpose that the President should not be re-elected, and ought of itself to be a sufficient answer to the charge of privity with our designs.

These things were a great surprise to the people of the whole country, the President included. Even when he saw the that result was to throw the election into the House of Representatives he did not perceive our purpose. In sixteen States the majority of Representatives was Democratic ; two were evenly divided ; in two others the gain of one man in each would result in a tie ; while enough Representatives from two more were absent, to neutralize the vote of the State. The President, who had a curious belief in his own good fortune, did not doubt that the ultimate result of this state of affairs would be the choice of himself as his own successor.

There were three candidates who had received electoral votes ; and from these it was not doubted by any except the few who were privy to our plans, that a selection would be made during the twenty-one days intervening between the second Wednesday of February, when the Joint Convention was held to count the electoral votes, and the Fourth of March, when the new Presidential term would begin. It was generally supposed, also, that in case of a failure to elect either a President or a Vice-President, the Secretary of State would perform the duties of the office until another election could be held, though as afterward appeared, this was a matter of mere impression rather than of logical conclusion. This fact served to hold the Democrats firm, and the President believed that, rather than see the office fall to the Secretary by a questionable construction, enough Republicans would come to him to secure his election.

In this belief, so far as I am aware, he never wavered until the morning of the third of March arrived and the houses of Congress met to find the Senate without a quorum of members, and the House without a quorum of States. This condition of affairs continued throughout the day. No effort sufficed to discover the hiding place of the recusant members. At midnight the Secretary of State took the oath of office as President before a Judge of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, the Chief Justice of the United States declining to perform the ceremony lest

the act should disqualify him from sitting in judgment upon the legality of the succession. At twelve o'clock on the Fourth of March the recent Secretary issued his inaugural address, setting forth the circumstances attending his assumption of the functions of the Chief Magistrate *pro tempore*, and calling the Congress to meet in extra session at an early day. This state of affairs produced considerable uneasiness throughout the North. The Secretary evidently did not feel secure in his seat and the nation he bestrode naturally felt restive under his assumed guidance.

Until the appearance of this proclamation the ex-President did not seem to realize that his official life was ended. Indeed it appeared almost impossible, even then, for him to comprehend the completeness of his downfall. From being the head of a great nation he had suddenly fallen below even his original insignificance. The fact that the nation was passing through a crisis which must be perilous and might be fatal, hardly seemed to affect his consciousness. Once satisfied that he had nothing more to hope for in connection with the presidential office, he seemed to think only of getting himself and his belongings away from the seat of his transitory greatness.

To his successor's offer of a reasonable time to remove his effects from the White House, he vouchsafed only a most ungracious response. Despite the self-absorption which blinded him to all thought of his country's danger, there was a sullen independence about his unexpected

leave-taking which commanded a sort of respect. It is safe to say that in no measure connected with his administration did he manifest so much vigor or more genuine executive ability as in his hasty preparations for removal.

His faithful private secretary had taken the precaution the day before to draw the last quarter of his patron's salary and deposit it in bank. Summoned by the irate ex-Magistrate to give an account of his stewardship of the privy purse, he was able at a moment's notice to state the amount on hand and the outstanding obligations. In short, sullen sentences he was directed to liquidate these and make instant preparation for the removal of certain personal effects and the sale of others. This done, the tireless agent, only half realizing his master's downfall, took the train for New York. As the sun went down, the recent master of the White House followed a dray-load of trunks to the railway station. His personal staff had disappeared, dismissed almost without thanks. The servants of the White House witnessed his departure with ill-concealed anxiety respecting their own future.

As he drove through the streets of the capital his attention was concentrated upon the van on which his baggage was piled. He seemed as unconscious of the fact that the significant portion of his life had closed as he had been of its beginning. As the carriage rolled unattended down the avenue, he seemed as impassive as when, four years before, he sat in the Senate Chamber waiting for the cere-

monies of his inauguration to begin. Never a personal favorite with the people, but few of those who recognized him and comprehended what was taking place, followed the carriage with kindly looks or sorrowful farewell. Many sneered, some hissed, and a few gave vent to taunts which must have reached his ears; but he gave no sign of having heard. At the train a little crowd collected for a last curious glance. He attended himself to the checking of his trunks, but waved no farewell and showed no consciousness that his exit from the stage where he had played a curious and by no means unimportant part was a matter of any moment to others. The next morning, I am told, he left the faithful secretary, to whom he owed whatever of success he had enjoyed, standing hat in hand upon the wind-swept wharf, hardly nodding to him a careless adieu as he sailed with his family and personal belongings for a foreign shore. Since that time he has enjoyed in placid ease and undisturbed obscurity the baths of Homburg, that favorite resort of dethroned royalty, whose waters seem to have an especial attraction for victims of political disaster.

His departure,—it was in no sense a flight,—was perhaps unfortunate for his renown. For that, however, he cared little. He enjoyed preferment simply because it added to his personal consequence. He delighted to be President merely because it gave him an individual importance that no one else could enjoy at the same time. He



liked the Chief Magistracy without any thought of doing honor to the position or making his incumbency notable by great events. His idea of government was a purely personal one. He thought of everything connected with it as *his*. He spoke of *his* office, *his* cabinet, *his* administration, and even designated the Executive mansion as "the President's House."

Taking him all in all, he was perhaps the most singular combination of attributes that was ever elevated to the headship of any government. Personally, he had so few friends that they might almost be counted on the fingers; and even for these he had no perceptible attachment after they ceased to be contributory to his personal comfort and aggrandizement. Politically, he seems to have been the result of a series of accidents to which he bore neither intellectually nor morally any causative relation. To the very last his political views were so ill-defined as to be a matter of conjecture even to his adherents, except on one subject on which he seems to have been driven merely by the hope of securing his own re-election, to express an opinion so unmistakable as to be afterwards a source of unmitigated regret. If induced by any to make a positive declaration the first breath of public clamor drove him at once to denial or explanation. This was true of every public expression which he used except that animosity for the Federal soldier. In this he never wavered. To *seem* positive and to *be* indefinite was his idea of political sa-

gacity. He seemed to regard the courteous acknowledgement of favor as somehow an impeachment of his own super-excellence. To him who flattered his personal vanity he gave freely ; for him who asked on the score of personal merit he had only sullen refusal. He loved himself so well that he hated every one who intimated that he had ever received or ever might require assistance.

He is not, however, in any sense deserving of the anathemas which the people of the North have visited upon him since the close of his term. The simple fact is that he did not regard the failure to re-elect him as a lawful end of his official career. To him it is a dethronement, —a forced abdication. He deems himself to have been unjustly deprived of a personal right, and left the country he could no longer rule simply to show the indignation which he felt.

It is a curious infatuation, but I am all the more satisfied that it is real, because I personally know that the generally received hypothesis in regard to his motives is false. The truth is that he laid claim to but one essential merit—honesty. Even this was not of a particularly exalted character. The boast of his adherents—he had not many real admirers—was that he would do what he thought to be right unless overpersuaded, misled or in some manner deflected from the path of duty by external influence. From first to last, this was the excuse assigned for all his acts which resulted unfavorably to the public interest or

failed to satisfy his party's expectation. This sort of honesty, which seems to be of the commonest and cheapest type, both he and his supporters vaunted with the utmost persistency, and it was accepted by many of his political opponents as indicative of exceptional qualities; so that the country presented the curious spectacle of men assailing the acts of the administration and at the same time excusing and defending its responsible head with the utmost fervor. The people of the North are extravagantly fond of subtle distinctions.

Perhaps nothing could better show the very low ebb which public morality had reached at the North, than the fact that even such common rectitude as this was applauded as exceptional, until the object of adulation undoubtedly thought himself a man of phenomenal if not unprecedented integrity. There can be no question that he came at length to regard himself as the most notably honest, if not the only entirely honest man who had served the nation as its chief executive since the days of the immortal Washington. Laboring as he did under this curious delusion, it is absurd to think that he directly enriched himself at the public expense to the value of a single farthing. Certainly he was neither bribed nor trusted by the Grand Council of the Southern Cross—not that we would have hesitated to resort to bribery, had it been necessary; since it is as fair to buy an enemy as to overpower him, especially one so unscrupulous in the use of mercenary influences as ours—but there was no

need to do so, since his coöperation was not required and his opposition not feared.

That such a man should have become the chief magistrate of a great nation, is in itself a most amazing fact. It could never have occurred had not the Northern people possessed the most singular characteristics. Instead of being proud of their great men they seem to grow jealous of notable achievement. They are always on the lookout, too, for the exceptional and marvelous. A people of the liveliest imagination, they clothed silence with the golden garb of wisdom and filled vacancy with amazing possibility. Inertness was accounted merely the absence of dangerous ambition ; lack of aspiration the confidence of conscious greatness ; uncertainty and obscurity the cloud in which wisdom hid grand designs. Strange as it may seem, Mr. Cleveland had risen from the most obscure estate to the very highest without having been known to express an opinion upon any public question. His adherents pointed to this fact as evidence of remarkable sagacity, and not only the people but Mr. Cleveland himself accepted this curious conclusion. The fact that he had not been great, or wise or brave, was regarded as conclusive evidence that he would be.

Perhaps the most singular of all the phases of his anomalous career, was the fact that it is even yet unknown on which side his sympathies were during the great War for Separation. He was then a young man and would naturally be expected to have positive convictions

one way or the other. So far as disclosed by the most heated personal canvass ever witnessed, however, no one ever knew him to express, either orally or in writing, any opinion as to the merits of the controversy during the entire four years of conflict between the Confederate States and the Union. His adherents attributed this to sagacious reticence; his opponents to cowardice and stolidity. Both were in error. He simply had no thought that the result would ever affect his personal interests and so did not trouble himself to form an opinion or have any preference in the matter. Except to furnish a substitute when "conscripted,"\* he is not known to have had any relation whatever to the war waged against the Confederacy. This naturally made him acceptable to the South, though no man of such colorless neutrality could have been chosen to any position of honor within her limits.

It was no doubt to this peculiarity that the most distinctive feature of Mr. Cleveland's administration was due. He seemed to entertain a personal animosity against those who had been soldiers of the Federal army, especially the

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\*I am aware that the use of this word is cited by Mr. Matthew Arnold, as evidence of a lack of culture on the part of Gen. Grant. As, however, it appears in the manuscript of Grand Master Owen, has been used by the entire press and people of the South since the passage of the first conscription act, early in 1862, and was sanctioned by the official usage of the Confederate government, its officers and generals without exception, I am satisfied to err with them and allow it to remain.

volunteers who returned after its close to civil life. It is probable that he considered their patriotic devotion an express imputation upon his own lack of interest in the great struggle. The one fixed principle of his political conduct seemed to be a conviction that the people of the North had had enough of soldiers and were tired of patriotism. He seemed to think that the surest way to public favor lay in treating those who had saved the country from disruption as vagabonds, who, having no longer any public enemy to plunder, had turned upon the nation. As if to emphasize the fact of personal antipathy to this particular class, he approved a service pension to the survivors of the Mexican war, two thirds of whom were residents of the South, while preventing even the decrepid and impoverished veterans who resisted the demands of the Confederacy, from receiving like favor.

In this estimate of Northern sentiment he was not entirely at fault. Many of the most prominent of his political opponents applauded his course in this respect. Indeed the one man among them all who never hesitated to proclaim himself the type of perfect purity and his peculiar notions the *ultima thule* of wisdom—the head and front of a singular company of self-worshipping apostles of mechanical merit—did not hesitate to proclaim him almost, if not quite the grandest character that Nation had ever produced. It is true, this man believed that all merit was assessable at a fixed valuation and that patriotism might

be accurately gauged upon a graded scale of excellence. He was the leader of those who in order to accomplish one good purpose, were willing to debase the sentiment of a whole people—who sought to make the dollar mark not only the symbol of value but the sole measure of merit—who would root out of the popular mind the sentiment of gratitude and honor, degrade the soldier to the level of the pauper and subordinate every national impulse to a mere economical test. It is not so strange that this man should have worshiped the President. There was a sort of affinity between them and he was incapable of seeing any fault in one who extolled the idea of which he thought himself the originator and which he devoutly believed was destined to secure an ideally perfect government, from which human impulse should be eradicated and under which human sentiment subordinated to intellectual merit scientifically ascertained and marked with unerring accuracy by an infallible system. The really curious thing was that such a man as the last President of the great Republic should be accepted as the type of the best Northern thought and that a people who had been ready to turn and rend any one who proposed the least reduction of the capitalist's demands, should look with such contemptuous scorn upon a soldiery whose claim to consideration was blood, shed in successful defence of the national life, rather than a debased currency thriftily exchanged for a promise wrung by terror from the nation's lips. It is but another evidence that the true hero,

according to the Northern standard, is the successful speculator rather than the self-forgetful patriot. The Federal soldier fought for half the price of a farm laborer and took his pay in depreciated money ; the Northern capitalist paid for his bond in a debased currency and demanded pay in gold. Yet the former was regarded as an ungrateful pauper and the latter as the type of the worthy patriot.

It was no doubt a subtle appreciation of this fact that induced the President to indulge his own personal pique by such bitter and repeated denunciation of the survivors as "willing dupes of reckless demagogues," that if the Republican party had been wise enough to oppose to him a candidate whose record was of a less questionable character for courage and devotion than his own, it might perhaps have been impossible to have prevented their success. A mere economic issue is a poor reliance for any party. Sentiment cannot at once be frozen out of a people's nature and if the Republicans had dared trust to the impulses which first gave them power—the universal instinct of justice and equality—it is doubtful if any influence could have prevailed against them. In nothing was the Divine favor more distinctly manifested to our cause than in the singular blindness which hid from them their great opportunity. So complete, however, is the moral debasement of the people of the North that her political leaders devoutly believe that success in any par-



ticular conflict is but a question of dollars and cents. Skill in organization, chicanery and money are the arguments in which they place confidence, and this is the only logic in which their leaders excel.

For myself, I must say I pitied the ex-President far more for what he was than for what he lost. If the time ever comes when the people of the Southern Republic prefer such negative merit to positive excellence in a chief magistrate, I trust that his administration may be as fatal to our new nationality as was his to the Federal Union. Such a preference indicates a decadence of public spirit and patriotic ardor far more fatal to a country's glory than revolution, war or subjugation. It is no doubt to this lesion of patriotic impulse at the North that we of the South are indebted for the success of our attempt to secure autonomy.

The influences that controlled this singular man were of a very peculiar character. Not only did he entertain the belief that he really determined the policy of his administration, but he managed to produce upon the general public and even upon many prominent men of his own party the impression that he was a man of great firmness and exceptional devotion to the welfare of the country. This resulted mainly from his oft-repeated protestations of absolute purity of purpose and invincible determination to do the right in spite of the malign and hostile influences by which he persisted in declaring that he

was constantly surrounded. His errors were always laboriously excused, either as the unauthorized acts of subordinates the results of accident or a want of knowledge of particular facts. With the legislative branch of the government he was constantly at war, and he did not hesitate to impeach the intelligence and sincerity of all who failed to recognize his pre-eminence. He rarely opened his mouth or touched his pen except to protest his own purity, excuse his shortcomings or impugn the motives of others. Whoever opposed his views or failed to laud his conduct he counted a personal enemy. Compared with the course pursued by his own party towards his predecessors, he was treated with distinguished consideration by his opponents in Congress, yet he never failed to manifest the utmost malignity and resentment towards his opponents in the legislative branch of the government. His veto messages outnumbered those written by all of his predecessors. In this fact he took especial pride, supposing it would be regarded as infallible proof not only of his superiority but also of the corrupt and venal character of his opponents.

In point of fact, no man was ever more easily controlled. Of his Cabinet he made the most prominent member, a man who had committed the serious offence of being an aspirant for the place which he had himself secured, the scapegoat of his most serious errors. There were two forces which dominated almost without exertion the whole tenor of his administration—the great Petroleum Monopoly, represented

by one whose entire political significance was due to his intimate relations with more than one of its managers, and the South, represented by one of the most remarkable men of any age—one of the few men who, without incurring personal peril, had become distinguished as a Confederate leader, and afterwards had made himself indispensable to the nominal head of his party in the re-established republic. The former influenced his chief by assuming that the President would sanction whatever he did. He neither asked nor argued. If a matter required the formal sanction of his superior, he merely prepared the papers and informed the President that his signature was necessary. He did not trouble the great man with details or theories, nor ask any instructions, but took the management of his Department off the shoulders of the President as a matter of favor and relief to that supposedly overworked official. The latter was a man who despised the emblems of authority but loved the exercise of power. He was the real head of the government. He swayed the man who thought himself his master by subtle and unfailing knowledge of his character. Everything he did or intimated was in the President's name. He *suggested* decisions, excuses, and protests. Between him and the representative of the great Monopoly there was never any difference. He smiled at the other's arrogant assumption, knowing well that he, too, was but the servant of a master whose power he did not comprehend. It was a notable fact that the President never at-

tributed any of the errors for which he was responsible to either of these men. Few suspected the power of the most potent, and it may be doubted if the President himself knew by whose will his acts were really guided.

Of course, the presence of these men in the Cabinet was of great assistance to us, but we made no dishonorable use of our advantage. By this means we were able to forestall the action of the government, but except in minor matters, such as the disposition of the army and navy at the crisis of our *coup*, such action was never intended to promote our cause. Even in those instances it was not so intended by the President and I doubt if more than one of his advisers realized the possible effect of the course they adopted.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

Though we owed the suggestion of our first step towards peaceful separation to the head of the Combined Monopolists, we are indebted for the plan by which the advantage thus secured was made effective, to that remarkable man who had been the real brain and conscience of the self-expatriated President. It was worthy of his ability and audacity, yet in its elements so simple that it seemed strange it should not have occurred to any one, especially after the hint received from Mr. Stoningham. It was carried into effect by inducing the Southern members of the incoming Congress to refrain from qualifying and the Southern Senators to absent themselves from the deliberations of that body. This so changed the political complexion of the two assemblages that it became necessary for some of the Northern Democratic members to do likewise and by this means prevent a quorum lest the Republicans should secure control of both Houses. As the recalcitrant members had never qualified they could not be brought in by the mandate of the House, nor could the minority proceed to notify the Governors of the various States that vacancies existed in the several districts thereof. In fact, there were no vacancies—only the men elected and certified did not see fit to qualify and act. This was a state of things

which no existing legislation was adequate to meet and of course no remedy could then be provided without a quorum in each house. No one had ever dreamed of this weak spot in the Federal armor unless it were the masterly intellect which first made its impress in the judicial annals of the country by the magnificent array of authorities and unanswerable logic of "*Ex Parte Garland*."

Before the consternation resulting from a knowledge that the national government was in a state of suspended animation, without recognized executive head or any legally constituted legislative department had died away at the North, it was renewed—perhaps I ought to say redoubled—by the resignation of the Southern members of the Cabinet upon the ground that the government had lapsed by reason of the failure to elect a successor to the President and the lack of any person legally authorized to exercise his duties *ad interim*. They felt compelled, they said, to protest against the usurpation by the late Secretary of State, of the functions of the Chief Executive, lest their further silence should be construed to imply concurrence therein. They also held that a contemporaneous failure of Executive and Legislative authority acted as an effectual dissolution of the Federal Union, its powers lapsing *eo instanti* to the several constituent republics from which they were originally derived. This being the case, as individual citizens of sovereign States, once more clothed with autonomy by the failure of the

Federal pact, and not having been authorized by their respective States to do anything tending to preserve even the form of a National Government, they felt bound to withdraw all connection with or constructive recognition of a spurious and usurpative organization. This document was addressed "To the People of the States of"—naming first the original thirteen States of the old Union and then the others in the order of their admission—but not referring in any manner to the "United States," as a political integer.

Upon the appearance of this document, the people of the North took alarm and offers of military and other support came pouring in upon the self-constituted President *pro tempore*, who had acted in the utmost good faith and no doubt desired both to perpetuate the Union and promote the welfare of all the States. He was not only weak and vain but, what was far more prejudicial to his purposes, vacillating in the extreme. He had little confidence in others and less in himself. Besides that, he had long doubted the possibility of perpetuating the Federal Union for any considerable period, believing a constitutional monarchy modelled on that of Great Britain, to be not only essential to national stability but also preferable as a political organization. These sentiments he intimated in an address to "The People of the United States," which he promulgated as a counterblast to that of the withdrawing officials. This doctrine which was emphatically concurred in by the *de facto* head of the Navy, raised a storm of angry

denunciation at the North and destroyed the last vestige of respect for these pseudo representatives of national authority.

The Governors of several of the Northern States at once assembled at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and organized themselves into a voluntary Council of Public Safety, alleging an intent on the part of the South to renew the attempt at forcible disruption of the Union. This was answered by the prompt assembling of the governors of all the Southern States at Richmond, Virginia. They indignantly denied the aspersions cast upon the patriotism and loyalty of the people of the South, and, while affirming their own concurrence in the views expressed by the members of the Cabinet who had recently withdrawn, they declared their determination to suppress by the most vigorous means any attempt on the part of any organized body to prevent the reorganization of the Federal Union. They even went so far as to say that if any number of the States of the North should seek by concurrent action to exercise the powers that lately inhered in the Federal Union, they might be assured that the people of the South would quietly, if not cheerfully, submit thereto, though they were confident that no true son of the South would ever hold office or exercise any political function under or by virtue of such authority. This proclamation was addressed to the people of the various States—naming them—and was followed at once by the resignation of



every Federal officer at the South, saving and excepting some few Judges of the Federal courts—an insignificant remainder of the days of “carpet-baggers” and “scallawags.” These resignations were all on the same form, addressed to the people of the several states, and duplicates were forwarded to the respective Departments at Washington, as well as to the Governors of states in which the officials resided. The mails were still carried throughout the South, but no reports were made to any so-called Federal official. The Federal courts were not held in these States because they were without ministerial officers. The world moved on, but the wheels of the Federal machinery had stopped throughout the South and moved but sluggishly and uncertainly at the North.

Whether the doctrine enunciated by the shrewd and capable ex-minister was correct in theory or not, may be hard to determine. Why the doctrine of a *de facto* executive should not apply as well to a Secretary of State improperly usurping the functions of the Executive, as to a President unlawfully holding over, I have never been able to determine. I am inclined to think that the whole doctrine depends in the main upon the capacity of the *de facto* Executive to rule and govern. At all events, there was soon manifested on every hand an inclination to concur in the idea that the collective sovereignty had lapsed by non-user, and that the union was thereby resolved into its original elements. The minorities of the two houses

of Congress continued to meet from day to day but did nothing ; indeed they could do nothing. For a time there were signs of bitterness on the part of the press and people of the North. This gradually subsided before the pacific, non-resistant policy of the South. Conventions of the people were called in all the States. In the Northern States "to consider the state of the Union;" in the Southern States "to consider matters of the highest importance to the people of the State."

No sooner had these various bodies met than it became apparent that the revolution was practically accomplished. The States of the North recognized the impossibility of compelling an unwilling people numbering more than twenty millions to coöperate in a government they had openly renounced but resolutely declined to oppose. They knew, too, that it would be impossible to govern them by force of arms. The shameful experience of the "Reconstruction" period came up before them with mocking vividness. There were some, indeed, who clamored about "Liberty and Union, one and inseparable," but they were ridiculed as sentimental enthusiasts. What the people of the North desired, it was soon learned, was some practical measure by which the confusion and expense of war might be avoided, the payment of the public debt be secured and they be permitted to resume and continue undisturbed their gainful avocations. There were a few hot-headed fanatics whose sectional hate even the lapse of time could not appease,

who still shrieked for freedom and raved about the rights of the negro. Taken as a whole, however, the people of the North were well typified by Burnside's soldiers in the crater before Petersburg, who shot down the negro comrades who fled for shelter to the yawning chasm where they lay hid rather than face the consequences of being captured in their company.

This has, indeed, been the tenor of the whole political relation of the North to the negro. They were desirous enough to use him, to stop bullets or cast ballots; and were willing to recompense him with anything which cost neither money nor manhood. When it became necessary to expend either care or cash in his behalf, however, they became at once blind to his need and deaf to his entreaty. The sneer of one Southern white man outweighed with them the welfare and the woe of a thousand negroes. The South has much to regret and much to amend in her dealings with the colored man. The problem of the co-existence of the races has always been one of difficulty, even of danger; but she has no such record of hypoerisy, betrayal and cowardly desertion as the people of the North have been accustomed to regard with boastful complaisance. To this record they now added what from their standpoint must be regarded as a crowning infamy. They abandoned the negro to those whom they had steadily averred for three-quarters of a century were his implacable enemies.

The Northern State conventions were practically

as unanimous as those of the South. They recommended an Advisory Committee of two from each State to meet a like delegation from each of the Southern States, to devise, if possible, a basis of future organic union. The Southern conventions responded by designating a like number of delegates, to meet them and "arrange, if possible, for peaceful separation and harmonious confederation." Of course, much more was said and done during this interval of uncertainty. Many things occurred which to the public mind seemed of more importance than those which I have noted. If I were writing a romantic narrative I should dwell on other and more exciting phases of the great struggle waged by peaceful methods under the unspotted banner of the Order of the Southern Cross!

## CHAPTER XLVII.

The great strike which was expected in the summer of 1888 did not take place. To the surprise of all, the railroads and telegraph lines voluntarily increased the pay and reduced the hours of nearly all their employés. They also acceded to the request which the associated laborers had hardly dared to insist on, that every employé charged with misconduct should be entitled to have the facts judicially determined by arbitrators before being discharged. This unexpected favor transformed hundreds of thousands of men in their employ from discontented slaves into loyal henchmen.

This with other things so stimulated the political hopes of the leaders of the labor movement that they judged it wiser to avoid any conflict. The season, itself, following two years of drouth, was one of almost unprecedented fertility. The country had never been so prosperous, had never seemed so peaceful and had never appeared more likely to continue undisturbed for an indefinite time.

In the midst of this profusion and apparent peace, the astounding increase of the vote of the Labor party fell like a bomb among those who were predicting an indefinite continuance of existing conditions. It was evident that neither concession nor prosperity had served to mitigate its

demands. While it had only succeeded in choosing its Electors in a few States, in almost all the others it had displayed an unexpected strength, not only securing a very respectable minority in the Legislatures of all the Northern States, but had so demoralized its competitors as to be able to dictate legislation. Many who had been chosen as representatives of the old parties, indeed, went wholly over to the new organization. Flushed with this unexpected success they renewed the warfare on capital and many very stringent laws were proposed, and in some instances enacted, in restriction of what were deemed the immutable rights of capital.

This conflict served to divert the attention of the North from the gravity of the National crisis arising from the non-election of President and Vice-President. Indeed, the people of the North had so thoroughly convinced themselves by constant iteration that there could never again arise any serious question of a sectional character, especially with the South, that I doubt if any revelation of our design would have been credited by them. To find the Federal government acephalous as to its executive branch and absolutely without legislative existence, surprised and astounded them but awakened very little resentment. The unanimity with which our people refused to take any part in re-establishing the wrecked nationality annoyed and discouraged them but did not awaken any general feeling of anger. They were too absorbed in their own affairs

to pay much attention to the whimsicalities of a people whose motives they could not understand.

The Commission appointed by the Conventions of the various Northern and Southern States to arrange a basis of re-union—or if that should be impossible, to agree upon terms of separation—met, as every one knows, at Louisville, Kentucky, on the Fourth of July. I had the honor of being chosen as its President by a unanimous vote, and I have reason to believe that at the conclusion of its labors not a single member would have changed the ballot he cast in my favor. The confidence thus reposed in me is the proudest recollection of my public life. That my own countrymen should trust me after what had been accomplished would hardly be accounted a matter of surprise; but that strangers knowing well my sentiments should without solicitation offer me the post of honor, may well be counted a matter of excusable self-gratulation.

The work of the Commission was from the first peculiarly harmonious. It contained men of all shades of opinion but its members were of the highest character and many of them of world-wide reputation. For patriotism, learning and ability it was probably unsurpassed by any body of men ever assembled on the continent. It consisted of two men from each State, and it really seemed as if every State had endeavored to select its wisest and best for this last common council of the States which had for a century composed one nation. Some came to beg for union, others

to protest against restraint. But almost from the first, it was apparent that persuasion would be vain and protest unnecessary.

In the discussion of the subject of union or separation, I noticed a curious fact. The North and the South seemed to have changed places. The representatives of a "practical" civilization and "a government based on business principles" had only sentimental considerations to offer for the continuance of the Union; while the representatives of the "sentimental" South dealt wholly in practical arguments, in the little they had to say upon the subject.

Our Northern brethren were the chief speech-makers. They seemed to admit that separation was a foregone conclusion if the South persisted in its demands. The historical appeal of Mr. Evarts in behalf of the traditional Union was especially affecting to the older members of the Commission, going back as it did to colonial times, with which he seemed much more conversant than with recent affairs. Mr. George William Curtis made a brilliant and erudite argument upon the benefits which might be expected to result from the English Civil Service which he had recently been instrumental in borrowing for American use. Many of our Southern delegates were much interested in his finely rounded periods and graceful delivery. The doctrine did not seem to have been calculated for this meridian, however, and so produced little impression. Mr. Kelley, of Pennsylvania, delivered a long speech in a *basso pro-*



*fundo* worthy of the gravity of the subject, upon the beneficent results of "Protection for American labor." The eloquent Senator from Indiana appealed to the patriotic impulses of the South and portrayed the especial need which the new Northwest created, for the restraining influences of Southern conservatism to prevent the Northern people from drifting into anarchy. Other touching and eloquent appeals were made by the Northern members, begging the South to remain in the Union for the sake of their various constituencies.

All these speeches were answered by the brief remarks of the most practical and sagacious of the Southern delegates. He said he had listened with interest to all that had been said and was willing to admit both the premises and conclusions of every argument that had been made. He could understand the need and advantage of the old Union or its equivalent—to *the North*. What he wanted to hear, if anybody had such a thing to offer, was an argument showing what advantage such a Union would or could be—to *the South*. The only thing of this sort attempted was to show that the North paid a larger share of the expenses of the Federal Government, which was triumphantly refuted by demonstrating that it had also consumed a greater proportion of the revenue and derived far greater benefits and advantages from its existence. After this it became apparent to all that our only task was to arrange terms of separation as equitable and satisfactory

as possible to both sections and all interests. The result of our action is well known. Its wisdom time alone can avouch.

During the session of this body, I was frequently struck with the contrast between the motives professed by different individuals and the forces which I knew to be at work compelling them to the conclusions on which they acted. While there was a suppressed anxiety to get rid of the South apparent in the readiness with which the Northern members abandoned their opposition after the most eloquent protests, there was not the most remote allusion to the advantages which either wing of Northern thought expected to gain by neutralizing an uncertain factor in national affairs.

When our labors were nearly completed, the plan which had been agreed upon, and the address which was to accompany it having been referred to the committee for final revision, I was surprised one evening\* by a request from Mr. Stoningham that I would accompany him that night in his private car to Indianapolis, returning in time for the morning session. He requested me not to mention the matter to any one, but merely meet him at the station which he would see that I reached again in ample time for the next day's duties.

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\*The the word "evening" is here used in the usual Southern sense, meaning afternoon.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

It was on this occasion that I was first informed of that master-stroke by which combined capital established its absolute control of the Northern republic—a control which is the basis of a new Feudalism whose power it will require generations if not centuries to break. I found Mr. Stoningham standing on the steps of one of those miracles of luxury, the private car of a railroad magnate—a mansion on wheels in which one might at that time travel fifty thousand miles without crossing a national boundary and almost without passing twice over the same mile of road. He nodded to an employé as he grasped my hand. The signal was given and the train which had just backed into the station steamed out again, and before we had reached the other side of the river, we were busily engaged in disposing of an abundant dinner which was waiting to be served.

We were the sole occupants of the car, except a stenographer and electrician who occupied a forward compartment containing a complete telegraphic outfit. Every now and then as we passed a station the clerk would come in with a bundle of dispatches to which my host would dictate answers almost without interrupting our conversation. Twice we ran upon a side-track for a train to pass, and

while we waited the wires were tapped and his messages sent without leaving the car.

“Well,” said Mr. Stoningham, after the dinner was over and we were alone with our cigars, “how goes the Commission?”

I told him briefly the state of affairs.

“Good!” said he, sharply. “You think they will not be ready to adjourn for three or four days?”

“Three, I should say at least,” I answered.

“You could make it four I suppose?”

“Probably, if there is any special need.”

“Exactly. Well, I can soon show you that it is a necessity. During the few months that the Government has been dragging along without a head and minus a tail, things have been developing pretty rapidly and we—the capitalists I mean—have made up our minds that we might as well have the whole matter over with at once. Have you any idea what I am out this way for?”

“Not in the least, unless you take an interest in what we are doing.”

“Not a particle, as I told you once before, except as it bears on our business relations and conditions here at the North. I think you can help us and we can help you, and both get what we want. That is the reason we are pulling together. I think we can make sure of the acceptance of the report your Commission will make by all the Northern States, and you can help us to settle our affairs in our

own way if you will only let me manage the matter on this side the line according to my own notions."

"But why do you wish the adjournment delayed?"

"Simply in order to let the members understand what is before them."

"You do not intend any violence?"

"Nothing more than making them walk home!" he answered with a laugh.

"I do not understand you."

"Probably not, and yet we have given fair warning. We had a man in Congress—one of the most prominent members, too, cheek by jowl with a man who came near being President—who blurted the whole thing out four or five years ago. I don't know how he came to get hold of it. Of course it has been talked of on the sly for a good while, but everybody knew he could't keep his mouth shut, so I wonder he was ever allowed to hear of it.

"It is just this. You know the war that has been made on capital by the political kleptomaniacs of the North for the last few years. Railroads, telegraphs, telephones, and in fact all corporate and combined capital has been the object of the bitterest attack. They insist that while laborers have a right to organize and strike, capitalists have no right to combine for their own advantage. Of course this is simply absurd. If Labor has a right to organize—and we do not deny it—so has Capital. 'What is sauce for the goose is

sauce for the gander,' you see. That is fair—always was fair and always must be fair. If it is lawful for me to carry on any business, it is equally lawful for me to associate others with me and form a partnership; or still others and form a corporation; or to combine everybody in the business and form a "Trust," giving each one his share. Of course it squeezes out the small fry, but it makes things cheaper and prevents trouble with employés and the like. When all businesses—or all that are susceptible of it—are managed in this way there will be no more strikes. Can't be, you see. Every man will know he has got to keep the place he has or be out of a job. There won't be any need of black-listing them, either, for all will be employed by the same concern and nobody can blame a man for not employing a man he has once turned off.

"Well, these Western and Northwestern States have gone wild over the matter, especially since the election. They 'want the earth' and swear they are going to have it too. So they have been legislating in every way to destroy business. We thought of getting up a panic last year, with some hope of securing for President a man we could manage and who had sense enough to do our work. That was before I saw you. Cleveland would have done well enough, but he could think of nothing but himself and had a faculty for putting his foot in things that we could not trust. The deal we made with you worked well enough, only it inflated the Labor-thieves at the North and demoralized

everybody else. They have done nothing but legislate against "Trusts" and corporations and capitalists ever since.

"We have stood it just as long as we can and have finally determined to precipitate a crisis and have it over along with your affair. We increased our Protective Pool several months ago to five. I am still the head of it, but I needed help. I am not familiar enough with the details of railroading, telegraphing, etc., to attend to all these things myself. Oil and natural gas I know all about. So a son of the great telegraph king, and a representative of the railroad, coal and iron interests as well as a representative of all combined interests, was put on to assist me. We "forked up the rhino,"—enough to insure success—and put it in the bank of England, where it will be safe and nobody can touch it,—and began to get ready.

"What did we do? Well, we gave every business that was of any importance the wink—that is, we said nothing but advised that certain things be done. It don't take much to give a business man a hint. As a result all our banks have the bulk of their specie stored abroad; supplies of all kinds are well distributed and there are no great stocks of anything in transit. We have looked out for these matters carefully, for we do not want to occasion any suffering or loss that can be avoided. Now everything is ready and in three days we shall strike the first blow.

"What are we going to do? I'll tell you in a word.

We are going to stop every car-wheel, silence every telegraph instrument, wreck every gas-plant and disable every pipe-line in the North."

"What!" I exclaimed in amazement. You do not mean to paralyze every business in the country?"

"That is just what we mean to do. At midnight three days hence every train west of the Mississippi will stop running, every sounder stop acting and every electric and gas-light stop shining. The next day the same will happen in the territory west of Pittsburg and north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi. On the third the ocean cables will be cut and the whistles give their last toot from Pittsburg to the eastern point of Maine. Communication will be kept open with the South a day or two longer. Then you will also be cut off, but not disabled unless it becomes necessary."

"But it is terrible!" I exclaimed. "Do you realize that almost the life of two-thirds of the people depends on these very agencies?"

"Realize it?" he said with a laugh. "You bet we do. We know what these things cost, you know. What we want is to have other people realize it. Suffer? Of course they'll suffer. Why shouldn't they? We are only acting in self-defence. They are trying to rob us and we want them to know what they are doing; that is all. These are our cars, our tracks, our wires, our pipe-lines and our plants, aren't they? We built them, bought them, made them, didn't we? If we choose to take up every rail, burn every crosstie,



wreck every car, cut every wire, smash every still and plug every well, whose business is it? The State might take back the right of way, and of course we can't destroy the grading. But it would require years of loss and labor and bankrupt every State just to replace what we have a right to take away

“The fact is, we have made this country. Our enterprise and our money have given it prosperity. Take out only the things I have mentioned and the value of the country would be reduced fifty per cent, at least. What would a farm along this line be worth without the railroad? What would all the farms in the West be worth without railroads? What is the good of raising corn if you have to burn it? What would cattle and hogs be worth with only a home market? Take away the railroads for ninety days and two-thirds of the business men and even farmers would be bankrupt. Let them see it—let them feel it once and, my word for it, they will learn a little sense. The fact is it is too late for them to kick. We have got them by the wrist and mean to hold on. Capital is intangible and immortal. They may kill me and all those with me—not a great many at best—but our power will remain, our rights, our privileges, our possessions. The day of heroics and sentimentalism is gone by. The sword and the pen are well enough for certain stages of progress, but this is the epoch of hard cash. The power is in the hands of those who have the money and there it will remain.

“We have not only made the country but we pretty

nearly own it. I do not mean the land—that is the paper title to it. We don't want that; but its products, its results, we hold.

“Practically there are but two classes of men—those who employ and those who serve. Both have their rights. The one has the right to have his money's worth of work and the other to fair wages. The farmer or other producer must pay for getting his wares to market. The law of supply and demand is the only law that governs or can govern these relations. The capitalist has a right to hire whom he pleases to do his work, at the lowest price the service is obtainable; the laborer has a right to sell his labor for the highest price he can get, and, if the farmer thinks the railroad charges extortionate, he can take his wheat to market on an ox-cart in the good old way, if he wants to. This is my idea of political economy—simple, fair, free. That is all we ask.”

“But,” said I recovering a little from my amazement, “are you not afraid of provoking a popular uprising that will destroy the properties you thus abandon?”

“Of course,” he answered with a shrug, “we take some risks, and must necessarily suffer loss. That is always the way in business. If we win, we shall soon make up the loss. That is the beauty of our position. If we fail—but we shall not. This is no matter of a moment. I tell you we are prepared. Would you like to know how we have guarded ourselves? I don't mind telling you some

of the things. We have been slackening up freight and traffic for a month and gathering our rolling stock at a few central points. Here it will be guarded, preserved by our employés,—every engine being first disabled by the removal of a vital part which will be in every case destroyed. In like manner the machinery in our shops will be destroyed so that we ourselves could not put the roads in operation again without considerable expense and some months of delay. We are going to make thorough work, you see.”

“But your employés, do you think they will stand by you?”

“Not a doubt of it. We have made sure of the conductors and engineers, through their associations. They know we are going to stand by them and they will stand by us. Our trainmen, agents, operators and the like, have been fixed in the same way. Everyone has received a month’s pay in advance with the promise of the party employing, indorsed by me, of full pay during any stoppage of business that may result, if they remain faithful to our interests. They know me, you see, and no man, friend or foe, ever doubted my word. They know they will get their pay and hold their places if they stand by us, and they will do it.

“At every important point we shall leave a man in charge with power and means. He will defend the property entrusted to his care at all hazards. The trainmen

and other dependents will assist. They have arms in abundance—Winchesters and Gatlings. If likely to be overpowered they will burn everything and leave the robbers only ashes as a reward for their acts of plunder. This is practically an army of half a million of mercenaries who will fight for us because their daily bread depends on our success. Behind them is the army of bankers and brokers and speculators of all sorts; warehousemen and jobbers; lawyers and politicians—all, in fact, whose livelihood or chance of profit depends on the maintenance of existing methods and conditions. It's a big job, but we've taken the contract and are going to see it through. And we shall win too! Mark my words: the revolution is already effected. Power has passed from the hands of the many into the hands of the few. Henceforth it will not be sentiment that will rule this country but sense—not votes but dollars. We are going to do our work so thoroughly that it will not need to be done over again for a century at least."

The train was speeding on through the darkness. I raised the curtain and looked out. The lights in the villages and farmhouses twinkled as we went by. I wondered what the people in them would think and feel and do, when the crash came and they found themselves cut off from that daily intercourse with the world which civilization has brought to all.

The stenographer entered and I heard my companion

dictating messages as quietly as if he were not preparing, even then, to initiate the most astounding revolution the world has ever known. The wheels rolled smoothly over the steel rails. The throb of the engine pulsed along the train. The white telegraph poles flew by like silent specters while their wires quivered and sighed as if the messages they bore were freighted with the woe of human sadness.

I turned and looked at my companion. There was not a trace of discomposure about him. More than ever the simplicity, boldness and directness of his character impressed me.

“Well,” said he with a smile, “do you think you can keep the Commission from adjourning?”

“I think,” was my reply, “that the independence of the South would be secured by such a course and will see that it remains in session four days longer.”

“Good,” said he extending his hand. “I thought you would see the point. Now if you will excuse me I will say good night. I must catch a little sleep before I get to Indianapolis. You will find a car waiting to take you back to Louisville, at the next station. Make yourself comfortable.”

He drew a curtain that hung before a recess, threw himself upon a couch and in a moment was asleep. I stepped across the car, looked out and saw Tycho Brahe’s star blazing and flashing above the Western horizon. I wondered if its appearance presaged the down-fall of another empire.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

More than a year before negotiations had been begun by the Mormons of Utah for the sale of their lands in that territory, to the Government of the United States, on condition that the whole body of the Saints should migrate somewhere beyond the limits of the Republic. This proposition exactly suited the mercantile instincts of the Northern people. For forty years the Mormons had been a fruitful source of discord and expense. The process of "stamping out" which had been so boastfully declared and so frequently attempted had simply resulted in the firmer establishment of the Church of the Latter Day Saints and its altogether remarkable increase. It numbered at this time a quarter of a million of souls, organized with singular thoroughness, owning practically all of Utah that was of any value, and making steadfast encroachments on the neighboring territories.

It was regarded as a matter of undeniably good policy that the government should take back all the unimproved lands purchased from it, at the original price, and allow for improvements according to the appraisal of commissioners. This included about nine-tenths of the arable land of the territory, which it was thought would furnish an excellent opportunity for testing the agrarian schemes of

some of the socialistic reformers, by leasing the lands thus acquired to actual occupants, thereby illustrating the practicality and beneficence of State ownership of the soil.

To this experiment there was practically no opposition. All parties were glad to get rid of the Mormons, and the costly task of eradicating a development inconsistent with civilization but which apparently could not be eliminated without a rigor which was abhorrent to all Northern methods of dealing with evil and at an expense which the Northern economist regarded with horror. To buy was one thing; to expend money in repressing evil or protecting right was quite another. The North had terribly begrudged the thousands that had been expended in governing Mormonism, but were enough glad to contribute the millions required to buy it, the simple fact being that they have an instinct for traffic but no fitness whatever for government except that of the shop-keeping variety.

In an incredibly short time the details were arranged. The United States was as desirous for its early consummation as the Mormons themselves, the administration being anxious to utilize in the Presidential campaign, the fact of the removal and the final settlement of the Mormon question.

The Republic of Mexico had long been apprehensive of aggression on the part of the United States, especially along her western border. To prevent this the government granted to the authorities of the Mormon church

the right to occupy and control the two western provinces as a quasi-independent nationality, on condition that they should satisfy the just demands of such private landowners as might wish to remove, pay the same rate of taxation as the rest of the Republic and defend the frontier from invasion. This plan had been secretly on foot ever since the death of the prophet, Brigham Young, and the Mormons had already secured by optional purchase a large part part of the land in these provinces.

Early in the fall of 1888, the migration to the new Land of Promise began. It was a curious thing to happen in our western world but one which many had long anticipated. The uprooting of a quarter of a million people and the transfer of their flocks and herds to a new habitat excited much comment and apprehension. Scarcely had the march begun when hostilities broke out. The passage of such a cavalcade through a pastoral region where cattle and sheep were the chief possession of the people, was of itself almost as bad as the curse of locusts. The government had guaranteed them safe conduct and the little "skeleton" army of the United States was nearly all employed in securing it. Despite all that could be done, however, the three Mormon columns soon became predatory hordes. Many Indians joined with them and the people of all the mountain region were thrown into a fever of excitement and apprehension by their progress through the intervening States and territories.



At the beginning of the year 1889 the Mormons had reached their new domain and the erection of a new Temple had been begun. No sooner had they taken possession of the region thus acquired, however, than the filibustering spirit which had been smouldering along the Mexican border for some years, fanned by the excitement resulting from the depredations of the resentful sectaries along their line of march, burst into a flame. By the utmost exertion, through the loyal efforts of the Knights of the Southern Cross, it was prevented from showing itself to any great extent along the Texan frontier. In New Mexico and California, however, the border soon assumed the character of a camp, and an army of invasion was mustered in an incredibly short time, composed of the wildest and most desperate spirits of all the western and northwestern region.

Among the wealthiest men in the Mexican Republic was a certain Hermoso de Orilla, whose mines were accounted the richest in the State of Chihuahua, if not, indeed, in all Mexico. He was a foreigner and reputed to be an American by birth though he had shown himself especially hostile to everything like American aggression, and it was chiefly through his influence that the concessions granted to American capitalists had been hampered with conditions removing them entirely from the domain of international arbitrament. The Mexicans were not slow to repel the threatened invasion, and the army which they stationed along the border with its well-armed and re-

vengeful Mormon auxiliaries, constituted a force by no means despicable. For forty years Mexico had been burning to avenge the ravishment from her control of the untold wealth of California, New Mexico and Nevada. This act of unblushing international robbery her people had never forgiven, and every year's total of the output of their mines and the product of their industries only added to the Mexican's hate and his desire for reprisal. De Orilla was known to be a man of prudence and sagacity as well as wealth, passionately devoted to Mexican interests and was understood to have displayed in his earlier days military talents of an unusual order. In consideration of these things he was offered the chief command upon the border as soon as it became apparent that hostilities were inevitable. This he declined, but accepted an appointment as a commissioner to conduct negotiations with the view of avoiding a conflict of arms.

Before his arrival, however, a collision had occurred, resulting in the defeat of the Americans, who were driven back across the border with considerable loss. This engagement had two important consequences. It took General Sheridan at once to the seat of war, thereby relieving us from apprehension arising from his impetuous temper and known hostility to any movement looking toward the partition of the Federal territory. Though he had once profanely declared a preference for hell rather than Texas as a place of residence, the General of the Army had mani-

fested no inclination to release the national hold on Texas, and it was with great satisfaction that we learned that the President had ordered Grant's favorite lieutenant to take personal command of the forces on the Mexican border. This defeat of the filibustering force transformed the United States forces into an army of invaders, supported by the enraged and defeated irregulars. It also greatly enhanced the confidence of the Mexican army with its virulent Mormon contingent thirsting for spoils and revenge. The general in command of the Mexican army of observation was a soldier of no mean repute, who not only shared the feelings of his men but was anxious to achieve fame by becoming the re-conqueror of the lost provinces. Sheridan, with that contempt of the "greaser" which prevails at the West and is no doubt largely due to the easy victories our army won over the Mexicans under Santa Anna, hastily collected and mounted his forces for a cavalry raid into Mexico along the line of the Mexican Central, having El Paso as a base; the line of the Rio Grande on one flank while the other was protected by the Sierra Madre range. It was a brilliant design but in the existing state of affairs liable to a counter-movement more complete than any known since Borodino.

The idea of leading a host of rough-riders through an enemy's country once more had an irresistible charm for the "hero of the Shenandoah," as the boastful conqueror of Early's weak and war-worn battalions loved to hear

himself designated. Understanding the impetuous character of his opponent, the Mexican general devised a plan even bolder than his which promised not only the certain destruction of the enemy but the conquest, or at least temporary subjugation and pillage, of the richest portion of the Pacific slope. While Sheridan was planning a sudden concentration of his forces and a vigorous dash along the line of the railroad into the heart of Mexico, leaving a small force to guard the line of the Rio Colorado and the Southern Pacific and its branches, relying on the vessels of the navy already stationed at San Diego to protect the coast line, the Mexican general was preparing a guerrilla force to destroy the road in advance of the invader and another to hang upon his rear and intercept his retreat; while he had already transferred his own troops through the passes of the Cordillaras and dispatched small companies of Mormons to cut the wires and burn the bridges on the Southern Pacific.

These influenced religious partisans, speaking the same language, thoroughly familiar not only with the passes of the mountains but with the habits of the roving bands by which the country was infested, found little difficulty in executing these orders. On the very day that Sheridan concluded his concentration at El Paso, he found himself shut off from communication with San Francisco. This he had probably expected. At least it did not trouble him, as he supposed the Northern route to the Pacific would remain

open so that the Western slope could be easily secured by the transfer of troops from the Eastern Departments if there should be any necessity for such action. He reported the fact to his government himself, sitting beside the operator in the station house at the Junction from which all government messages were sent. At the same time he announced that all his preparations had been completed and that he would unless otherwise ordered, cut loose from his base and enter the enemy's country at daybreak. It was then nearly midnight at Washington. The impetuous soldier thought of this as he looked at his watch to note the time of his despatch and recalled how often during the War for Separation the wires had been open at that hour between his own headquarters and those of his great commander for a moment's consultation. He remembered these things with a touch of sadness. The man at the head of the government, if it could be said to have a head, was not a soldier and knew nothing of the value of minutes. The grizzled cavalier wondered if he would not better have served his country by assuming the reins of power and preventing the scheme for dismemberment which he no doubt believed to be on foot. A soldier's duty is to obey, however.

After some delay this message was received in reply to the one he had sent:

“The President *pro tempore* counsels the utmost moderation

and advises that you proceed with the greatest caution. The condition of affairs at the West and South is such that—”

Here the message ended abruptly. The operator announced himself cut off—and while the impatient cavalier paced up and down, uttering anathemas more forceful than elegant, began to detach parts of his instruments.

“What are you doing?” asked the general.

“Obeying orders, sir. I am directed to side-track all trains coming from either direction and disable the telegraph instruments.”

“What for?”

“Ask me something easy, General,” was the answer, with a shrug. “It’s orders; that’s all I know.”

“Don’t you do it!”

“Very well; you are in command,” said the operator, with a gesture of assent. He turned a thumbscrew on the now silent instrument, rose and stood before the officer.

“Shall I side-track the train, sir?”

He took up his signal light and glanced at the clock as he spoke. A train would be due in a few minutes.

“Well, yes,” said the general, “I suppose you had better.”

The operator went to his desk; closed it mechanically, putting something in his pocket as he did so. The General thought it a revolver and smiled at what he deemed the man’s needless precaution. It was in fact a pair

of wire-nippers, "snips" as they are called in the trade. He went out of the room and walked along the platform to the corner of the building where the wires shunted down from the poles on either side. Reaching behind a loose board, he severed the wires just where they entered the office. The General might represent the country, but *he* was in the employ of the Railroad and Telegraph Companies and bound to obey his employers' orders.

So Sheridan with his army was cut off midway between the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific; the silent wires and disabled tracks stretching away eastward and westward and an exultant enemy in his front. Meanwhile at the East the "blind pool" and the Order of the Southern Cross held undisturbed control of the situation. Before he could even learn the situation of affairs, much less interfere to prevent, the crisis was over.

Two days before the Mormon auxiliaries of the Mexican army had been transformed into a host of frenzied fanatics by the reappearance of Tycho Brahe's star—the star of Bethlehem as they believed—which flashed upon their astounded eyes at midday. Priests and elders construed the flaming star to be a presage of victory as well as the precursor of a new Messiah. A child born that day to a wife of one of the Twelve Apostles, was declared to be the divinely designated successor of the Prophet and was adopted for nurture and maintenance by the Mormon people as their future ruler. All were wild with

desire to engage in the pillage of the fertile plains and rich cities of California. Yet still the Mexican general hesitated. He did not dare to move until assured that Sheridan had actually crossed the border, and thus committed the government of the United States to war.

While Sheridan waited in the telegraph office, perplexed and angry, a courier came from the picket line which ran along his front and handed him a scrap of paper.

“What!” exclaimed the General in surprise. “Fairbanks! Bring him to my quarters at once.”

That night Hermoso de Orilla and the American commander concluded an armistice which guaranteed the inviolability of the border for sixty days, pending the adjustment of all questions at issue between the governments of the United States and Mexico by a mixed commission to be appointed one by each of the belligerents, and an umpire to be named by the Emperor of Germany.

“You had better stay with us, General, and let me send this over by a flag of truce,” said the American officer to the white bearded man who stood in front of his quarters a little after sunrise the next morning. “Those fellows are treacherous and may treat you roughly, despite all you have done for them.”

“It is possible,” said the other gravely, “but it is my duty. Blood is thicker than water and I could not fight against the old flag; but Mexico is my country and I owe her allegiance and service. I feel that I



have done my duty in concluding this armistice, and with your coöperation have saved both countries from needless slaughter. I go now to see that the convention is duly observed by my adopted countrymen."

The two men clasped hands gravely and earnestly. Hermoso de Orilla galloped away down the sandy valley already shimmering with the heat of the summer day. The American commander shook his head regretfully as he disappeared.

Twenty-four hours afterwards the rising sun shone on the face of a man who stood with his back against the mud wall of a hacienda, his arms pinioned behind him. Before him were twelve men with rifles. Back of them was a battalion of infantry forming three sides of a hollow square. Behind these surged an angry multitude. The officer in command of the squad spoke three words; there was a puff of white smoke in the morning sunlight and Ambrose Fairbanks fell on his face.—shot as a traitor! Yet the Mexican general observed the armistice he had concluded, though visiting his vengeance on him for having defeated his ambitious designs. It was not until all was over that I learned from my mother's lips that this man, who by the sacrifice of his own life saved thousands of his real and adopted countrymen, was the unknown benefactor of our cause.

## CHAPTER L.

Everything occurred just as Stoningham told me it was arranged. On the third day after our interview the morning papers announced that telegraphic communication to all points west of the Mississippi had ceased at midnight and that for a considerable distance eastward the wires were working feebly. The companies were doing all in their power, it was said, to ascertain the cause of the sudden interruption. An electrical storm of unprecedented extent; some great internal convulsion of the earth; the possibility of collision with some heavenly body,—all these were canvassed as possible causes by excited crowds who cast many glances at the sky, where Tycho Brahe's star flashed red and green, even at mid-day, whenever the sun was obscured by clouds. All westward trains were stopped at the crossings of the Mississippi. The eastward bound trains were filled with frightened passengers. They had come through a desert of silence. As far west as the mountains at least, it was known that the telegraphic circuit was broken and the wires were dead. All trains were stopped except those which came through that day. The terrified passengers thought some great convulsion had taken place in the mountains. It was said that a volcano had burst out near Salt Lake. They

brought also rumors of serious disaster upon the Mexican border. All day and all the night following the trains kept rushing eastward as if fleeing from an unknown terror; but none went westward.

The wires still worked feebly. As Tycho Brahe's star dropped below the horizon all those leading to the northward and eastward of the city where the Commission sat, became suddenly dead. This fact became almost instantly known all over the city and the streets were soon filled with pallid crowds. The line running to the southward still worked, and by morning it was learned from a New York dispatch, received by way of Atlanta and Nashville, that the area of isolation included all the region west of Pennsylvania and north of the Ohio river. The river was now the only avenue of escape from the city. The Commission met early the next morning, hastily concluded its work and in solemn silence adjourned *sine die*. The members sadly bade each other farewell, their subdued tones belieing the words of hope they forced themselves to utter. Every face was clouded with anxiety for loved ones of whom they could hear no word, from whom they seemed separated by infinite space now that the possibility of instant communication with them had suddenly failed.

Each one sougth with frantic eagerness to get even a day's journey nearer to his home before the expected end of all things. No trains ran out of the city that

day, except to and fro across the river to the city on the other shore. The iron track was deemed unsafe when the electric sentinel was asleep. Even the operators and railroad officials, who must have had a suspicion of the cause of all this, seemed moody and apprehensive. Though I had been forewarned, I found myself affected with a nameless terror—and an irresistible inclination to fly homeward as if to escape some dreadful disaster.

The churches were crowded; the voice of prayer was heard from every house; kneeling figures were a frequent sight upon sidewalks. Money had lost its power. Men bought and sold only the necessaries of life. Many gave even these away freely. None served and none commanded. Society was dissolved with terror, yet there was no crime. Fear had disarmed even lust and rapacity. I fled with my associates, and was indeed hardly less terrified than they. During that day, it was learned that the ocean cables had ceased working. It was as if the earth had been cut in twain. The next morning all communication had been cut off north of Richmond. Even to the southward the wires worked weakly and uncertainly.

All remember the weeks that followed, so full of terror and apprehension! Where the wires still worked they were used almost exclusively to convey farewells. When by-and-by the truth came to be known, anger succeeded dread. Threats were freely uttered against those who had so wantonly trifled with the fears of a continent. There was talk of indicting

them for the murder of some hundreds who had died from fright. But wiser counsels prevailed. The lesson was too terrible to be soon unlearned. The people were too glad to regain the privileges they had so long enjoyed to hold to severe accountability those who had taught them even by so sharp a lesson how inestimably precious they had become. The Capitalists were invited to resume the functions they had acquired under guarantees that rendered their privileges even more secure. The feudalism of wealth thus secured still more absolute control of the Northern Republic by the marvellous audacity of the head of the "blind pool."

The prayer of the South was granted by the States of the North almost without opposition and the government of the United States, reduced by more than a third in extent and population, was re-organized with such guarantees as it pleased the capitalists to offer, which the people found themselves compelled to accept. Just where the right lies between the two forces there arrayed against each other I do not know, but I fear the end has not yet come.

## CHAPTER LI.

Doubly widowed, my mother sits by my bedside waiting for the end. I think, as I look at her still fair face and mourning weeds, how, like my grandmother, she will dwell alone here at Ryalmont and watch the world's happenings, but without hope or fear for the fate of her son.

The hurt of which I die is but a repetition of that which marked the turning of the current of my life. I have been told that there is evidence that the rocket which exploded beneath my horse was in reality a bomb thrown with murderous intent. Certain it is, however, that I was not touched by its fragments, and that my injury resulted from the fall of the frightened and wounded steed. It is possible that some of the unfortunate race who are apprehensive of results that may affect their future unfavorably, may have borrowed something of the savage idea which abounds among certain classes of the North and have thought to appeal to murder as a remedy for apprehended ills. However this may be, as no one else was harmed, I trust that there may be no investigation and no punishment. Surely, even if it be true, I have done enough for my country to ask that the life of mine enemy may be spared, that the triumph of our cause may be bloodless—

no man's life having been taken to secure our freedom or in punishment of any who resisted.

\* \* \* \* \*

The starry cross is triumphant. The duties and responsibilities of nationality now rest upon the Southern people, untrammelled by Northern prejudice and suspicion. For what has occurred we may find much excuse. The world is charitable. Success hides what failure only emphasizes. For what is to be, the world will hold us to strict accountability. Civilization is the master whom all modern nationalities must serve. The balance between national power and individual right must be carefully adjusted to our necessities and justice must be impartially administered to all irrespective of past relations or prejudices. Justice is the foundation stone on which we must build—justice to each, justice to all—justice to high and low, to rich and poor, to strong and weak, to white and black! Mercy is not enough! Charity and compassion are delusive words. Justice is the only sure foundation. This is the mistake the North made. They were pitiful, tender, merciful; but they forgot justice. So their power relaxed and the weak prevailed!

\* \* \* \* \*

The South has its mission which must be faithfully performed or its downfall is certain. Because we are a strong people—the strongest the New World has produced—God has placed before us the mightiest problem of civilization.

How shall black and white live together in peace, prosperity and content? This is the question we have to answer. The master's power is broken—broken by light, progress, knowledge. What shall take its place? Let my countrymen answer truly, justly and the future of the new Nation is assured. Already we have thrice conquered our ancient enemy. The nation whose power we could not withstand, a quarter of a century of peace has enabled us to rule and conquer. Already its literature is but the story of our life. Our heroes are its chief inheritance of fame. Its own, it accounts as it well may, as weak and pitiful beside them. Our great names are even yet held up to emulation; theirs are consigned to silence and contempt! They exult in the names of Lee and Jackson and the immortal galaxy that stand beside them on the pinnacle of fame. They apologize for Grant and Sherman and Sheridan and all the array of great names and little natures whom only the accident of success enfames. The Federal soldier has long since become a pitiful creature worthy only to serve as an example of that magnanimity which gave alms to our conquerors when peace had restored us to our natural place of ruler of the nation's destinies. Let us see to it that the moral and intellectual supremacy thus incontestably attested over a people strong in substance but weak in honor, self-respect and the inherent sense of justice, be not lost now that the bond that united the discordant peoples has been severed. We have seen what made them weak; let it



teach us how to remain strong ! Our people are not poor, and I thank God they are not rich. The example of our neighbor, once our unmated yokefellow, will serve to show us much that we should avoid. Let my countrymen see to it that so far as possible our laws, while encouraging enterprise and facilitating the acquirement of competency, guard most carefully against the dangerous accumulation and combination of capital. The "blind pool," it matters not how good the man who wields its power, how devout his inclinations or sincere his convictions of right may be—is the most dangerous instrument of destruction that civilization has yet developed.

\* . \* \* \* \*

There are two Republics instead of one. The plant of American liberty has not only blossomed but borne fruit. There are two nations, two peoples, two civilizations. Each must solve its own corollary of eternal truth. Each is charged with its peculiar phase of the problem of human destiny. Mutual peace rests on the firm support of mutual respect. We shall exchange products, ideas, influences. The world will be better that we are no longer one in form. The spirit of liberty will be stronger and more potent in its effects upon the civilization of the future, now that there are two rival republics to uphold its glory, than if they had remained but one.

\* \* \* \* \*

The confederated Republics are but the nucleus around

which the weak of the earth will gather for protection against the strong until the "balance of power" shall become a myth and the "rights of peoples" tangible and enforceable realities. Already the problem of Labor and Capital is working out its true solution and a new civilization founded upon it is growing up at the North. What shall be its excellences and what its faults none can yet determine. Her experience will be our guide, and our counsel will have far more weight with her people than when the claim of self-interest deprived it of half its force.

The days have grown to weeks, and the weeks to months, since I began my task. Long since I was compelled to surrender to another's hand the labor of recording my words. In the meantime hope has grown into assured certainty. The love of my people has not failed. What I trembled to see attempted, I rejoice to know has been achieved. It is not the dismemberment of a nation, but the birth of a new sovereignty. The future may, perhaps, reunite the twain; but civilization, humanity, peace and prosperity demand their present separation. What I undertook with doubt, I see concluded with gladness. I have finished my work; completed my task, and leave it now to my countrymen, with only the injunction which the greatest of our Northern neighbors uttered on the field of battle consecrated by his sorrowful benediction, that they "do the right—as God gives us to see the Right!"

[The following monograph, in the handwriting of the Grand Master, seems to have been prepared just previous to the unfortunate accident that terminated his life. It is one of the few things that escaped the destruction of his papers which he ordered. It is so clear an exposition of his views upon one phase of the question presented by his action, that it is deemed proper to give it a place here.—E. H.]

### ***1689, 1789, 1889.***

For three centuries “’Eighty-Nine” has been the year of jubilee, the day of peaceful accomplishment, the hour of complete fruition. It would seem as if, in Anglo-Saxon history, liberty moved in an orbit whose period was a century; as if progress came in recurrent cycles of just a hundred years; as if some mystic impulse, akin to that which causes the bees to swarm and the stork to migrate, affected this race of liberty-lovers and compelled it to mark each century’s close by some notable event of especial significance to the human race in its never ending struggle for individual equality and collective right. These crises have grown more and more significant, and their relations to antecedent growths have become more and more distinct with each successive period.

It is apparent now that each precedent century was but a period of incubation during which was germinated

the great idea that sprang into life at its close. The progress has been continuous, but the result is marked by successive steps, each of which rests on the solid basis of a hundred years of thought, of toil, of suffering and of blood. There is no conflict between the great ideas thus evolved. Each one grows out of those that went before as naturally as the oak out of the acorn. The period of commotion, perhaps of conflict, that precedes the climax may seem like destruction. The weak and narrow-minded may bewail its fierceness and intensity. Those who worship the Moloch that forges fetters for the present out of the darkness of the past, may mourn the downfall of existing institutions, the overthrow of accepted theories and the establishment of new dogmas. Their alarm is but the weakness of folly and the apprehension of ignorance. The convulsion that fills them with dread is but the bursting of the acorn-shell. The strange growth they count as noxious and malign is but a seedling of the oak possessing a stronger fiber and destined to develop a sturdier trunk and wider stretch of limb.

At the first of these great epochs a nation declared itself greater than its king; at the second a child affirmed its right to walk without a mother's guidance; at the third a people cradled with another avowed their right to self-direction. Monarchy fought furiously for its supreme prerogative; the mother-land rained blows and curses on the presumptive colonies; the sturdier twin met the foolish

aspiration of its weaker fellow with slaughter and subjugation. In each case the right triumphed. The people degraded the king but exalted the throne ; the American nation became the pride of the English people ; the new republic is destined to become the safety and support of that from which it separated. Three great revolutions mark three momentous epochs ! Three harmonious chords in the great oratorio of progress have been struck at intervals of just a century ! The lesson that they teach is well worth the world's attention.

### **Sixteen Hundred Eighty-Nine.**

The struggles of the English people for self-government had been long and bloody. Seventeen centuries lay between the wicker skiffs and the wooden walls that were already contesting the sovereignty of the seas. The Heptarchy had been dissolved by conflict and its residuum cemented with blood. The Roman had been conquered and driven out ; the Norman and Dane absorbed. The barons had curbed the power of John with a strong hand. Wat Tyler and his followers, thirty thousand strong, had encamped about the Tower of London with the ennobling demand, " Ye will make us free forever, our heirs and our lands." Jack Cade, with his rabble of starving hinds, had burst the barriers of fear and, clamoring for bread, for the mere right to live, had hurled themselves upon the mailed

retainers of feudalism, demanding, with a pitiful instinct of justice, that the purchasing power of labor be increased in order that the poor might live. Cromwell had come out of the fens, had checked the pride of monarchy, baffled the intrigues of aristocracy and showed, not only that the people might rule themselves through independent, self-appointed leaders, representing the popular thought, but might grow, conquer and prosper without scepter or sovereign. With his death had come again the Stuarts and absolutism. For thirty years the people of England, who had tasted liberty and tested self-government under Cromwell, yielded once more to the exactions of a foolish and arrogant legitimacy. When another generation had risen, the people of England, unworn by the anguish and impoverishment of war, fired with the glory of their fathers' achievements, full of self-confidence and emulation of a glorious example, rose up in the quiet majesty of conscious power and drove the prince, who, though accounted legitimate, was in spirit a usurper, not merely from the throne but from the land. The ferment of freedom spread throughout the whole dominion and lifted peer and peasant alike to the height of self-assertion and the plane of voluntary self-government. Then for the first time the people assembled "in convention," consecrating that word forever to the assertion of popular sovereignty and making such voluntary, informal assemblage lawful at all times as the ultimate means of expressing a nation's will and declar-

ing the birth of a new government. They were not yet ready to march without the semblance of a scepter at their head. From over the stormy sea, therefore, they called the stern and silent man who had already conquered a kingdom from the fiercest foemen of that time, had dared to appeal to the whelming waves as an ally against oppression, and had consecrated to liberty and self-government what his sword had won. Thus the first great Anglo-Saxon revolution became a fact and the joy-bells echoed throughout England as William, stumbling, kissed her soil, and hand in hand with his sagacious Queen, received the plaudits of a liberated people. This was 1689.

### **Seventeen Hundred Eighty-Nine.**

I should not need to dwell upon the luster that surrounds the second member of this divine numeric trinity were it not that, with a foolish desire to perpetuate the memory of conflict rather than the glory of achievement, the American people have been accustomed to regard the day which first gave voice to the aspiration, rather than that which marked the final accomplishment of nationality, as the birth hour of our liberty.

For two hundred and fifty years the Anglo-Saxon stock had been domiciled on the soil of America. The seed of liberty had ripened quickly in the new world. Solitude has ever been the nurse of power. The wilderness is

always a hotbed of aspiration. Men who are alone with God come quickly to outstrip their fellows. The Old World pitied the isolation of her colonies, little dreaming that the distance that lay between them and the parent stock would prove a sure incentive to manhood of a stronger growth than she had ever known. Transplanted to virgin soil, Puritanism hardly felt the check that came with Cromwell's death. Whether Charles or James or William ruled in London mattered little to the sturdy founders of an empire, who felt within themselves the impulse towards self-direction and control growing stronger and stronger year by year. Already before the first Congress met, the germ of nationality had burst its shell. Jefferson did not originate the Declaration of Independence. He merely phrased a people's thought. It was not the men who met in Philadelphia that laid the foundations of the American Republic, but the people whose irresistible aspirations compelled them to the course they adopted. Massachusetts and Carolina were linked together by stronger bonds of union before the Declaration was published—when the people of the southern colony sent aid and comfort to the stricken patriots of Boston—than have ever united them since. It was not the wisdom of her statesmen or the merit of her leaders that established the Republic, but the invincible determination of the people—an Anglo-Saxon people made strong by that isolation which a thousand leagues of ocean gave, and made self-



reliant by two centuries of conflict with barbarism and the wilderness. They who came looked back to England at first, indeed, as a mother-country. In their children's hearts the tie grew weak until, long enough before the conflict occurred, an Anglo-American type had become established. Interest and aspiration had ceased to bind the people to the parent isle, and hope looked forward with confident assurance to a mighty empire beneath the setting sun.

It was not the war of Revolution that separated us from the mother country. The severance was complete before it began. When the Congress formulated the declaration that we were a free and independent people, there was no mistake of mood or tense. It was no prophetic declaration, but merely the formal assertion of an accomplished fact. It did not import the overthrow of any social system and hardly required the establishment of a new form of government. The people, one day the subjects of Great Britain, awoke the next to find themselves allegiants of a sovereignty asserted though not created that first Fourth of July. The Colonies, already for nigh a hundred years, had been self-supporting and in the main self-protecting organisms. They had conquered for Great Britain more territory than she had ever before possessed, and held it, almost single-handed, not merely against the savage, but also against the Frenchman on the North and the Spaniard on the South. They had become not only

controllers of their own destiny, but conquerors over whose subjugated realms waved the flag of Great Britain, a mocking symbol of power usurped.

The struggle was no doubt a surprise to both the combatants. The English monarchy soon learned the difference between ravaging our coasts and conquering a people every man of whom felt himself the peer of a monarch in the divine right to rule. When the end came, "'Eighty-Nine" was again glorified. The years of conflict and of doubt gave way to certainty. Again a convention of the people marked the birth of a new nationality. Battle and bloodshed and triumph had made it possible for a free people to act for themselves under such forms as they might devise. After due deliberation they determined to establish an independent nation on the American continent. This nationality was not an accident but a growth. "'Seventy-Six" marked the assertion of liberty and right; "'Eighty-Nine," the era of crystalization and certainty. Then it was that the nation was really born, the republic organized, and an epoch of self-government inaugurated.

### **Eighteen Hundred Eighty-Nine.**

Eighteen Hundred and Eighty-Nine! What shall I say of it? What can I say of it that every one who reads these words does not already know? It too has been an era of fulfilment. The germ of a new nationality had

ripened in the pericarp of the old. For a hundred years the American Republic had sheltered two peoples. Year by year they had grown more and more distinct. Each had crystalized about its own specific center. Alike, yet unlike, they had grown side by side hardly aware of the unseen forces that were dragging them asunder. Like rays of sunlight they had slowly but certainly diverged. The chord which a child's hand might have spanned at the beginning, when a century of growth had intervened, subtended an arc which touched almost the antipodes of thought.

The government of the United States existed something more than a hundred years, estimating its duration from the date of the famous Declaration of Independence. This was accurate enough, so far as its relations to Great Britain were concerned. The mother country lost a dependency, or, rather, a galaxy of dependencies on that day; but "the federation of the world" can hardly be said to have gained a state at the same time. The national existence really began with the adoption of a constitution in 1789. It continued under and by virtue of that constitution, variously changed and modified, one hundred years. At the end of that period, it is true, it still remained nominally intact, but the process of separation had proceeded so far that dismemberment was inevitable. From that time on its history is only a recital of the various stages of disruption. As an actual, vital force in the family of

nations, therefore, the first great Republic may be said to have been in existence exactly a century.

Why did it not exist a thousand years? Why, indeed, did it perish at all?

Three distinct answers have been given to these questions. One by that class of thinkers who believe monarchy to be the only guaranty of stability. They, of course, see in the dismemberment of the Union another evidence of the weakness and unreliability of a republican form of government. According to them the democratic experiment, tried on the grandest scale and under the most favorable auspices, has proved a failure. So far as a single nationality is concerned, this is true. The government of the United States undoubtedly did prove unable to control and harmonize—in other words to govern—the people inhabiting its territorial limits; but the question of self-government—government by the people, in some form or of some type—certainly has not been decided in the negative. The only thing thus far determined is that the government of the United States, as at first organized and subsequently developed, was not adapted to hold in prosperous and harmonious relations all of its constituent elements. The Democratic principle still remains, somewhat modified, it is true, in a part of the original territory, but not abandoned in any of it.

This fact furnishes the basis on which the second answer is predicated. It is asserted by certain swift gen-

eralizing doctrinaires that the fate of the Federal Union is but another instance of a fatal thirst for empire. They tell us that the scope of territory it embraced became so great that the nation simply fell apart from its own unwieldiness. There is not a shred of reasoning to support this theory. It is useless to cite examples from history. The examples themselves rest merely on assertion. Nothing but bare rhetorical assumption can be cited in support of the generally received idea that even the Roman Empire grew top-heavy by conquest and perished from over-extension of its territorial limits. Every fact of her history proves the contrary. It is true that Rome had no assimilative power. What she took she held by force. The Roman eagle mated with nothing else. Yet, despite this fact, it is unquestionable that the causes of her downfall were to be found at the very center of her power, within the walls of the seven-hilled city itself. If her territory had been no greater than that claimed by the wolf-suckled freebooters of the Tiber, and the same elements of weakness had crept within the walls, the city must have fallen. It was not extent of territory but the decay of Roman manhood that precipitated the doom of Rome. The legionary had become a hireling and conquered without Romanizing. The nation had ceased to be homogeneous in purpose and impulse. The East had half separated from the West. It was no longer true that all roads led to Rome. The seat of the empire, as one of

its great chieftains declared, was no longer on the Tiber, but where the eagles of his legions flew. The empire itself had ceased to be Roman and remained only an organized force that might be shifted from Rome to Byzantium, from Massilia to the banks of the Euphrates. It was a garment that fitted any shoulders; which one might wear to-day and another to-morrow; which might be parted between two or stolen by Gaul or Oriental, without significant change of character. It was so complete an organism that it took centuries to destroy its form, but its vital distinctive force was dead before any usurper dared to seize or rend.

Even if the commonly accepted theory of territorial unwieldiness were established as the prime cause of the decay of other governments, it could not with any show of reason be applied to the government of the United States. Steam and electricity have not only annihilated time, they have also eliminated space, as an element of governmental problems. Practically, government is now omnipresent, in the very person of the ruler, in every part of his dominion. There was not a hamlet in the United States in which the President of the Republic could not address her citizens or instruct his officials every day without leaving his chair in the White House. San Francisco was just as near the seat of government as Baltimore.

Besides this, the press supplies in modern times the means of universal knowledge. The specific need of one section was as fully known to the other as it was possible

for a mere observer to expound it. The people of New England were as well informed of the wants of California as of their own needs. Both were equally well understood at the Executive Mansion and represented with equal ability in the halls of Congress. Virginia was no nearer the seat of government than Minnesota—in fact not half so near, for the result of the War for Separation had made the Capital essentially a part of the North. The apprehension of the fathers that the states contiguous to the Federal Capital might unduly influence its character, was curiously set at naught by the enginery of civilization. There were fifty telegraph wires between Washington and New York ; a single one more than sufficed for the intercourse between the Capital and Richmond. There were more, it is true, but they only served to connect the great commercial metropolis with its sources of supply.

There was none of the ancient lack of information. The uttermost parts of the earth were next door neighbors. Knowledge of events was practically simultaneous with their occurrence. Sentiments, however, were not transmittable by the Morse alphabet. The East knew the facts of the South and the West, and these, in like manner, had a general and complete knowledge of the externals of each other's life. What the East did not know and could not comprehend was what the South or West thought and felt in regard to the facts of their own respective lives.

It was neither extent of territory, unfairness of repre-

sentation, nor weakness of the republican principle that destroyed the unity of the great Republic, but that polarization of thought and sentiment which is an inherent characteristic of all English-speaking masses—that impulse which distinguishes the Anglo-Saxon from all other peoples of the world—making it not merely the great colonizer of the earth but the founder of distinct but harmonious empires. The very force which unifies the English people divided the Republic.

The third answer given to this inquiry is that dismemberment was the result of party strife and factional discord. As a reason for the known result, this is even more fallacious than those previously considered. That parties and factions were active instrumentalities no one can deny. In every movement under a popular form of government there must be leaders and followers—parties and factions. These are not causes, however, but the indices of the causes that underlie such movements. Parties are but the fruitage of popular sentiment. Factions are simply attempts to control parties. Political leaders may create factions, but they never can secure control of a party in a republic except by going in the direction the party desires. In a democracy the real leaders are only forerunners who point out the way to the goal the multitude are seeking. In the present case there was no factional or partisan interest involved in the fact of separation. Those who took the initiative not only had control of the government but the



apparent power to retain a predominant influence therein for a generation. The only question with them was whether they could peacefully and prosperously maintain that local supremacy which they deemed essential to the domestic peace and security of the section they more immediately represented, and still remain an integral part of the original republic. Very wisely, I think, they decided that they could not. So the steps they took, instead of being in derogation of constitutional government and an evidence of the weakness of the republican idea, are really conclusive proof of its strength and a guaranty of its perpetuity.

If there be any cause outside of the inherent tendency of the English people to governmental polarization, which may be said to have been especially instrumental in producing the result which is so variously regarded by different minds. I should say it was the universality of the belief on the part of the people of the most highly developed (and, in one sense, the controlling) section, that such a result was an impossibility. This curious overconfidence was chiefly the result of a hundred years of constant reiteration, and was strengthened by the peculiar immunity of the first century of the national existence from serious internal discord; remarkable success in two defensive wars; the golden glamour of one war of conquest and aggression; and the suppression of an armed rebellion of unusual proportions. The continuous recital of

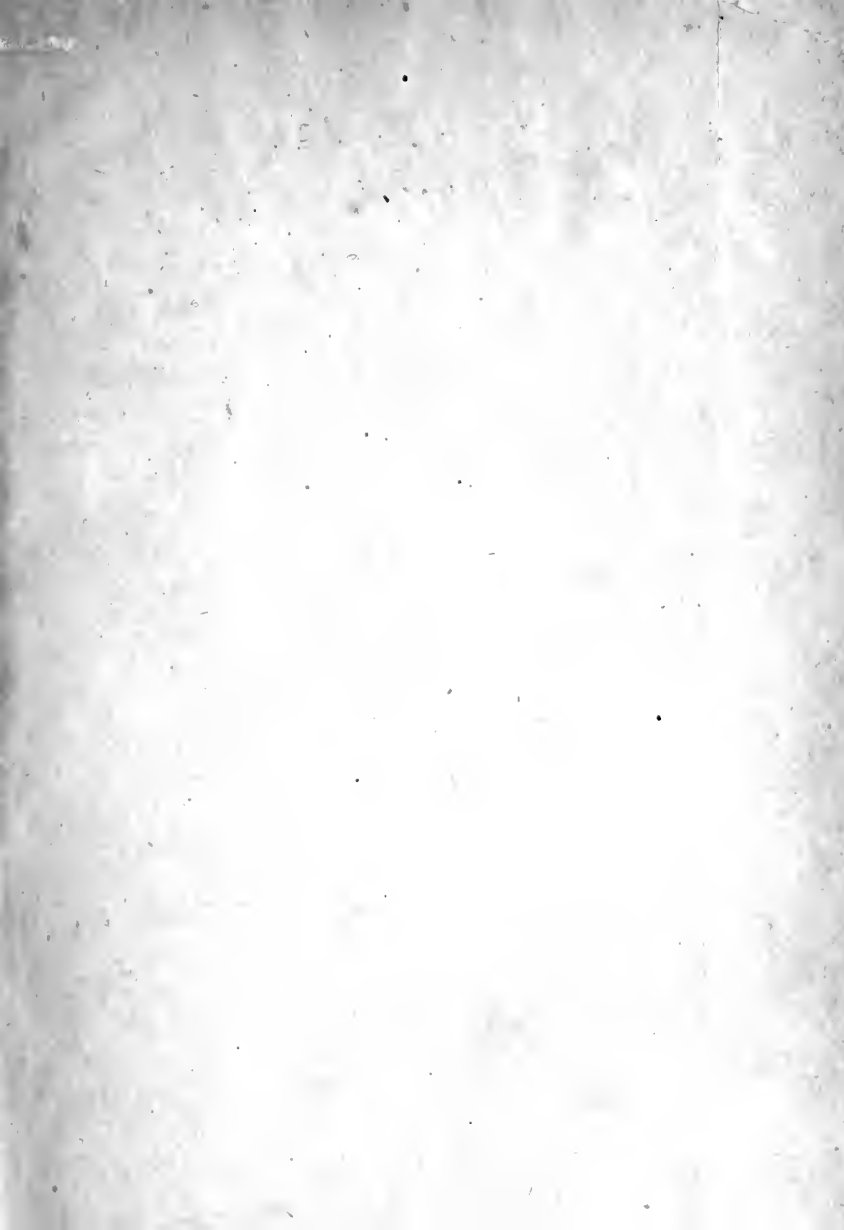
these facts had removed all apprehension of such a contingency, and induced a confidence in the national organism which not only prevented the adoption of measures intended to secure its perpetuity, but induced men to regard with ridicule and contempt all hints of its terminable character. Their blindness had all indications of a tendency to subdivision. Men regarded the Federal Union as destined to be perpetual simply because it was American, without effort, care, or regard for inherent forces tending to disruption. With nations as with men, the over-confidence which leads to neglect of wise precaution, is the most dangerous of all conditions. He was a wise man, though unknown, who wrote in that necropolis of genius, the columns of a newspaper, the words: "England owes her glory to the constant apprehension of invasion."

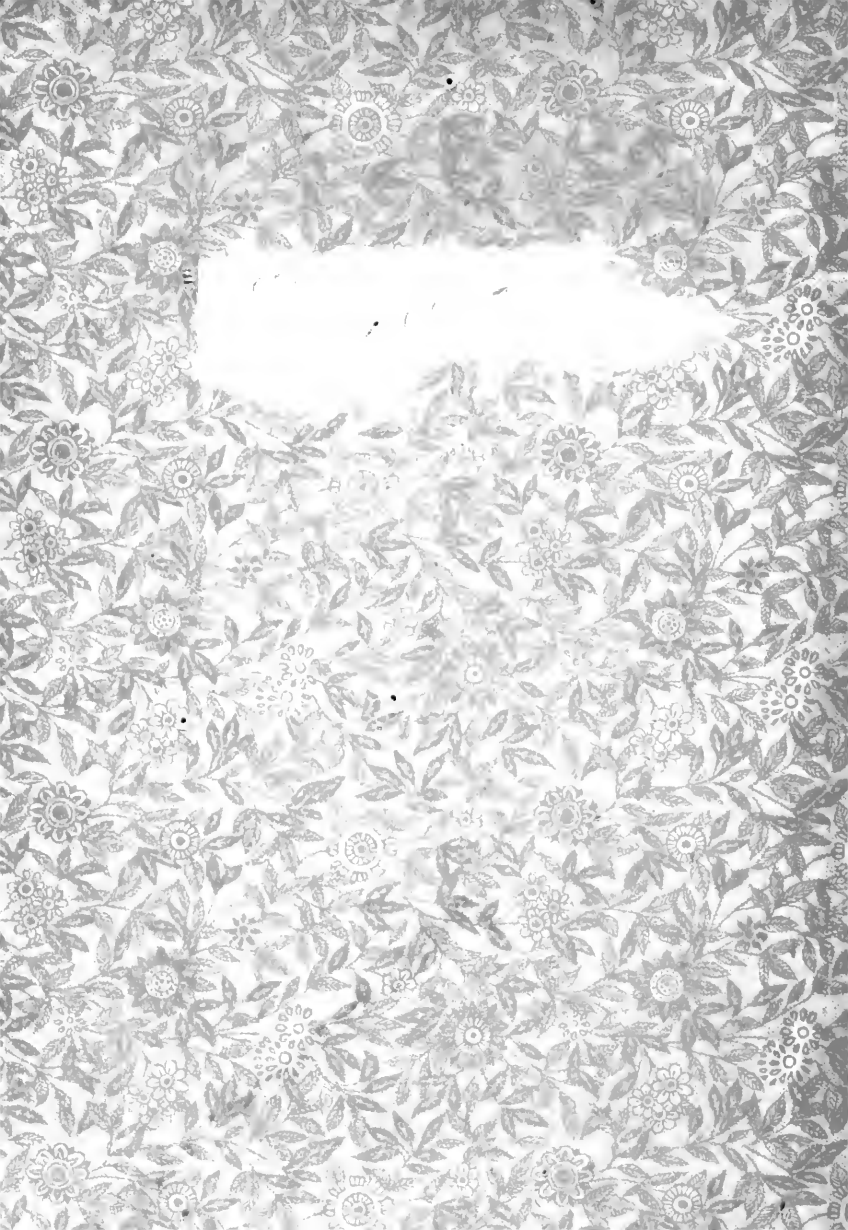
The United States feared no peril—least of all dismemberment—and so neglected causes that a child might have seen not only led in that direction, but, if unchecked, must eventually produce that result.

THE END.









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