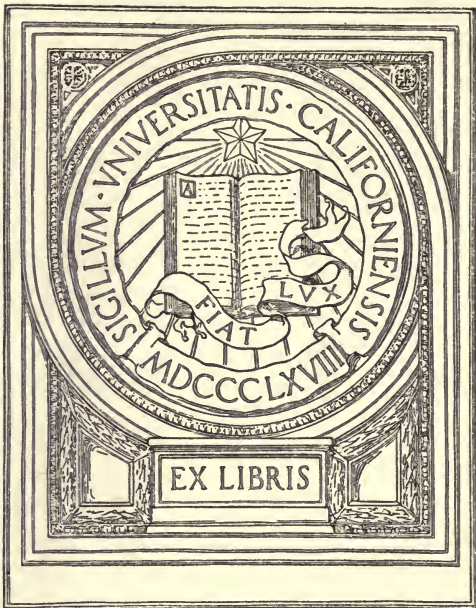


A BROKEN SWORD



GENERAL · CHARLES · KING

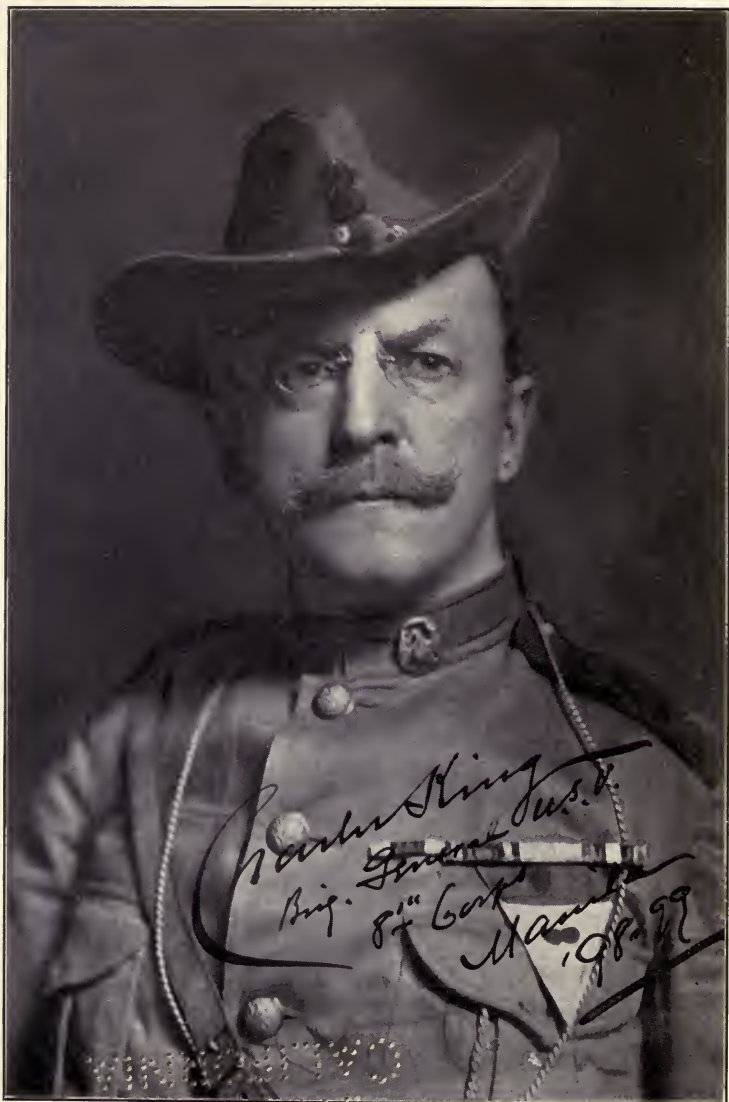


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Charles King
General U.S.A.
Brig. 8th Corps
March 1899



A B R O K E N S W O R D

A Tale of the Civil War

BY

GENERAL CHARLES KING

AUTHOR OF "COMRADES IN ARMS," "A KNIGHT OF COLUMBIA,"
"AN APACHE PRINCESS," "A DAUGHTER OF THE SIOUX,"
"THE MEDAL OF HONOR," "THE COLONEL'S DAUGHTER," ETC.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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A BROKEN SWORD.

CHAPTER I.

GOTHAM AT GRACE CHURCH.

IT was a soft, balmy April morning—early April at that—and New York in general, and Grace Church in particular, had been taken by surprise. Furs and heavy overcoats had been the vogue up to Friday night and, as noontide of Sunday drew near, and, with it, the climax of the Doctor's sermon, Brown, the big sexton, had thrown open the outer doors and was actually mopping his brow.

Two young men stood chatting in subdued tone on the stone step at the main entrance when the heavy portals unexpectedly swung inward. Broadway at the moment was silent and well nigh deserted. None of the dozen "bus" lines profaned the Sabbath stillness of those days by jar of hoof or rumble of wheel upon the Russ pavement. Cabs and hansoms were unknown. A policeman sauntered along the opposite sidewalk in front of the St. Denis. A few private carriages were already drawn up along the curb awaiting the coming forth of their pious owners—some of

the coachmen looking choked in their heavy winter capes; but not one moving vehicle, not a dozen pedestrians, could be counted in the two blocks between Tenth and Twelfth streets. It was before the days of cable cars. It was before Raines laws had been heard of, yet Phelan's great billiard rooms adjoining the church on the Tenth street side, with everything appertaining to them, were closed.

An almost rural silence reigned. The murmured conversation between the gallants upon the church steps was audible to them and evidently intended to be audible to no one else, for it ceased suddenly as Brown strode forth between the swinging doors and, at sight of the pair, bowed with the dignity and importance of a Turveydrop.

"Ha! Our ecclesiastical Falstaff in all his glory!" said the elder of the two, with something like a sneer, a trifle of impatience, too, in his tone and manner, for he had been talking eagerly to his companion, and the interruption came at the wrong moment.

"And he salutes Prince Hal with all loyalty," answered the portly sexton. "You bear the sunshine of the savannas with you, Captain Wallis. If the advance guard of the South come in this fashion what will the main body bring us?"

"Better manners, Brown; and, possibly, better sense," was the sharp, irritable answer, and the speaker, a tall, slender, most distinguished-looking man, turned abruptly and, linking his arm in that of his companion, led him a few paces away and again

began his eager, low-toned talk. It was evident that the sudden apparition had annoyed—even shaken—him. It was evident, too, that he resented the semi-familiar manner of the renowned sexton and meant that he should know it.

“Odds boddikins!” said Brown, in high dudgeon. “The captain is snippier than ever this morning. Wants to borrow a thousand of young Barclay, I’m betting a bottle! Better manners and sense, indeed!” Wrathfully he glared at the two a moment. There was none of the meekness of the cloister about Brown. Sexton of Gotham’s most famous and fashionable church; accustomed for years to preside at every funeral, wedding or baptism in high society, even at times when the interested parties were not of his congregation; precursor of the lamented Ward McAllister as an authority on social standing; possessor of an alphabetical array of New Yorkers known to society as “Brown’s List” that was accepted as submissively as is Debrett or Burke abroad; arbiter of many a question of social precedence; autocrat of his profession; bowed down to by hundreds who would appear upon his books yet could not, and smiled upon by those already there, he took it ill that all symptom of deference was denied him by this haughty military personage whose annual stipend was so much less than his own, tips not included. He could not stomach it that he should be treated with disdain. He stood there at the Gothic portal red with wrath; swelling with indignation; far too much amazed to know just how to

resent the indignity, when of a sudden the swinging doors beyond the vestibule burst open and there fairly staggered into view a party of three; a gray-haired woman, richly dressed, although in mourning, but evidently stricken by some sudden malady or emotion, supported by two anxious yet youthful forms, one that of a fair girl, the other of a slight-built, flaxen-haired youth, both garbed in the height of the fashion of the day, which in the woman's case was ridiculous. The main difficulty in assisting the invalid arose from the vast expanse of dress-goods worn "below the belt" by both herself and the girl. The crinoline of '61, being never less than five to six feet in diameter at the base, made the wearer look for all the world like an inverted peg top.

But Brown, being built on different lines and tapering from the ground upward to the waist, became available at the instant. His huge bulk was brought to bear without a second's delay. His red face and angering eyes took on a look of deepest sympathy. One sweeping gesture summoned the half dozing coachman on the box of the nearest carriage. A stalwart arm relieved the trembling girl. "Simply a little faint. The day is too suddenly warm," he reassuringly spoke, even while he narrowly studied the pallid face of the tottering woman. "Home at once, Miss Rutherford," he murmured. "A little sal ammoniac, and I'll have Dr. Tracy after you in the next carriage."

And so, bidding the speechless sufferer to lean her

weight upon his strength, he slowly led her across the pavement to the curb; opened the carriage door, nor would he step aside when the sound of anxious voices told him Captain Wallis and Mr. Barclay had sprung to their assistance. Unaided save by young Rutherford, the son, he placed the lady within the carriage; saw that her daughter was seated beside her; motioned the youth to jump in; slammed the door; said, "Home, lively," to the coachman; then turned and in self-conscious, pompous triumph confronted his recent reviler and the little knot of sympathetic friends that had gathered quickly from within.

"Pray have no uneasiness," said he. "The Doctor's war pictures have been a bit too much for Mrs. Rutherford's nerves. She, at least, has some excuse for her Southern sympathies—she is a Georgian," and here he looked with much significance into the imperturbable features of Captain Wallis.

"Possibly, ah, Brown, you might display wisdom by summoning Dr. Tracy, nevertheless," said the tall officer, as he quickly bent and possessed himself of a small silken bag that, unnoticed by the Rutherfords or the sexton, had fallen at the edge of the pavement.

"That, Captain Wallis, I purpose doing at once," answered Brown, with much dignity. "And further, if you please, I will ask him to return to them that reticule."

"I shall do that in person," replied the captain, with airy superiority of mien and manner. "You need trouble neither the Doctor nor yourself. Shall we go,

Barclay?" and, raising his silk hat to the little group, Wallis turned placidly away.

For a moment no word was spoken. Perhaps a dozen people by this time had gathered in front of the sanctuary, several of them anxious friends of Mrs. Rutherford who had followed her from within, the others mere loungers and saunterers attracted to the spot through curiosity. By sight or reputation everybody knew Brown. He was far more frequently quoted or mentioned than was his superior, the rector, and the sight of the great man standing there in the noonday sunshine, gazing in wrath after the disturber of his peace, was something that for a moment silenced them all. The sound of the City Hall bell, two miles distant, yet in those days distinctly audible of a Sunday, beginning with its companions in the fire watch towers the stroke of twelve, recalled him to himself. Mechanically he wrested a fine hunting-cased gold watch from the pocket of his glossy, globular, silken waistcoat; glanced at the face to compare notes with the keeper of the city's time; then quickly re-entered the church; tiptoed under the subdued light of the stained-glass windows up the carpeted aisle, while the gray-haired pastor read on from his impressive sermon; tapped softly upon a black broad-clothed shoulder and whispered a word in the ear of a portly gentleman. The first response was a shrug of impatience, an effort to wave the disturber aside; for Dr. Tracy was listening intently, as was the entire congregation, to the Doctor's words. It was the first

time within those walls that the possibilities of the great "impending conflict" between the North and South had been touched upon and the time was more than ripe, for shotted guns were trained on Sumter's beleaguered garrison and already had barked their challenge to the flag of the Union, driving back to sea the *Star of the West* as she steamed across the bar, laden with needed reinforcements and supplies. It was not until the sexton bent a second time and whispered, "Mrs. Rutherford's ill and taken home," that Dr. Tracy slowly found his feet and the aisle. Even then he turned and bent attentive ear to the rector's eloquent periods and exchanged glances with an elderly man whose eyes were snapping with suppressed feeling, whose usually crisp curling gray hair seemed charged with electricity, for the rector was preaching the gospel of peace at any price at the very moment when throughout the Southern States, far and near, good Episcopalians as these in Gotham were besieging the throne of grace with importunity in behalf of a President of their own choice, ignoring him whom the nation had so recently called to the chair. It was ten minutes after twelve when at last the great physician drove away, and, though he had barely seven blocks to traverse, was surprised to find Captain Wallis on the broad brownstone steps in rapid conversation with flaxen-haired young Rutherford, who had come forth bareheaded. A third person, Mr. Barclay, stood a silent but most interested listener.

Tracy nodded brusquely to Wallis—he did not like him at all; failed to notice the respectful lift of the hat accorded him by Mr. Barclay, whom he had known since the day he ushered him into the world, and, taking Rutherford by the arm, led him within the broad vestibule, never noting the fact that, while Barclay hung back, Wallis followed at his heels, and as the physician ascended the stairs to the second story the officer turned calmly into the parlor of the old Fifth Avenue homestead. Two minutes later the latter came forth into the sunshine to find that Barclay had descended the broad flight of steps and was halted irresolute on the sidewalk.

Up and down the avenue the churches were just beginning to pour forth their congregations, and the gay hour—the promenade hour—of the week was about to begin. Any sunlit afternoon would find many of Gotham's social circle sauntering along the broad sidewalks between the limits of Tenth Street and the reservoir; but on Sunday, freshly garbed and gloved and duly inspired by the words of grace to which they had listened for the hour past, every man and woman worthy the notice of the elect made the solemn tour afoot. One might, even in those church-going days, neglect the service, but never the stroll, and for six months past Captain Wallis, stationed at Governor's Island, had rarely been known to miss it until mid March, when suddenly sent South on some errand that seemed to take precedence. He had just returned, as Brown had intimated, and now, instead of

reappearing in the promenade—a man immaculate in dress and unimpeachable in bearing and distinction—he seemed bent on other projects, for he called to Barclay, and there was something of command in his tone, bidding him return. Wallis had more to say to him.

Barclay came half way up the steps. “Then say it as we walk, Wallis. I—I don’t like to intrude at such a time.”

“*You* couldn’t intrude here at any time,” was the curt rejoinder. “I could, and I need you for a cloak to my intrusion. No one is in the parlor. We can continue our talk there; we cannot at the club.”

“I’ve said—all I had to say,” was Barclay’s answer, but as he spoke his eyes were wandering to the upper windows, his face was grave and perturbed.

“You think you have, man, because you haven’t heard half I have to say to you. What’s more, it’s got to be said to-day or written to-night. Which will you take?” and there was something like menace now in the tone.

“I don’t wish Rutherford to—suspect,” began Barclay.

“Who can better help you? He was your chum at Columbia. You did him a service not four months ago. You pulled him through his senior year, if all I hear be true. He can’t have forgotten he owed his sheepskin to you last June and his sweetheart last January.”

“That’s just why I won’t draw on him,” and now

Barclay's handsome young face was setting white and stern. "Moreover, Captain Wallis, I should have to tell him why I asked it and thereby confirm his suspicions. He—warned me of this last winter."

"Ah, did he? Oh, *good* morning, Mrs. Griswold!" and Wallis bowed with courtly grace to the foremost couple of a little procession issuing from the churchyard in the block below, a woman with social ambition, a man with none outside the stock market, and in the eyes of both there was mild surprise. Harold Wallis—"Prince Hal" to a certain coterie that was limited in the start and already growing smaller—was no favorite with the Griswold clique, yet here he stood at the portals of the most exclusive mansion on the avenue, one whose threshold *they* had never crossed, yet here were those portals wide open to him. Barclay had raised his beaver in civil, if perfunctory, salutation, then turned as though to leave, but Wallis laid a detaining hand upon his arm.

"Come back, youngster," said he.

"No," said Barclay. "If you need say more I'll be at the Union at one o'clock."

"Come back, youngster," repeated Wallis, as he drew the silken bag from the breast of his natty spring overcoat. "Who shall give this to Miss Ethel—you or I? Ten minutes with me, then twenty with her. Isn't it worth it?"

For a moment Barclay stood, his color and his courage coming and going, then he turned and followed the elder into the house. Once within the hall

the latter stopped, closed the massive doors behind them and motioned to his captive to enter the parlor. This, too, almost in the face of the advance guard of anxious inquirers from the congregation of Grace Church.

CHAPTER II.

A SIGNIFICANT DISCUSSION.

IT had been a strange half year in the great city—that that followed the presidential election of November, 1860. The people had chosen for their chief magistrate a son of the soil from the far West rather than the great leader who had twice served as governor of the Empire State and long years in the Senate, and plainly did New York show that New Yorkers didn't like it. Who was Abraham Lincoln that he should be held the peer of William H. Seward? None but Horace Greeley, the veteran editor of the "Tribune," who more than any one man had destroyed Seward's chances in the Chicago convention, could or would say now; for few remembered the speech of the tall, ungainly Westerner at the Cooper Institute only the year before—he whose words were destined to go ringing down the ages, quoted, revered and studied, as have been those of no other leader in our national life. In apathy, if not indifference, many people had read the news that State after State, South Carolina leading the ill-starred procession, had severed its ties with the Union and seized all federal property within its gates. The old New York Hotel was thronged with jubilant, boastful Southerners and

their Northern sympathizers, many wearing openly the badge of their new-born Confederacy. The "stars and bars" in silk and silver and gold were flaunted on many a smiling woman's bodice, or pinned to the waistcoat of excited and exultant men. The veteran general of the army, hero of the wars of 1812 and Mexico, driven from Washington by the slights of successive war secretaries, all Southern born and bred, had been dwelling in New York until the demands of the solid business element of the nation had wrung from President Buchanan in the last months of his administration the naming of Joseph Holt, a strong Unionist, as Secretary of War, and Edwin M. Stanton, of Pennsylvania, as Attorney General, and through these came the recall of Scott to his proper station. But even then the adjutant general's office was in the hands of a soldier schooled by such as Jefferson Davis and John B. Floyd. Almost every important post or arsenal had been placed in charge of a Southern officer. Even at West Point the teachings of the national Corps of Cadets had been confided to men strong in their assertion of State's rights and Southern supremacy. Even at Columbia, New York's own college, the badge of disloyalty was covertly displayed by certain students not even Southern by birth, but sympathetic through personal association. And, at a time when army officers far and near were tendering their resignations and quitting the service of the Union for that of the South, Harold Wallis, captain of infantry, born, bred and reared in the old army and

educated at West Point, was daily and nightly consorting with the Southern extremists in society and spending hours with the secession element at the New York Hotel.

He had been accorded the *entrée* at the Union and the New York Clubs, the former the most conservative, the latter the most progressive of the day. But there were men at the one who were beginning to look upon him with doubtful eyes, while, strange to say, within the portals of the other could be heard more expression of Southern than of Union sentiment. It was one of the symptoms that misled the leaders of a brave and enthusiastic people. They little dreamed of the deep love and loyalty to the flag that underlay the silence of the North. The old submission to the will of the majority, the supremacy of the slave-holding States, the doctrine of freedom of the press and of personal speech, the fact that for years federal officials of every grade had had to be men in sympathy with the "peculiar institution" of the South—all still weighed heavily upon men who loved the Union. But the lightning was only sleeping—the fire smouldering. "Let the erring sisters go in peace," spoke Greeley, through the "Tribune," and in many a Northern city, even though something told every thinking man that in peace those sisters would neither go nor stay, a peace-loving, law-abiding, yet, when once aroused, a stubborn and determined people, seemed content to let the advocates of disunion do all the talking, and talk they certainly did.

That very Sunday of the Rutherfords' sudden exit from the sanctuary and within an hour from the closing of the church doors, the throng on the sunlit avenue dispersed for luncheon, and a dozen people, men and women, had gathered about the hospitable board of an old family mansion in Fourteenth Street. A matronly dame and her daughters were entertaining guests who had casually dropped in, for the head of the house had stopped to have a warning word with the rector of Grace. Three young women and as many attendant cavaliers made up the party of visitors. Of these one eager, animated girl, whose accent plainly bespoke her far Southern birth, wore openly upon her breast a little silken flag that bore the colors but not the pattern of the stars and stripes. Next her was seated a youth upon whose waistcoat could be occasionally seen the counterpart of the badge so ostentatiously displayed by the girl from whom he hardly once removed his eyes. Fascination was apparent to one and all, nor was it a new story. Jimmy Granger's devotion to the fair Georgian had been obvious to uppertendom since her coming early the previous autumn. On her other hand, and seated next the mistress of the homestead, was Wallis, blithe and debonair as ever, and taking up much of the talk not monopolized by Miss Brenham, for, with the rector's sermon as a text, that brilliant young woman had launched into an eager, vehement defense of the action of her native State. Once in awhile some of her own sex ventured a word of polite dissent, or re-

monstrance, but not so Wallis. If anything, he urged her on in a vivid, verbal picture she was drawing—the contrast in social life as it had been in Washington under the guidance of the courtly Buchanan and his gifted, gracious niece, and as it must be under this new occupant of the White House, “this commoner of the commonest with his countrified, ignorant wife.” Across the table, silent, yet evidently chafing and disturbed, sat a man of possibly twenty-six, shorter of stature than Wallis by nearly a head; fair in hair and complexion where the other was dark; with eyes of deep blue, whereas those of Wallis were well nigh black and sparkling like a diamond he wore in the ring of his Roman scarf; a man whose dress was far more quiet in cut and color, if not, indeed, a trifle quaint, while Wallis was garbed in the height of the prevailing mode and wore his garments with infinite dash and style; a man somewhat shy and reserved, whereas Wallis had the assurance and air of a Brummell; but a man as distinctly a soldier in bearing and carriage as was Wallis himself, and with better claim, for his right cheek was deeply seamed where plowed but recently by Indian arrow, and Wallis, with several more years of service, had never a scratch. To him—the shy and silent one—a daughter of the house spoke frequently; striving to draw him into chat; to make the conversation general; to break up, if possible, the monopoly compelled by the magnetism of the Georgian. But the blue-eyed soldier seemed held by some strange fascination. His replies were brief

and even irrelevant. His whole attention seemed concentrated on what she and Wallis were saying, but there were ominous indications that he was meditating vehement reply; and the other gentleman, the third of the party, a younger brother of Captain Wallis, watched him narrowly in evident anticipation of an outbreak. The soldier's lips were twitching; his moustache bristling; his fingers thrumming nervously, sometimes on the arm of his chair and sometimes on the table; and the one or two who knew him well and had known him long felt that a clash was surely coming, for Bernard Hoyt was a loyalist to the backbone—a young troop leader renowned in the cavalry, though still far from his captaincy—and, from the moment of their first meeting under this very roof, three weeks before and just prior to the sudden mission of Wallis to the South, it was patent to those who observed that no love was lost between these fellow soldiers—that Hoyt held Wallis in marked disfavor. It was something the head of the house, the gray-haired gentleman with whom Dr. Tracy had exchanged significant glances in church, had noted at the moment, and had never forgotten since. It was known that they had served together on the Utah expedition, Hoyt with the cavalry, Wallis on the staff. Wallis had come over from the Island the evening of that occurrence with a brother officer, a South Carolinian who had just resigned and was still in New York, waiting for his tailor to finish the new uniforms of Confederate gray that in March, '61, were being

made, even there, in greater numbers than were those of Union blue. They were paying a dinner call when the butler entered with a card; and a young man appeared at the doorway, at sight of whom one of the family sprang forward and welcomed him with eager delight. She had met and known him well, it seems, when visiting kindred in the far West. Joyously she presented him to her parents and sisters, then turned to Wallis and his Southern comrade who had risen as courtesy demanded.

“Ah, Hoyt, dear boy, when did you blow hither? Thought you were still chasing Indians out on the Smoky Hill,” said Wallis, airily. A flush mounted instantly to the new arrival’s face. “How do you do, Captain Wallis,” he said, with cold civility; giving but a limp and reluctant hand to that held forth to him; then, quickly turning, he took in both his the faltering hand of the South Carolinian: “Haines, old fellow, I’m so glad to see you! and—so very sorry to hear—of your going,” he said.

There was something strangely significant in the difference of his manner toward these two, presumably, comrades and brother officers—his cold respect to the soldier superior who still remained upon the army rolls, his almost affectionate greeting to a former messmate, who, following the dictates of his conscience and the teachings of a lifetime, had thrown up his commission to follow the fortunes of his State.

Hoyt’s visit that evening had been but a brief one. To the regret of the household he speedily took his

leave; explaining that, being only just arrived in New York, he had many old friends to "look up," and then, with a glance at the Southerner and a slight shade of embarrassment, he added that there was no saying whether he could expect to enjoy his entire leave. "I hope to see you again before you go South," he said to Haines, whereas to Wallis he expressed no desire of future meeting at all.

"Very—ah—creditable. At least—ah—quite so," said Wallis, not two minutes after Hoyt had gone, for the latter's record on the plains had been referred to and the senior officer found himself directly addressed.

"*Quite* so!" exclaimed Haines, impetuously. "Why, Wallis, you know well your own chief said there was no finer young troop leader in the service, and if ever a man knew a soldier it is Sidney Johnston."

And now again these men had met, as luck would have it, not only under that same roof but at a luncheon table; the one, though still a wearer of the army blue, a kinsman of some of the best and oldest families of the South and the daily associate of those who sought the utter disruption of the Union; the other, Northern by birth and lineage and Union to his heart's core. It was evident to almost every one at the table that Hoyt was only waiting for a pause in the vehement flow of the fair Georgian's words to enter the lists, and, above all things, the hostess hated argument or discussion that bade fair to be warm. Something had to be done.

"Captain Wallis," she said, turning full upon him and compelling his attention, "you began saying how you left Mrs. Rutherford, but became so engrossed in what Miss Brenham was telling us that you never finished; and, Mr. Hoyt, the Rutherfords are your kinsfolk, I think. Let me see, your mother was Dorothy Renwick and she and Gerald Rutherford were first cousins, were they not?"

"Only second, Mrs. Leroy."

"Then you and Ethel are not near of kin at all. I thought—we all thought——"

"We were boy and girl chums,—perhaps sweet-hearts," said Hoyt, with slight access of color, for Wallis had whirled in his chair and was watching him narrowly. "I was not at Grace this morning, but I—left the Rutherfords only just before coming here. Mrs. Rutherford was then quite restored and much more composed."

"And Ethel?"

"Ethel was busy in the parlor receiving and reassuring inquiring friends."

"You left Ned Barclay there, I'll warrant!" cried Miss Brenham, impetuously. "He has been an adorer ever since her return from Europe a year ago."

"Mr. Barclay was one of several who were still there when I came away," answered Hoyt, with grave reserve of manner. "Mrs. Rutherford's sudden illness seemed to be due to the raking up of an old sorrow. I dare say you all know how Ralph, her first-born,

met his death," and now the steely blue eyes were looking first at Wallis, then at Miss Brenham, and straight into the eyes of both. "The rector's unfortunate sermon——"

"Pardon me, ah, Hoyt," interrupted Wallis, at once, and with just a symptom of haste despite his airy manner, "pardon my saying that it is very unlikely that any one present, except possibly myself, can know just how Ralph Rutherford met his death. The stories published in a prejudiced—ah—Northern press were most erroneous. It was at the time, as you remember, of the episode in the Senate chamber in which Senator Sumner and Mr. Brooks figured—and the Northern press was notably unjust—did grievous injustice to a gentleman of one of our most famous families in the South. It was a very regrettable occurrence—that of the meeting between Preston and Rutherford, but, ah—ah—entirely unavoidable through Rutherford's own rashness."

"I know, and you know this, Captain Wallis," answered Hoyt, and his voice grew firm and ringing, "Ralph Rutherford was a guest at the club at Savannah at the time, and he was wantonly insulted by a master in the use of weapons and the code of the duello. Gordon, his friend, and his mother's kinsman, was away at the time, and he had none to counsel. He did just what the fashion of the day demanded, and was shot dead at sunrise that his slayer might cut another notch in the stock of his pistol!"

"Leftenant Hoyt!" exclaimed Miss Brenham, in

amaze and indignation. "You surely do not believe——"

"Mr. Hoyt," began Wallis, half rising from his chair, "if—ah—the story reached the frontier in that form it is high time——"

But Hoyt's blood was up, and he was not to be silenced. Awkward as was the situation; embarrassing as was the discussion to all other persons present, it had gone too far not to be finished. For an instant the hostess had glanced appealingly at Hoyt—as though begging him to refrain.

"I crave your pardon, Mrs. Leroy," said he, with instant deference and regret. "I have spoken of matters I wish I could forget, but Ralph Rutherford was my warmest friend before I went to the Point and when I was on leave or furlough, and I never rested till I got the facts. Captain Gordon, who made thorough investigation, and Seabrooke, now cooped up at Sumter, who was his second, both wrote me full details. I wish that Haines were still here to add further confirmation, as I know he could; but, if Ralph Rutherford had fair play, why did the Oglethorpe close its doors to Hugh Preston? Why is Preston an exile in Paris to this day?"

"He's not, my dear fellow," answered Wallis, raising his claret glass to the light and critically studying it as though other matters were of little moment. "He is home at this minute or was—ah—a week ago."

"Then the story which we scouted at the West Point mess—that he dined with you at Delmonico's

three weeks ago, and that you went South together, may after all have some foundation," said Hoyt, his blue eyes blazing, his fingers strumming ominously.

"And—if it have?" said Wallis, with utter unconcern.

The strain was becoming intolerable. Miss Brenham's cheeks were burning; her eyes were ablaze with angry light. All attempts on the part of the household to start conversation on other topics with other members of the party had fallen flat. The sudden entrance of the butler with two cards on a tray brought blessed relief.

"Mr. Gerald Rutherford, Jr."

"Mr. Edward Clayton Barclay."

read the hostess aloud and with infinite gratitude. "Show them right in here, Furness. Why, how odd!" she continued, as she turned in her chair. "Yet—you said Mrs. Rutherford was quite restored, Mr. Hoyt?"

Almost immediately the two young men appeared at the folding doors that opened into the old-fashioned parlor, embarrassment on both faces. This April Sunday seemed destined to be prolific of sensation—so soft and warm and balmy without that the butler had opened the long windows leading to the little balcony at the back of the house, and the lace curtains were fluttering in the entering breeze—so ominous and threatening within that, like pent up electricity, it seemed as though it must find vent in

flash and thunder. Glad, possibly to escape from the table for an instant, though luncheon was not yet over, Mrs. Leroy had risen at sight of these two young gentlemen, both prominent in society, both members of old and distinguished families. She advanced upon them with welcoming hand, and each bowed over it in deep respect and murmured his apology for intrusion at such a moment.

“The butler said we were to come directly here, Mrs. Leroy,” said young Rutherford, his straw-colored hair making vivid contrast with his blushing face. “Oh! thanks, yes, mother is much better—quite herself again! The sudden heat, you know. It—it’s Ethel that’s upset now. Will you pardon me, Mrs. Leroy, but——” And here his eyes, that had flitted with his perfunctory, embarrassed bows from one to another of the assembled party, rested full on Wallis. Like their mother, the daughters had risen to greet the newcomers. Lieutenant Hoyt, too, was on his feet; while Frederick, a college boy of nineteen, the only male member of the household present, had hastened round the table and was hospitably shaking hands with Barclay, who still hung back at the folding doors, looking, if anything, more perturbed than Rutherford.

“Ethel!” exclaimed Mrs. Leroy. “Nothing serious, I hope. You weren’t looking for Dr. Tracy?”

“No; the doctor isn’t needed. The fact is she dropped a silk bag—that reticule thing you may have seen her carry—and Captain Wallis was so—so kind

as to return it, but—some of the contents are missing—some to which she attached peculiar importance, and she begged me to find the Captain at once and ask if by any possibility they could have dropped out or—whether the bag was open or—closed when he found it.”

“Closed to a certainty!” answered Wallis, promptly, positively, and without a shade of the airy, *blasé*, cynical manner that was his odd characteristic. One would have said his interest and sympathy had been instantly enlisted.

“And you—pardon me—could it have become—open, you know—it was only closed by a silken cord—open while you had it?”

“Hardly possible, Mr. Rutherford,” promptly answered Wallis. “I thrust it into the inside pocket of my overcoat—may the butler fetch it here, Mrs. Leroy? and I handed it intact, I think, to Mr. Barclay to deliver to Miss Rutherford. But we’ll search at once. What are missing?—some items of—ah—jewelry?”

“Some papers, rather, I infer from what she says,” answered Rutherford.

“Very odd indeed! Such things could not easily drop from a bag like that. You had it, Barclay, for some minutes after I left. Did you—ah—feel anything like papers in it?”

Barclay still stood at the folding doors. He had not advanced beyond them. His face was pallid, his lips were compressed, but at the abrupt question, that

turned all eyes upon him, the color rushed to his very brows and he started forward a full pace before he answered:—

“I? I never had occasion to touch it! You laid it on the center table as you went away, and there it lay until Miss Rutherford came down and herself picked it up.”

“How very strange!” said Wallis, now rummaging in the pockets of the natty, silk-lined, light drab overcoat then in vogue for Easter weather. “Do you know—I—ah—would have gone to my next station with the absolute conviction that I had placed that reticule in your hands.”

CHAPTER III.

A REPRIMAND SPOILED.

THE news of the fall of Sumter—the affront to the flag—came to the men of the North like a slap in the face. New York City blazed with instant patriotism. Every staff, spire, tower and public building threw to the breeze the stars and stripes. Bunting within twenty-four hours commanded a fabulous price, and Broadway went mad in a riot of brilliant hues. Men and women—even children—who did not wear in some outward form the badge of loyalty to the nation were not infrequently called on to “show their colors.” And those who had dared to wear, almost unrebuked, the miniature flag of secession, dared no longer, for the North was roused at last.

Even at “Southern Headquarters,” as they now called Cranston’s famous old red-brick hostelry—even in their delirious hour of temporary triumph—men spoke with bated breath and cautious tone. The angering eyes of the throng on the street without boded ill for the peace and security of those within, and there was wisdom in the whispered order that sent a strong detachment of detectives in plain clothes to hover about the obnoxious building, while in doubled numbers the Metropolitan police kept the crowds

moving and broke up incipient mobs. Given half a chance, and a leader, there is little doubt that the hotel would have been rendered untenable as Sumter—and in far less time. On the almost summerlike Sunday preceding the bombardment it was considered safe, as it was saucy, for men and women both to sport the “stars and bars.” There had been something fine, daring and defiant about it to the mind of the unthinking, but, in the twinkling of an eye, all this was changed. There were women, of course, who, relying upon the immunity of the sex and the chivalry of American manhood, did not scruple to appear at certain social functions still wearing their cherished badge and talking bravely of the wrongs and the determination of the South. But Southern sympathizers who read the signs aright stood astounded, if not dismayed, at such overwhelming evidence of loyalty to the old flag. This was not what leaders of the Northern Democracy had promised. The masses, as well as the elect, were filled with sudden craze for action, when but the week gone by they seemed passive and inert. So far from submitting to the will of the South, the people had risen in a passion of protest; and, all too late, the leaders of secession found that, cold, dull, undemonstrative as it had appeared, the Northland loved the Union with a devotion all the deeper for its silence, and that it would fight for what it loved, relentless, and to the bitter end. At the New York Club the situation had been epitomized in two sentences:

“Nothing short of a miracle will make the average Yankee fight,” said Wallis, the very day that brought the news.

“And nothing short of annihilation will make him quit,” was the spirited reply.

On Saturday, the 13th of April, the flag was lowered on the battered walls of Sumter. On Monday, the 15th, it was hoisted by tens of thousands all over the North, and the President called for seventy-five thousand volunteers to defend it. Seventy-five thousand!—when by hundreds of thousands, untaught, untried, but firm and resolute, the men of the North sprang to arms and almost fought for the privilege to be first in the fight for the flag. On Tuesday the loyal States were wiring their pledges of fealty and their promises of troops. On Wednesday the drum beat was heard in every armory in the Northern cities, and the regiments of New England and the Middle States were mustering for battle. In their quaint, high, old-fashioned shakos and long blue overcoats, the thronging ranks of the Sixth and Eighth Massachusetts marched through New York, cheered and fêted by countless multitudes. Through dense masses of humanity, women weeping, men hoarsely shouting, New York’s magnificent Seventh, first offering of the Empire State, strode down Broadway to the Cortlandt Ferry, and were lost in the darkness of the Jersey shore. In all its history Gotham had never known such a day. The flower of its young manhood, the best blood, the oldest names, the first

families were represented on the rolls. The night that followed was not one for merrymaking. Even in the homes of well-known Southern sympathizers—even in the mansion of a family but recently removed from the Gulf coast and introduced to society through the medium of Brown's list and a big ball—lights were turned low, curtains were drawn. There was that in the air that prompted caution, and invitations to even quiet home gatherings had been recalled. A Columbia senior who had strutted the length of Fifth Avenue the week before, thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat and the badge of Georgia on his breast, stood close mouthed and as close buttoned in his snug-fitting sack coat at the corner of Fourteenth Street, the device of the "Delta Sigs" upon his lapel, but indecision in his breast. It was the night for their regular meeting, but even fraternal relations had seemed strained since the firing on the Star of the West, and now stood threatened with open rupture. Fifth Avenue was still alive with people, moving restlessly hither and yon; and as the young student gazed uneasily about him, half stunned by the outpouring that boded ill for "the States in rebellion," he could count within the radius of a single block no less than a dozen homes within whose portals he had been a welcome visitor but the month before, from within whose portals there had gone that day sons and brothers in the uniform of the Seventh. How could they welcome him to-night?—he, who, Northern born and bred, had lost his heart in the Sunny South, and

for the sake of the girl who won it, had apparently lost his head!

Halted there, nervous, troubled, irresolute, he started when a hand was passed within his arm—a slender little hand, daintily gloved—and, whirling about, he pulled off his Amidon cap, the college head-gear of the day, and bowed, with ill-concealed agitation. There stood Ethel Rutherford, leaning on the arm of the blue-eyed officer he had met at the Leroys, and Ethel's fair face was full of sadness.

"I so hoped you'd come this evening, Jimmy," said she, in low, gentle tone. "You and poor Gerald were such friends. You know Mr. Hoyt, I think," whereat the cavalryman gravely touched his hat, but sent the hand no further. "Mother, too, would be so glad if you could come in and comfort him."

"I didn't know—or, rather, I supposed—of course, he'd——"

"Gone with his regiment?—Gerald?—Why, Jimmy! Hadn't you heard?" and Miss Rutherford's pretty lips were twitching piteously. "He's almost heartbroken," she went on, presently, striving to control herself. "Mother swooned when he told her the Seventh were ordered off, and that meant him, too, and then—oh, I can't talk of it here!—but Dr. Tracy solemnly declared it would kill her if he went, and he's locked himself in his own room. Can't you go to him?"

"I'd go, Miss Rutherford, if—if— But he'll no more see me than—anybody!" answered Granger, in deep embarrassment; then, plunging further into the

mire, haplessly added, "Can't Barclay— Oh, I beg pardon!"

Even in the dim light they saw the swift color mantle her cheek. "Mr. Barclay has gone with the Seventh. That's what makes it even harder perhaps," said she.

"Why, I didn't know he belonged to the Seventh!" began Granger, grateful for anything to turn the talk to less trying topics.

"He didn't. He went in Gerald's place—almost in his shoes," she answered, with an attempt at gaiety. "At least he wore Gerald's overcoat. He couldn't begin to button his gray jacket around him. You *will* come, won't you? Listen, I'm going for Lorna now. Mother's almost crying to see her."

Up to this moment Lieutenant Hoyt had been standing in civil, patient silence, yet the light cane he carried was switching nervously. Now he suddenly spoke. "Pardon me, Miss Rutherford, if I suggest that now you might accomplish both ends in one. Why not let Mr. Granger bear your mother's message, and be Miss Brenham's escort?"

"Oh, *would* you, Jimmy?" asked Miss Rutherford, impulsively, eagerly, and Granger's sombre eyes looked up in quick suspicion. "It is only to Sixteenth Street, but, of course, you know—and really I ought to hasten back to mother," was her hurried explanation.

"I'll bear the message and offer my services with pleasure," said Granger, trying hard not to show

with how much pleasure, "but—will you?—do you think Gerald will care to see me?"

"Come in—anyway," was the answer, as they parted, and Granger, hurrying on his mission, came face to face at the very next corner with Captain Wallis whom, in his haste and eagerness, he would gladly have avoided. Wallis was dressed with even more than the usual care, and wore at his buttonhole a little knot of ribbon in the national colors. Granger would have passed him by with only a nod, but the elder and brainier man willed it otherwise, and barred his path.

"What, what, what!" he cried, in feigned displeasure. "A Granger—and undecorated with the red, white and blue! Whither away, lad?—and why this haste?—and why no colors? Have we not all to show the symbol of our serfdom to Uncle Sam?"

"I don't believe in wearing my heart upon my sleeve, nor in being compelled to show my colors, Captain Wallis," answered Granger, petulantly. "I am on an errand for Mrs. Rutherford, and must hurry."

"I only stopped you because if I don't a dozen will, James, my lad. Follow my advice—and example. Swing your colors on the outer wall! What's the odds, my boy?—they're the same for both sides!" and then Granger realized that the captain had been dining lavishly, for he swayed slightly and his eyes were clouded. "For Mrs. Rutherford, said you, James, and—do you return thither?"

“Presently—possibly, at least, Captain Wallis; and now, if you’ll excuse me——”

“Not now so easily as I will a bit later, James, if you happen to be there when I am announced. You needn’t mention it, of course, but just then, Jimmy, you emulate your bi-bilical namesake, and be one James the less. Pardon the bluntness of the soldier, Jimmy. *Au revoir.*”

But, in anger now, young Granger had brushed by and disappeared among the moving groups along the avenue. Wallis looked after him a moment, an almost scornful smile on his handsome, highbred face; then glanced at his watch and went sauntering southward. He was in civilian dress, for even in those days one rarely saw Harold Wallis in the garb of his profession except on parade or officer-of-the-day duty at the Island. Ever since the return of the *Star of the West* from her luckless attempt to reinforce Major Anderson in Charleston Harbor an unusual number of officers and men had been camped or quartered about Fort Columbus and Castle William. Duty had been light, and the officers had spent much time in town. They came by twos or threes as a rule, the exception being in the case of Wallis. He preferred to cruise alone. A fluent talker, a man of travel, information, some reading, and ready wit; gifted with a fine presence and admirable self poise and possession; above all, with that quality which tells in social as it does in business life, and which we call *push*, Harold Wallis, despite his cynicism, his apparent disdain of his profession, his brother officers

and especially his superiors, was more sought after in society, bidden to more dinners and dances, than any man of his cloth in that day and generation; this, too, after men at the Union Club had begun to "cold shoulder" him, and others to look askance. He was a favorite among the women, especially the younger matrons, and that established him. "A squire of dames" they called him in the Seventh. Earnest amateurs were they at the old armory over Tompkins Market, and liked not his lofty contempt or gay disdain for all the details of the military art, the more so because even his enemies in the Army, and they were many, were fain to admit that he was a master. Wallis was a brilliant officer, a rare commander on the drill ground when he once drew sword, a graceful, admirable horseman, a keen shot with the old dueling pistols he cherished among his possessions, an agile swordsman, a rather friendly and considerate fellow among the young officers, but a veritable thorn in the flesh of all the seniors.

Even in the week of gloom that preceded the fall of the flag at Sumter, Gotham was laughing over the story told of Wallis and an irate, if only temporary, post commander. The colonel, whom even Wallis held in respect, had been summoned to Washington, and his mantle had fallen for the time, at least, on the shoulders of a testy, yet most worthy veteran who couldn't bear Wallis, nor could his buxom better half, and for excellent reason. Both knew they were the butt of his shafts of wit and ridicule; both had many an ancient grudge

against him, yet neither had ever been able to penetrate the armor of his self esteem or to say or do a thing potent enough to bear him the least annoy. The opportunity seemed to have come at last, however, when Wallis, who had gone over to town right after inspection on the previous Sunday, failed to return that night, and did not report his return until late Monday afternoon, when he sauntered into the mess room accoutred for parade. Everybody knew the major had marked his absence at orderly hour. The morning report of his company, too, was signed by the first lieutenant. The post commander sent to see if he were at his quarters and portentously left orders with the adjutant that Captain Wallis should report to him in person the moment he appeared. This order was duly intrusted to the officer of the guard, and that efficient subaltern kept his eye on every boat that landed at the dock throughout the day, and was ready to swear Captain Wallis was not on the Island, when, in full uniform and utter unconcern, that gentleman issued from his quarters and strolled to the mess.

“The major left orders you were to report at his quarters the moment you returned, Captain Wallis,” said the adjutant, who loved him not.

“Did he?” said Wallis, poising a brimming glass of sherry between him and the light, a pet trick of his when assailed. “How thoughtless our youngsters are becoming! Now, that is the very first intimation I have received, and there goes the drum for parade—and likewise the major!”

“Didn’t Hammond tell you?” queried the adjutant, suspicious and unmollified.

“Hammond—Hammond?” said Wallis, reflectively. “Where should I be apt to encounter Hammond?”

“At the dock on your return. He was ordered to see every boat and not half an hour ago declared he had done so.”

“And didn’t see me? Quite remarkable! Oh, ah, Foster,” he continued, in his imperturbable way, “what time was it when you were so inconsiderate as to invade my sanctum and rouse me from sleep?”

“Two o’clock,” said the officer addressed, with obvious disquiet. He had bounced in, confident that Wallis was still away, and eager to confirm his theory of Wallis’s continued absence, and there had found him enjoying a siesta on his sofa, and had tiptoed back to his own den, hopeful that he had been undetected, yet much discomfited.

All the garrison folk seemed gathered at the edge of the grassy parade that evening. The word had gone forth that martial retribution awaited the debonair captain of the color company, and that the major meant to overhaul him in the presence of the assembled officers the moment the parade was dismissed. Indeed the major’s wife had said so to more than one, and was there to supervise. The men in the long blue ranks wondered why the major cut out so much of his favorite act of putting them through the manual, and the plumed line of officers as it marched to the front and flourished its white-gloved fists in front of the burly commander, lis-

tened with quickened pulses to the first words from his lips as he acknowledged their salute.

"Gentlemen, you will remain a moment. Captain Wallis, your permission to visit the city expired at midnight, I believe?"

"At midnight, Major Blunt," responded, with utter suavity, a voice from the center of the group.

"You have been absent without leave then from that time to this?"

"With the exception of a few unimportant hours, and without—*your* leave, yes, sir." And still was the languid utterance placid and composed; the manner calm, imperturbable, yet almost insolent in its unconcern.

"You failed to report at my quarters, as ordered, on your return," said the major, bristling with rising wrath.

"I must plead total ignorance of the honor of the invitation, major."

"Didn't you see the officer of the guard?" was the instant query.

"Once, at least, quite distinctly, major, as I passed the dock. He appeared—ah—absorbed in receiving the arrivals from town."

"You mean you didn't land there?" demanded the major, with sudden suspicion. "No boat is permitted to land anywhere else, sir." And now in his just indignation the honest old soldier was losing his head. "Do you wish me to suppose you swam back, Captain Wallis?"

"I should rather you thought that, major, than that I—ah—would be willingly absent without leave. Leander, as you doubtless remember, swam the Hellespont. Why should not I attempt the Buttermilk Channel if need be?"

But the major didn't remember. Long years on the frontier and in the line had left him innocent of classical lore. There was but one explanation of this remark—Wallis was poking fun at him; and the soul of the veteran took fire at once. In vehement words, audible even to the group of listening women under the trees at the edge of the parade, he proceeded to stern and ringing reprimand. He declared that the captain had put intentional slight upon him as post commander. He denounced his absence as unsoldierly and inexcusable. He sharply forbade the captain to utter a word until he had finished, for, perhaps purposely, Wallis essayed to interrupt, and finally the major wound up by saying: "Strictly speaking, you should be placed in arrest at once, but as I am merely in command for the day, I shall report—and you can explain—your misconduct to the colonel himself to-morrow."

For an instant the silence that followed this impetuous outburst was unbroken. Then, civil, courteous, placid apparently as before, Captain Wallis finally spoke.

"Is—ah—that all, major?"

"All, sir? Yes, sir; and a serious matter you'll find it! That's enough for the present."

"As you please, major," responded the captain,

calmly lifting his black-plumed "Kosciusko" and glancing inquiringly about him. Then, to the amaze of the group, with polite interest in his tone, turned once more to the irate soldier and languidly said: "I trust, major, that—ah—Mrs. Blunt is well this evening."

It is hard to say who was the more amazed, the major in command or the officers within hearing. The former simply stood and glared a moment. Then with something between a sniff and a snort, turned abruptly away, confounded.

The consensus of opinion on the Island was that Wallis deserved instant trial for disrespect to his superior. The confusion of the cabal of his opponents was indescribable when, on the following morning, came a courteous letter from the distinguished commander of the Brooklyn Navy Yard. In hearty words he begged leave to express his appreciation of the gallant and invaluable services rendered by Captain Harold Wallis to some of his men on Sunday night, and with the hope that the captain had sustained no ill effects from his exposure and involuntary plunge, subscribed himself the most obedient servant of the commanding officer.

Then poor Hammond, who had been getting a rasp for not delivering an order to a man he had not seen, asked for justice at the hands of the colonel on that officer's return and got it. Wallis was sent for and placidly explained that on his way to the Whitehall Ferry, late at night, he heard sounds of mingled riot and revelry; found some sailors at the water's edge in a row with the boatmen, "and got wet hauling one of them out

of the river." A boat shoved off from the Minnesota, anchored off the Battery, and took them all aboard. There Wallis spent the rest of the night until his clothes were dried, and the ship's tailor in the morning had done his best. Then the captain's gig, after breakfast, set him ashore under the guns of the fort and close to his quarters instead of at the stairs, for navy boats could land where they pleased. Not until later was it known that Wallis had swum to save a drowning blue-jacket, helpless through drink, but his absence was fully accounted for now. Asked why he had not explained it to Major Blunt, he, with incomparable ease, replied that the major had refused to listen, which was true. As for the major's reprimand, Wallis did not say, but none the less vividly showed, that it gave him no concern whatsoever.

And this story was going the rounds of Gotham up to the moment of the dread news that South Carolina had loosed her guns on Sumter. Then it might have been forgotten but for a something that took place this very night at the Rutherfords'.

Just as Ethel said, Gerald had locked himself in his room, a martyr to motherly anxiety and boyish despair. Ever since the tragic death of her first-born Mrs. Rutherford had seemed to cling with passionate intensity to Gerald. Time and again by night she would steal to his room and assure herself he was there and safely sleeping. Time and again by day she would sit and wait and watch for him, grudging the hours he gave to college and to his few amusements, and taking com-

fort in his association with the Seventh Regiment, because there, at least, she could go and watch him at drill. Never for a moment had it occurred to her that in all that martial training there was purpose sterner than mere pomp and parade, and her weakened heart well nigh stopped short at the amazing news that the regiment was ordered into active service—that within the week it might clash with Georgia.

“I tell you solemnly,” said Dr. Tracy, to the almost desperate boy, “it may kill your mother if you do not promise her not to go.” It seemed the next thing to dishonor and disgrace, but he gave the promise on his knees; then, refusing to be comforted, turned wretchedly away. It was something, at least, that almost at the last moment Ned Barclay came bounding in, wildly eager, to beg for Gerald’s uniform and his place. They had ten minutes’ talk together alone, and then Barclay was gone and poor Gerald had later buried his head beneath the pillows that he might not hear the distant roar of cheers that rolled down Broadway with the mighty striding column of that splendid command.

That evening he yielded to Ethel’s pleading and let her in. “You must come and see mother a little while,” she cried. “Lorna Brenham and Jim Granger have just gone. I’m so sorry you couldn’t see them—and Captain Wallis was here before they came, but he seemed so odd—excited—flighty, I don’t know what,—and Mr. Hoyt and he left together while I was taking Lorna up to mother’s room. Jimmy couldn’t explain it. The cap-

tain seemed determined to see—you. Has he—has he heard anything, do you think, of—what was lost from my bag?”

“It isn’t that he came to tell,” said Gerald, fiercely. “I’ll see him any time, and the sooner the better, and I want to see Bernard Hoyt, he was Ralph’s best friend. I want to see him this very night. I *must* see him!”

But neither Hoyt nor Wallis could Gerald see alone that night. Ethel, with Lieutenant Hoyt, was seated in the parlor, it seems, when Wallis was ushered in. They had but just returned, and hardly had the senior officer begun to speak when Hoyt turned quickly, and the keen blue eyes looked him sternly over. Wallis winced under the scrutiny and became even more elaborate and effusive in speech and manner, much to Ethel’s perplexity, for she little liked him. Then, when Miss Brenham arrived he overwhelmed her with lavish greeting and inquiries after kindred in the South, to the end that she speedily broke away and begged to be shown at once to Mrs. Rutherford. “Will you excuse me a moment?” said Ethel to the three men, and left them in the parlor.

Granger was there alone when she returned, and Granger was visibly embarrassed, for no sooner had the ladies left the room than Lieutenant Hoyt stepped up to Wallis.

“Captain,” said he, “my rooms are but a few steps away in Eleventh Street. I have telegraphic orders to be in readiness to report for special duty at once. There

will be no time to-morrow, and what I have to say is of importance. Will you come with me at once?" Then, with quick, significant glance toward Granger, "I cannot tell you here."

"Really—Mr.—ah—Hoyt," began Wallis, swaying slightly as he spoke, and the heavily fringed lids half closing, "I should much prefer an hour hence."

"So you said the night of that episode at the Planters' in St. Louis, Captain Wallis. Now I have a letter that you should see——"

"Oh, as you like—as you like, Hoyt," answered Wallis, airily. "Ah, Granger, dear boy, never mind being James the Less just now. Oblige me by saying to Miss Rutherford that I shall return in ten minutes. After you—ah—Mr. Hoyt."

But at Hoyt's doorway stood Lieutenant Hammond in uniform. "I have been searching the clubs for you, Captain Wallis," said he. "You are ordered to report to the Adjutant General at Washington without delay. The orders came this evening."

"*Poco tiempo—poco tiempo*, my dear fellow. Come in—come in with us, Hoyt's going to open his heart—and a bottle of Sillery. There's no train now before morning, and that—that'll never get through Bal'more."

Hoyt turned on him like a flash, his blue eyes blazing. "Who will stop it?" demanded he, "and how do you come to know it? Mr. Hammond, I am not going to open a bottle of Sillery, and you can see why; but I'll open my heart to this extent. I say to this officer," and

again he turned on Wallis—"to *you*, Captain Wallis, that those words shall be reported, verbatim."

And with the morrow they were verified. The road was blocked, and Union troops were shot down in the streets of Baltimore.

CHAPTER IV.

A FAIR GEORGIAN.

LATE as was the hour when Lieutenant Hoyt returned to Fifth Avenue, lights were still gleaming in some of the old-fashioned mansions and many people were adrift along the pavements, all in quest of authentic news. The humid air was thick with rumors. A little crowd had gathered in front of the Brevoort, for there had started an exciting story to the effect that the special train bearing the Seventh through the Jerseys had been wrecked beyond Trenton, and Gotham was ready to believe almost anything.

Busy at his desk, filing and sealing certain papers, Hoyt had worked in silence full an hour after the departure of Wallis and Hammond. It was characteristic of the former that he should airily decline the company of the latter and, in impressive dignity, he had sauntered away under the ailanthus trees that bordered the curb.

"Report my language to whomsoever you will, Mr.—ah—Hoyt," he had languidly said, in response to the junior's indignant words. "It may serve to add force to what I have already said officially in my—ah—effort to rouse the Government to a realization of its peril. As yet, sir, your Pennsylvania War Secretary hasn't got

his eyes open—a sort of week-old Keystone kitten, Mr. Hoyt, and—ah—Mr. Hammond. However, forty-eight hours will do it. Had you any—ah—further communication from our estimable superior, the major, Mr. Hammond? No? I am correct, I assume, in believing it to have been the major rather than the colonel who sent you. It might interest him—it may interest you—to hear that I knew all about it. In fact it is a measure devised to relieve me from this daily contact with the things I loathe—at Governor's Island. Good night to you, gentlemen," and so saying the captain had touched his hat and turned away.

For all the mingled hauteur and insolence of his manner, however, Wallis had been startled into sobriety. The swagger had returned to—the sway had gone from—his walk. His head was high, his demeanor unruffled, his cane twirling jauntily as ever until he reached the Avenue, where he paused a moment; gazed at the Rutherford mansion as though half bent on the return he had promised; then crossed to the east side, where, out of sight of his fellow officers, he quickened the pace and, hurrying through Eleventh Street to University Place, caught and boarded a Fifth Avenue stage, southward bound. He had made a shrewd guess in saying it was the major who sent in search of him, for, still earlier in the evening the colonel commanding had been summoned to meet a general officer of the army at the Astor House, and Hammond made another shrewd guess when, as they watched the tall form striding under the gaslight at the corner, he said, "Prince

Hal won't obey that order until he first reports at the New York Hotel."

Hoyt made, for the moment, no response. His face was grave and anxious.

"Why did the major think he might be here with me?" he presently asked.

"He thought, rather, you might be with him. That—reticule business—" began young Hammond, uncomfortably.

"You don't mean to say that it is known at the Island!" exclaimed Hoyt, spinning on his heel and squarely facing the junior officer.

"Certainly. That fool brother of his was at the Leroy's when Barclay was virtually accused. Wallis hasn't opened his head about it that I know of, but Wallis, Junior, blabs unconscionably. What makes us wrathful is that he hints that Barclay is no longer received at the Rutherfords—that he's in straits—that he's got to get out of New York or—into trouble."

"Trash!" said Hoyt, impetuously. "Barclay is a gentleman. I've known his people for years. They are poor now, perhaps, but he's straight as a string. Moreover, he's gone with the Seventh in young Rutherford's place. That looks little like a breach between him and the family! Will you come in, Hammond?"

"I cannot. I must be back at midnight, but young Wallis will be there occupying his brother's rooms. Should he say or hint anything more——"

"Say for me," broke in Hoyt, "that any reflection on Mr. Barclay is tantamount to slander."

Yet an hour later when the cavalryman came again to the Avenue, even though he discredited the story of disaster to the Seventh, he was perturbed on Barclay's account. It had not taken many days after his reaching New York to learn how devoted that young gentleman had been for months to Ethel Rutherford, and once having seen her—the tall slip of a girl he had left three years before in long braids and short dresses, now a sweet and stately damsel, the fairest of the winter's *débutantes*, Hoyt could well account for that infatuation. For several years the two lads, Barclay and Gerald, had been chums at school and at college. The business of Barclay, Senior, had prospered moderately during the middle fifties, but after the November election of 1860 had fallen away alarmingly. Most of his correspondents were in the South, and Southern securities in the spring of '61 became unavailable assets. Ethel, sole daughter of an old and wealthy family, a beauty and a belle, was not a bride to be won by a penniless suitor, said society. "Barclay was too near her own age—and the poorhouse," was the graceful epigram in which Wallis had disposed of the subject; and even while society laughed, it resented, for Ned Barclay was universally liked, was one of the brightest spirits of his day at Columbia, had stood among the fives of his class, and had pulled Gerald Rutherford through more than one examination. But he was dependent entirely upon his father; had no means whatever outside his allowance, and found that allowance swiftly dwindling at the very time he needed it most. He was a youth

of no vices, up to the time Wallis burst like a comet into the firmament of New York society, and he had renounced his chief hope and ambition at his father's stern behest. As a youth his utmost longing had been to enter West Point, and at that time his cadetship could have been won without much trouble, but Barclay, the elder, had an almost Quaker-like horror of the trade of war. Not only did he set his foot firmly down on that aspiration, but he even forbade, two years later, his son's joining the Seventh. Gerald himself was a member, yet Ned was forbidden to set foot within the armory. Far better would it have been for son and father both had his bent been indulged, for when Wallis came, he brought among other letters three from Southern correspondents whose wishes Barclay could not ignore. He simply *had* to welcome Wallis and push him everywhere.

Wallis had not been slow to learn Ned's longing for a military life, and frequent visits to Governor's Island and the mess had followed. Also frequent dinners and suppers with Wallis's set of Southern youth. Then came the quick secession of State after State, and stories of great disaster to the house of Barclay Brothers. Then Ned Barclay's face began to grow white and haggard and other stories were whispered on the Avenue. Captain Wallis himself was becoming importunate in his attentions to Miss Rutherford whensoever she met him in society. He had never yet been bidden to the house, for, despite her Georgia birth, or perhaps because of it, Mrs. Rutherford from the very first had set her

face against him, and that was long weeks before the spirited encounter at the Leroys and his implied defense of Hugh Preston—he who had first insulted and then shot her beloved son. Good heavens! the last lines her brave boy had written—blurred by repentant tears, for Ralph had caused her many an anxious hour—she read and re-read every day and night of her stricken life, and wore ever upon her grieving heart. She could not bear to receive the man who, while stationed in the South, had been the intimate of Preston and others of his set. She had turned indignantly upon poor Barclay when at last she learned that he had frequently been Wallis's guest—she never knew at what solemn cost—and then it was, when Gotham would have it that Ned Barclay's hopes were blasted and that Wallis would be the coming man, that Ethel Rutherford had amazed society by showing for the former a preference she had never shown before. This, too, at a time when he seemed to have become resigned to his misfortunes!

“Coquetry,” said the envious others. “She only laughed at him so long as he wooed and sighed, but now that he would hold aloof, she lures him back.” Yet deliberate coquetry was a thing the pure-minded girl held in abhorrence. For years as lad and lass they had been frank, jolly boon companions, so long as she wasn't in the way when he and Gerald were planning boyish pranks. Later, while she was studying at Madame Hoffman's and the boys at Columbia, they met less often. Then came senior year for them, and “finishing” for her, and then poor Ned, marveling that he had never

seen it before, saw his fate and fell worshipper at her feet. Now, when she would have rejoiced in the frank, jolly friendship of the old days, he would none of it and was full of sighs and sentiment, and so bored her inexpressibly. When at last, in a torrent of eager words, he told her of his love, she chided,—they were both too young, she said—and then when he waxed importunate, she turned cold. Then came his troubles, his loss of prospects, fortune and what all, and with it his withdrawal from the field, and lo, she who had rebuked and rebuffed, now sought, followed, even pleaded with him, and had won him back to just one week of a Fool's Paradise,—she was so grateful, she said, for all he had done for Gerald—and then, all on a sudden, Ralph's old friend, Bernard Hoyt, appeared upon the scene, with all the glamour of his soldier deeds clustering about his unconscious head, a hero in spite of himself, for no man ever had less self assertion, and before he had been a week within the doors of the old mansion on the Avenue there came a light in Ethel's eyes that Ned Barclay, jealously watching, had never seen before, and so he blessed the chance that gave him Gerald's place upon the rolls of Nevers's company and sent him within twelve hours away to the front. At odds with his father, with fate, with Wallis and the world at large; with an indefinable, yet undisproved accusation lying at his door, without a word from Ethel, whom he deliberately avoided—with more than a word, a lingering hand clasp, a most un-American and totally un-English embrace and a pledge of undying faith and friendship from Gerald—with one

shameful burden lifted from his shoulders, away went Barclay to Washington and the war.

It was of Barclay more than of Wallis, and for the moment more than of the startling military and political situation, that Lieutenant Hoyt was thinking as, along toward eleven o'clock he regained the Avenue and, seeing the excited little crowd in front of the Brevoort, went thither at once to learn the news. By this time the train disaster story had been disproved, but it had gone far and wide, so anxious friends were constantly coming with new inquiry. Among these latter were fathers of families well known to Hoyt, and several appealed to him with questions as to the possibility of treachery to the Seventh en route to the capital. That they might have stirring work after reaching Washington was well understood. That they might have to fight their way thither had not been contemplated for a moment.

"The Seventh," said Hoyt, reassuringly, "is quite able to take care of itself."

"On the battlefield, yes," said an elderly man, whom Hoyt recognized as Mr. Griswold, "yet one of your own cloth, lieutenant, said in my hearing not ten minutes ago that in the narrow streets of a city they would be at the mercy of the mob."

"No disciplined troops under proper command were ever at the mercy of a mob, Mr. Griswold," he answered, firmly. "Who of my cloth could have said so?"

"Captain Wallis," was the prompt reply.

Hoyt smiled. "That was probably at the New York Hotel, and—for Southern ears," said he.

"No. It was in front of the Rutherfords, and to these gentlemen, who, like myself, have sons in the Seventh!"

"Wallis at the Rutherfords!—" began Hoyt, in astonishment, before his better judgment controlled him. It was barely two hours since he had succeeded, for good and sufficient reason, in getting Wallis away from there. Was it possible the captain could have found further exhilaration at the New York Hotel—or an excuse to return? Five minutes settled the question. Hastening thither, Hoyt found a carriage waiting in front and questioned the driver. Yes, he had brought Captain Wallis and the captain had told him to wait.

A dim light was burning in the second story front room—Mrs. Rutherford's, but the lower story and basement were dark. The shades were down in the third and fourth story rooms, but Gerald's sanctum was evidently alight and occupied, for twice a shadow passed swiftly across the window. Somebody had moved hastily between the gas jets and the shade. For a moment Hoyt stood there irresolute. After all, what business was it of his? What right had he to dog Wallis's footsteps? Dissatisfied and vaguely troubled, he glanced about him. Some of the men he had left in front of the Brevoort were already close at hand, and he dreaded further questioning. Walking quickly to the next street, he turned westward a moment; waited well over toward Sixth Avenue, until they had gone by, then retraced his steps. The carriage, at the instant of his return to the avenue, whirled about and drove rapidly

south, and as he reached the door a dark form standing in the shadow of the stone steps suddenly retreated through the basement door. Marveling at this, as he still hovered about the neighborhood, Hoyt heard the front door violently open. Then a young man only partially dressed sprang forth on the broad, free-stone steps and the rasping din of a watchman's rattle burst upon the night. A policeman went bounding bulkily up the avenue, but Hoyt beat him half a dozen lengths to the door. "Come in, for God's sake!" cried Gerald, at sight of his face. "Something has happened to mother!"

CHAPTER V.

MRS. RUTHERFORD'S MALADY.

AT one o'clock that still April morning an anxious party of kinsfolk and neighbors gathered in the parlors of the old Rutherford mansion on the Avenue. In the room above, Mrs. Rutherford's, lay the mistress of the household, moaning at intervals, faint and only half conscious. Beside her, pale, tearful, disheveled, knelt her daughter. In low-toned consultation were Dr. Tracy, for years the trusted physician of many of the old Knickerbocker families, and a much younger man, a rising practitioner of the modern school, Dr. Parker. One or two maid servants flitted nervously about, obviously as much in attendance on Hortense, the housekeeper, as upon their mistress, for the housekeeper's nerves, too, seemed to have sustained a shock. Upstairs and down, now here, now there, restless and, as all could see, unstrung, Gerald Rutherford was darting from room to room, searching he would not say for what; and in the dining-room, silent, alert, dignified, and busying himself after the fashion of the day, in serving sherry and biscuit to the visitors, was Forbes, for more than a decade the family butler and major domo. Among the neighbors gathered in the parlor, discussing in low tone the extraordinary event of the night, were

one or two of the party that, two hours earlier, had been in conversation with Lieutenant Hoyt at the Brevoort. Hoyt, himself, had disappeared—gone in quest of Captain Wallis was the explanation, for there was grave reason why that officer and gentleman should appear and account for himself. Unless the physicians were utterly at fault, he, Wallis, was in some way the cause of Mrs. Rutherford's severe and sudden prostration.

Just what had happened no one could say. This much and only this much was known: Ethel had been with her mother when, shortly after half-past ten, a carriage stopped in front of the house, and they listened for the sound of the gong that announced an arrival. They heard Forbes swiftly ascend the stairs from the basement and go to the front door, despite the fact that no bell had summoned him, and then, peering through the window, Ethel saw that several men were gathered on the broad pavement in front, evidently in earnest talk. Dim as was the light, she recognized in their midst the tall, distinguished form of Captain Wallis, and, in answer to her mother's nervous, excited question, told her he was there. Presently Wallis raised his hat to the knot of civilians, turned and looked up at the windows. A moment later they heard his voice at the door. Wondering at his coming at so late an hour, Ethel darted out into the hall and stood looking down over the balusters.

In quick, imperative tone Wallis made his request. The languid drawl had vanished: "Forbes, say to Mrs. Rutherford I must see her—if only for a moment—on a matter of importance."

With swift, catlike steps, Forbes had come aloft. Ethel had again darted into her mother's boudoir, alarmed and mystified. She heard the butler's deep tone, formal and respectful, as he made the announcement.

"Captain Wallis, ma'am, begs to see Mrs. Rutherford for five minutes—a matter of the utmost importance." Even at the time Ethel noted the addition made by Forbes to the message as given him. How came he, the butler, to know, and knowing to say of his own motion that it was a matter of the *utmost* importance?

"Show the captain here," to Ethel's surprise, was her mother's prompt answer. "I wish to see Captain Wallis, and by myself, Ethel," and the girl had barely time to escape through the passage leading from her mother's boudoir to her own room at the rear of the house.

Only some fifteen minutes did Wallis remain in the boudoir. He came forth hurriedly, softly; went down the stairs with light and agile steps,—he who was usually so deliberate in every move. Then from the hallway below Ethel heard his voice in low, yet imperative tones: "Forbes, where is Hortense?"

"In the basement, sir. Shall I call her? She has had visitors."

"No. Lead on. I'll go with you," was the answer, and that was all until Hortense was heard, in a very few minutes scurrying up the stairs, and then came from Mrs. Rutherford's room a cry of alarm. Rushing thither, Ethel found her mother lying on the couch in a deathlike swoon, Hortense bending and blubbering

over her, just as the carriage door without was heard to slam, and the vehicle drove swiftly away. Gerald had come bounding from his mother's room, minus coat, waistcoat and boots, and, panic-stricken at sight of his mother's pallid face, and a disorderly array of papers lying about her open desk, had rushed to the front door and sprung his rattle to summon the only aid then available—the police.

“My first thought was that she had been robbed,” he explained. “The desk was always kept locked, and none of us ever saw the papers out before. *Now* they lay scattered about the floor and she lay in a swoon. Of course I called the watch and sent Forbes's boy for the doctor, but Tracy got here before our messenger could have gone half way—came in the carriage in which Wallis drove away—Wallis it was who summoned him and sent him in his own carriage.”

Now, a singular fact in support of this statement was that the carriage was yet there, after one o'clock in the morning, after some of the elders had gone to their homes, and while Lieutenant Hoyt was still away searching for Wallis. The driver said he was waiting for the doctor's orders and the doctor sent word he had no further use for him. Then the driver said he wanted his pay; and the butler, being sent forth to settle with him, came back and reported that the man demanded six dollars, first for taking the captain and another gent to the house, second for taking the captain and t'other gent as far as Dr. Tracy's, third for bringing Dr. Tracy, and finally for waiting two hours or so. The captain and

“t’other gent” had disappeared during the two or three minutes which it took Dr. Tracy to get ready.

“Who was the other gentleman?” was the question eagerly asked by Gerald when he in turn went out to see the driver. But that was something the driver couldn’t tell. All he knew was that he wanted six dollars, and it would soon be seven if they kept him ten minutes more. Rutherford paid him and discharged him, after taking his address, and then before the carriage was fairly out of sight, whipping round a corner toward Broadway, back came Lieutenant Hoyt in another vehicle. He had gone all the way to Whitehall only to learn that Captain Wallis had not returned—had not even been seen.

There was an old boatman in those days who was frequently employed by officers returning late at night to their quarters at Governor’s Island, and Wallis was one of his deities. Superior, even supercilious, as was the captain’s manner toward most of his associates, it was kindness itself toward those in humbler station, just so long as they seemed to recognize the difference in their respective walks in life. He gave, too, with too liberal a hand, dwarfing the largess of his brother officers, much to the prejudice of good order, if not of military discipline, but to the end that old Jasper and his mates worshiped and were ever eager to serve him. This devotion on their part had become intensified since the episode of his midnight rescue of the drowning sailor. Now Jasper well knew the unpopularity of Captain Wallis and therefore took delight in dilating upon

his virtues in the presence and hearing of those whom he conceived to be the captain's enemies. No man is a hero to his valet, but one way to win the masses is to offend the powers, and Jasper, though he had only twice before seen Lieutenant Hoyt, scented danger to his favorite. The very tone in which the young cavalryman couched his inquiry told of menace.

Stripping a leaf from his pocketbook after satisfying himself that inquiry was useless, Hoyt wrote as follows :

“CAPTAIN WALLIS :

“No train leaves for Washington before 6 A.M. Matters gravely involving your name have occurred at the Rutherford house. Mrs. Rutherford is prostrated, and, Dr. Tracy states, because of the disappearance of certain important papers. For your own sake and that of the service, I urge you to see the doctor and Mr. Gerald Rutherford before you go. They will wait for you all night if need be. I have left a similar message, sealed, at the New York Hotel. BERNARD HOYT.”

Folding this carefully, he handed it to Jasper and, leading him to one side beyond the hearing of the hackman, there in low tone gave his instructions.

“Jasper,” said he, “you are a friend of Captain Wallis and would gladly do him a service. See that he gets this note the moment he comes, and on no account let it fall into other hands.”

But, when questioned on the following day, Jasper declared that Captain Wallis never came that way to the Island during the night. At five in the morning, Mr. Eugene Wallis, who had gone over shortly before mid-

night, came back, bringing certain items of the captain's kit, and stating that he was on his way to the Cortlandt Ferry to meet his brother, who was to take the early train for Washington. Contrary to the instructions of Lieutenant Hoyt, Jasper placed the note in the younger brother's hands.

The night, therefore, passed at the Rutherfords' without further visit from Captain Wallis, nor had he again been to the New York Hotel, for the sealed note remained at the desk unclaimed. At dawn, wearied with his long vigil, and leaving his patient at last in apparently tranquil slumber, Dr. Tracy had returned to his home. Ethel and a nurse remained in the room with Mrs. Rutherford, but the former had been persuaded to lie down and was trying to sleep. The servants had finally gone to their rooms, yet lights were still brilliant in the parlor where Gerald Rutherford paced nervously to and fro, waiting for the coming of the man who never came and for whom, late as four o'clock, Hoyt had again inquired at the New York Hotel and, just as Tracy was leaving, returned to report his quest unsuccessful and to endeavor to learn more definitely, if possible, something of the real cause of the night's alarm.

He and Wallis had never been friends. He more than suspected Wallis of being a Southern sympathizer. He knew him to have been a card player on "the Plains," and had heard tales of high play at his quarters on the Island and at certain resorts in town. He had been told that Wallis was, not many months since, quite deeply in debt, but never had he dreamed it possible that

one of that old family and distinguished name could be guilty of forcibly or fraudulently possessing himself of valuable papers, yet, from all that could be gathered, most important papers were actually missing from Mrs. Rutherford's desk, and all over town the story had gone that Ethel Rutherford had lost from her reticule the previous Sunday letters, or something of that sort, on which she set much value. Wallis had picked up the reticule and brought it to the house. Wallis had been alone with Mrs. Rutherford late that very night. Her desk had all the appearance of having been rifled, and it was not until the following day that she herself was able to declare that she herself had opened the desk in Wallis's presence and had tossed those papers about while searching for others she needed to show him—others that, either then or earlier, had disappeared. Of their nature she would not speak, even to Gerald and Ethel, but Tracy gathered that they were connected with Ralph's adventurous past, and in the hurried, whispered conferences between brother and sister that occurred at intervals during the night, this had been accepted as explanation of her extreme agitation.

Forbes, the butler, vigilant and gravely sympathetic, had come up from his den in the basement, as the doctor descended the stairs, and with deep deference and concern, had begged for better news of the mistress he had so long served.

"Better, better, thank you, Forbes," said Tracy. "But we must guard her carefully against further shock. Er—you—you were her brother's butler in Savannah,

were you not, before his death? Did you ever observe——”

“Not in Savannah, sir, except for occasional visits,” interrupted Forbes, with much deference, yet a certain haste. “It was in Paris and Washington I had the honor of serving Mr. Gordon.”

“Ah, yes, I remember,” said Tracy, as he stepped forth from the vestibule, and at the head of the steps encountered Lieutenant Hoyt returning from his unsuccessful search. The two young men were in the parlor a moment later, with Forbes hovering about in respectful, assiduous attendance, just as the first pallid light of dawn began to steal into the eastward sky. With bewildered brain, Hoyt was trying to piece together all he had seen, heard and known of Wallis in the past, and then, couple his conclusions with those forced upon him by the events of the night. He remembered only too well how Wallis had publicly, as it were—at the Leroy’s table—given out the insinuation that Ned Barclay was the man who knew what had become of Ethel’s missing letters. He believed that it was to speak of her murdered boy that Mrs. Rutherford had conquered her antipathy to Wallis, sufficiently, at least, to permit him to enter her boudoir, and that when Wallis left it fifteen minutes later, he left the desk in a snarl of disorder and the mistress of the house in a swoon. Hoyt knew, furthermore, that when Wallis made his exit from the house it was not by way of the front steps, but from underneath them—through the basement door. He knew

now that, all the time Wallis was within, a companion remained silent and concealed in the carriage. Who could that have been? He remembered that as he reached the house, after the carriage had driven away, a dark figure was visible near the basement door, but slunk quickly within at sight of him—the butler, probably—but why should the irreproachable Forbes have acted then as though unwilling to be seen, when, now that he and Gerald had much to say to each other, Forbes found means to busy himself about the room?

And then Hoyt recalled Wallis's remarkable words—the words he had resolved to report to their commanding officer as he had so notified Wallis—the words he had already spoken of to Rutherford—the prophecy that no train on the morrow would succeed in getting through Baltimore. What possible knowledge could Wallis have of a plot to cut communication with the threatened capital? Hoyt was thinking especially of this—had spoken of it to Rutherford, still nervously and excitedly pacing the floor, when the latter suddenly turned on Forbes, bidding him to withdraw to his own room. Then, as with low bow, the butler turned to go, all three stopped short and Rutherford held up his hand as though cautioning silence.

Far down the street, on the pulseless morning air, shrill, boyish voices could be faintly heard uplifted in exciting cry. Nearer they came and nearer, the young street Arabs running rapidly in the effort to

outstrip each other and herald their wares among the homes of the residence district. Indistinct as yet, but startling, were their cries, and the young men hastened out upon the broad stone steps in front. What news of the Seventh now? was the thought uppermost with each.

Full tilt across the Belgian pavement, waving a paper in his grimy hand, a tattered little figure came bounding from the block below, and then at last the young harbinger of evil pealed forth his message to a startled world.

“Extra Her’ld! Battle at Baltimore! Massacree of the Sixth Massachusetts!”

And Gotham woke in desperate earnest now. Where then was its precious Seventh?

CHAPTER VI.

CLASHING AUTHORITY.

IN the brilliant sunshine of mid May the snow white tents of a great regiment were gleaming on the heights to the north of Washington. It was the hour of the afternoon battalion drill, and a swarm of spectators in carriages, in saddle and afoot, watched the machine-like evolutions of the long gray-jacketed lines and listened to the stirring music of the Seventh's splendid band. Around Baltimore, by way of Annapolis instead of through the grimy, hostile, "tough"-infested streets, the first comers from the Empire State, side by side with the men of the Eighth Massachusetts, had safely reached the imperiled capital, and they were not happy over the change in their projected route. The tidings that their comrades of the Sixth, pushed ahead by special train from Philadelphia, and then compelled to quit their cars at the eastern suburb and fight their way through the mob-ruled city, had stirred in every breast a longing to move at once on Baltimore and sweep its blackguard element—sole participants in the assault—from the face of the earth. But older heads had counseled deviation from the route. Washington, the capitol,

the President and cabinet were the first consideration. Baltimore could be handled later.

For a day the Seventh had stacked its arms in the marble corridors and chambers of the capitol itself; had noted with keen appreciation the martial and ringing voice of the gifted officer sent to muster them into the service of the United States, and had well nigh exploded with merriment over the vivid contrast in mien, tone and manner of the soldier in charge of the impressive ceremony and the civilian chosen, as was deemed the proper thing in those earlier days, to administer to the regiment, all and severally, the solemn obligation that bound it to battle against all enemies of the Republic whomsoever. With bared right palms uplifted stood the long gray ranks, facing in statuesque silence and gravity the queer little figure that, book in hand, stepped a pace or two forward from the group of officials; glanced nervously up and down the lines, and then those lines shook and swayed in the effort to subdue their almost irrepressible laughter, when, in shrill, high-pitched, quavering falsetto the little man piped forth, "*The following is the oath.*"

And now, the observed of all observers, the famous command was fairly in camp, and the gleaming bayonets of its gray-clad sentries flashed in the slanting sunshine—those along the roadway, time and again, coming to the "present" as officers of rank and distinction rode or drove in front of the westward posts. And right here at the corner of camp nearest the

dusty thoroughfare leading away toward the distant roofs and spires of the city, an odd thing happened this blithe May afternoon.

The sentry on Number 12, erect, alert and soldierly, had halted and faced the roadway for about the fortieth time since the posting of the second relief, for another carriage came whirling toward him from town, and two officers, followed by an orderly in the yellow trimmed jacket of the cavalry, were riding in close attendance. Up the line of sentry posts, northward and mainly beyond the guard tents, spectators in large numbers were watching the evolutions of the regiment. The band for the time was silently awaiting the next period of rest. At the head of each company street, seated on camp stools or sprawled about the turf, was a little knot of gray-jackets, critically observing the drill and watching the work of the sentries, for even in those earlier days the Seventh prided itself on its precision in guard and sentry duty. Number 12 had come in for favorable comment time and again—his soldierly bearing and consummate knowledge of the details of his duty being obvious to all. The question was, "How did he get it?" for, as the whole Sixth Company knew, Private Barclay had never donned the uniform of the regiment until the April day they marched away.

"I was corporal of his relief the first time he mounted guard," said Van Dusen, corporal of company police, and excused because of that duty from afternoon drill, "and he knew the ropes better than

I did, but he explained it by saying he had so often visited the camp at West Point and watched the sentries at Governor's Island. He was forever going over there."

"With that hee-haw Dundreary fellow Wallis," broke in young Burnham, impetuously. "It galls me, somehow, to have to salute him, and he's forever riding out here. He and Barclay were thick as thieves all the early spring. Now—they don't speak."

"How can they, you idiot?" demanded Van Dusen. "We're sworn into service on the same basis as the rank and file of the regulars, and it's nothing but salute and stand attention. Look you, now. Yonder comes the very man. Gad, but he can sit a horse!"

And so for a moment all eyes were directed upon the distant carriage, swiftly bowling up the dusty road, upon its attendant cavaliers, upon the lone sentry now standing at halt and "support," facing squarely to his front. Even over the intervening hundred yards the soldier spectators could not but see that the equipage was one of the few really stylish and well-appointed to be found in Washington at the time. Coachman and footman were in livery, with cockaded hats. A spotted coach dog trotted underneath. The open landau glistened with paint and varnish and silver lamps and trimmings. The high-checked, high-stepping team were blooded bays, and what could be seen of the occupants under the lace-fringed parasols told of wealth and station. Wallis,

like Major Pendennis, often said he was so poor he could afford to be seen with nothing less.

His spirited horse, curveting at the right of the carriage, was guided and controlled by the lightest touch of his bridle hand. Disdainful of the high-pommeled Grimsley saddle, then the regulation for officers' use, Wallis sat like a centaur in an English pigskin, his riding trousers strapped down over the dainty boot that peeped through the polished steel stirrup. No black-hooded, cumbrous wooden block for him when within the confines of civilization. His uniform frock coat, faultless in fit and style, was worn with careless grace.

The French-made *kepi* that followed neither the orthodox pattern of forage cap nor the newfangled "McClellan" with its overhanging top and sloping visor, sat jauntily over the right eye and brow, in dashing defiance of the edicts of the War Department. The skirts of his coat were at least a foot shorter than the law allowed. His trousers, cut in the extreme of the peg-top style then in vogue, were at least a foot larger at the knee, and were dark instead of the prescribed sky blue. From head to foot he looked the *beau sabreur*—the easy, debonair, almost insolent cavalier, and from head to heel, decorated as was the latter with flashing steel spur, he was a picture of soldierly style and unsoldierly contempt for regulation.

But how was this? Unmistakable as was the form, what was there unfamiliar in the uniform? Two

days before, when Van Dusen was on guard, the debonair captain had ridden jauntily along their front, the sentries facing him and bringing their rifles to the shoulder in deference to the single row of buttons and the double bars of gold upon the glistening "rectangles." Now, to the surprise of these soldier critics, Barclay's gleaming rifle was snapped suddenly to the "present," and the explanation was before their eyes. The single-breasted frock had given place to another, its glittering buttons in a double row. Wallis, the gay, indifferent dawdler of the Island, the man perennially on the ragged edge of trial by court-martial for neglect of duty—or his superior officers—rode revealed before the astonished gaze of the Seventh, the first of the coterie of "regulars" they had seen about New York to receive promotion. The gold bars had sprouted into golden leaves—Wallis had been made major of one of the new regiments just organized by direction of the President, and the more youthful rider, on the opposite side of the carriage, in the uniform of a subaltern of the same command, was Wallis's younger brother, Eugene. What strange influence could have been at work that these, whose haunts and habits were ever those of the gay, reckless set of Southerners that for years had spent their summers and their dollars at Saratoga, should be among the very first selected for advancement in the Union blue?

And now, facing these two, statuesque, soldierly and in the field dress of a private of the Seventh

Regiment, Ned Barclay stood with presented arms, saluting the worst enemy he had ever known.

But the episode had not ended. A careless, mechanical lift of the hand, unaccompanied by even a glance, was the major's recognition of the sentry's salute as he cantered by. They who watched saw that Barclay instantly resumed the shoulder, almost before strict sentinel etiquette permitted; tossed the gleaming rifle to the "slope" and with his eyes on the brilliant little party, followed along his post. Then it was that the oddest part of the odd thing happened.

The wind was blowing briskly from up the valley of the Potomac, whirling little dust clouds from the roadway across the sentry post, and a sudden puff had caught a light, filmy veil from the head of one of the ladies and borne it sailing through space, directly within the guarded lines and straight in front of the marching sentry on Number 12. Major Wallis, whose bay was plunging excitedly at the moment, did not see it, for it flew behind him. Eugene Wallis, looking at the ladies as he rode, and jealously watching, too, the saluting sentries, reined up promptly and, turning to the right, rode straight at the sentry post, at the same time calling to the orderly to pursue and capture the floating veil. It had fluttered to the ground by this time about a dozen yards inside the post of Number 12. The orderly, a veteran regular, glanced dubiously at the lieutenant and uncertainly at the sentry, but thought it best to obey.

To his end he spurred his horse at the low bank and—was brought up suddenly by the crash of Number 12's bayonet coming to the charge and the ringing order, "Halt!"

"That's all right, sentinel," shouted young Wallis from his saddle. "I ordered the man to get that veil, sir."

Back came the rifle to the shoulder, then snapped to the "port." "Sorry, sir," was the uncompromising reply; "my orders forbid it."

"Not when an officer assumes the responsibility, sir," shouted the week-old lieutenant, angered and reddening, and suddenly realizing to whom he was speaking. "I order you, sir, to respect my authority and let my man pass."

"I repeat, sir, my orders forbid it. You *have* no authority here," was the sharp, sudden and not too respectful answer, for well did Barclay know that a sentry "took orders" from no subaltern except the officer of the guard. So did the mounted orderly, who sat motionless and trying not to look tickled half to death at the boy officer's discomfiture. The carriage had stopped several rods away. The ladies were gazing and listening. The major, taking in the situation at a glance, had trotted ahead toward the guard tents where he could cross the lines unhindered. It was not wise of him to go without first calling off the callow lad in the bumptiousness of his first uniform, and Eugene made the blunder of his life.

In his ignorance of the sentry's prerogative he chose to think that Barclay was seizing the opportunity to brave and belittle him before the eyes of society and so avenge, in part, the injuries dealt by the words and deeds of his elder brother. Furiously digging the spurs into his mettlesome charger's flanks, he drove straight at the sentry. In an instant the shout for the corporal of the guard went ringing down the line, and the lookers-on sprang to their feet in time to see the flashing bayonet again slapped down to the charge. Deaf to the lieutenant's wrathful orders, disdainful of upraised whip or on-coming steed, the sentry of the Seventh stood his ground like a rock, and the shining steel dug deep in the glossy brown shoulder before the abused and innocent victim could check his own way. Then as the whip came down, the blood-dripping bayonet was tossed on high, parrying the stroke, and then came the corporal and a file of the guard, running at speed to the scene.

After them came their officer. After him, at swift trot, with genuine concern in his sombre eyes, Major Wallis. The veil was forgotten. Sinewy hands seized the bridle reins and backed horse and rider to the roadway.

"Eugene—Eugene!" said Wallis, in evident dismay, "dismount at once and look to your horse. Gentlemen, I beg you to overlook my brother's error. He shall make every amend. He really did not know he should not force a sentry post. Your sentry did perfectly right. I make you my compliments, sir," said

he, raising his cap and for the first time looking at and fairly seeing Number 12. Then, on a sudden, the flash went out from his eyes, the flush from his cheeks. "Good God—Barclay—you!"

For a moment not another word was spoken. With the blood spurting from his maimed shoulder the bay stood quivering before them; his rider, white with rage and humiliation, slowly, reluctantly dismounting. Far up the field the regiment, in compact column of division, had just stacked arms for a brief rest, and the band began a spirited selection from a favorite opera of the day—the "Ballo in Maschera." From the guard tents a few soldiers, drawn by curiosity, came a little distance and stood silently, intently watching the group in front of Number 12. They saw the major still in saddle, his horse switching nervously about, while the skilled rider's eyes were fixed in evident amaze and some chagrin on the stern, set face of Ned Barclay, who for his part, finding himself addressed, coolly assumed once more the position of port arms, looked straight before him into space and answered never a word.

By this time Eugene Wallis had slid his hand along the rein and, with hatred burning in his eyes, stood glaring at Barclay, ignoring utterly the plight of his beautiful steed. So engrossed were the entire party by the scene at the spot that none noticed the swift approach of a slender young officer in the uniform of the cavalry. Paying no heed to any man present, he had leaped from saddle; tossed the reins to his orderly

and, brushing young Wallis aside with but scant apology, bent, looked one instant at the jetting wound; then straightened up; glanced eagerly about him; pointed to a near-by fence where, in the slanting sunbeams, something was glistening and shimmering; then spoke in quick yet quiet tone of command to the corporal and his men.

"Fetch me a handful of those cobwebs," said he, and at the sound of his voice the soldiers darted away, while Wallis, in saddle, whirled suddenly about and glared.

"What—ah—you, too, Mr.—ah—Hoyt!" he began, with quick resumption of the old, insolent drawl. "We are dealing in—ah—surprises, it seems, this—ah—afternoon."

With no more reply than had been accorded by the sentry, Lieutenant Hoyt turned and stood pressing together the lips of the wound. Then, as the guard came hurrying back, took from their outstretched hands a quantity of the filmy web; rolled it into a wad; clamped it firmly against the horse's shoulder with both hands, briefly saying to young Wallis, "Hold him steady a moment."

"Er—ah—Eugene, when the bleeding is—ah—stanchd you will find us—ah—with the Secretary's party. The ladies are probably getting impatient. Mr. Officer-of-the-Guard, I regret this unhappy—ah—accident, and so does my brother, who is—ah—perhaps too much overcome to speak. Good evening, sir," and the major rode airily away.

"Good day, Major Wallis," answered the New York lieutenant, with cold civility and a perfunctory touch to the cap visor. Then turning to the scowling junior, who was quivering with suppressed rage, said, "I shall have to trouble you for your name and address, sir."

"Lieutenant Eugene Wallis, ——teenth Infantry, Regular Army," was the answer, in ruffled but impressive dignity. "I am responsible personally, sir," he added, with painful imitation of the manner of the men he had most assiduously studied, "*personally, sir,*" he continued, "for anything I may have said or done. The insolence of your sentry, sir——"

"My sentry, sir, made only one slip," was the instant rejoinder. "Your own brother bears him out. Personally, sir, I regret that he bayoneted the horse. It should have been you."

In a fury now, Wallis the younger whirled on this new tormentor. "By God, sir!" he cried. "I can't stoop to words with a contemptible private, but you at least wear the badge of an officer and a gentleman. I'll hold you personally accountable——"

"You'll be held *officially* accountable," sharply broke in Lieutenant Bronson, of the Seventh, springing back a pace, his hand at his sword hilt, for in his blind rage Wallis's whip was once more uplifted.

But it never fell. A hand—a very bloody hand—quickly seized it from the rear, and then a voice—a

very quiet voice—but a very stern one—said: “Let go that whip, Mr. Wallis, and then follow your brother—in arrest.”

For a moment there was utter silence. Then, stunned and startled, yet bent on making brave show to the last, young Wallis, with twitching lips, turned savagely on the speaker.

“I’m not under *your* command, Lieutenant Hoyt. *You* can’t place me in arrest.”

“Another exhibit of your ignorance, Mr. Wallis,” was the placid reply, as the blue-eyed young cavalry-man stepped forward, his dripping hands outstretched. “I saw you threaten and abuse a sentry and then raise a whip at an officer in the discharge of his duty. My first thought had been to look after this horse you so misused. Now, as Mr. Bronson may be unaware of his prerogative, or unwilling to use it on a week-old regular, I shall use mine. By the articles of war all officers have power to quell all quarrels, frays and disorders, whether among persons belonging to their own or to another corps. Pardon my preaching, gentlemen of the Seventh, but the occasion calls for a lesson—‘and to order officers into arrest,’ as I, sir, order you,” and with that Hoyt turned squarely on his junior, the cause of all the trouble.

Then suddenly, the men of the Seventh, sentry and all, once more stood at salute, for Major Wallis had come trotting back.

“What delays you? What has occurred, Eugene?”

he asked, in sharp, imperative tone, so unlike the drawl and dawdle he affected in society.

"Ask—this man," was the sullen answer, as Wallis indicated with a mere gesture, Lieutenant Hoyt.

"I have ordered your brother under arrest, Major Wallis," said Hoyt, speaking slowly and distinctly, and looking squarely up into the burning eyes of the handsome horseman. "He abused and threatened a sentry and attempted to lash the officer of the guard. These gentlemen are inexperienced, possibly, in such matters. You and I are not."

"Then here and now, Mr.—ah—Hoyt, I countermand your order and assume, as your superior, all responsibility in the premises."

It was an awkward moment. Here was a palpable clash of authority between representative officers of the regular army in the presence and hearing of officers and men of the nation's most famous regiment of citizen soldiery. Bronson, looking as though he knew not what to do, stood in silence, his hand still at the sword hilt, his eyes glancing first at one, then the other. Barclay, as sentry, no longer addressed or addressing, looking as though he knew just what to do and was longing to do it but for the iron rules of the service, had resumed the "shoulder" and stood like a statue. The corporal and his party had withdrawn a pace or two, one of the number replacing Hoyt and continuing the effort to staunch the flow of blood, but one and all started as though with sudden shock;

then stood staring at Hoyt as the answer came, stern, sharp and cutting.

“You are in no position, Major Wallis, either to order or to counter-order. You were directed not an hour ago to report in person to the adjutant general to answer to the charge laid at your door—that of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.”

CHAPTER VII.

A SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN.

WITH commissions in the regular or volunteer army awaiting nearly half its membership, the Seventh was sent home at the end of a month. The danger was over for the time being. The seventy-five thousand, and more, had answered the call. Washington was a military camp, of all manner of soldiers, in every conceivable kind of dress and equipment and grade of discipline. Baltimore was subdued, but seething, and in both cities the friends of the South—of “the States in rebellion”—were as active, hopeful and, among residents at least, well nigh as numerous as were those of the Union. Across the Potomac the stars and stripes floated over the parapets of Fort Runyon—many a blistered palm had the Seventh to show for its spade work on the sacred soil—while the stars and bars fluttered in full view of the capitol over the roofs of Alexandria. The rabble of Gotham, ever at odds with what it called its “shanghai” regiment, shouted derision at its return—the *ignobile vulgus* and the unthinking in better station professing to believe that these who were able to instruct and command should have stayed to fight in the ranks. The War Department knew better.

Men fit for soldiers could be found by the hundred thousand. Officers qualified to teach and discipline, to lead and drill the vast levies soon to be raised, even for the new regiments of regulars, were so few in proportion to the crying need that the government was eagerly conferring commissions on soldiers of fortune from the ranks abroad, sergeants from the ranks at home and civilians by the score from many a city. The Island became a bustling, swarming school for newly appointed officers. Their white tents dotted the greenward within—and the glacis without—old Fort Columbus, and the tall, martial colonel in command—the one man to whom Harold Wallis had ever shown the faintest deference during his six months' sojourn at the post—was the soldier at whose desk so many of the Seventh, Ned Barclay among them, made their first report in their brand-new uniforms as subalterns of the regular service. He was far too fine and distinguished a man in his profession to long remain at duty so inconspicuous. With the stars of a general officer on his shoulders he was sent to the West, saying to his successor as he was escorted across to the ferry, "Do me one favor, Blunt. Look out for young Wallis. I—promised the mother to watch over both her boys and—you know what a time I've had."

Blunt, however, only half knew. It had taken all the influence of certain Senators, all the pleadings of certain old army friends of the Wallises—men who loved the memory of the father, killed fighting gloriously in the Mexican War—and all the persuasive powers of

Major Wallis himself to induce the irate adjutant general to recommend to the War Secretary that the numerous charges against him be "pigeon-holed"—he would not recommend their being entirely dropped. Simon Cameron himself would speedily have surrendered to the pleasure had not Lorenzo Thomas, head of the adjutant general's department, stood stanchly to his guns. The charges against Wallis had come in fast and furious—some from responsible and urgent patriots, prominent citizens of Gotham—some mere rabid frothings of sensation and scandal lovers. "Holding treasonable intercourse with the enemy," "being an active sympathizer with the South" and "corresponding with Southern officers and families" were serious enough to call for explanation, but when Bernard Hoyt supplemented these, as he did, with a written statement regarding the disappearance of certain letters of Miss Rutherford's from her silken bag and of important papers from Mrs. Rutherford's desk, presumably on the occasion of Wallis's midnight visit to her boudoir, the adjutant general felt that prompt action was demanded and sent an orderly with a note directing the major to report to him in person at once.

Wallis had planned that afternoon to waylay the carriage of a most influential and distinguished woman, daughter of a Cabinet Minister and a power in social circles. He wished to present his younger brother and secure her interest in his behalf, and conceived that in no way would Eugene be so apt to make a favorable impression as in saddle. It was there the brothers

looked their best. It was without surprise, but with airily concealed annoyance, that he received the general's mandate and, after reading it, signed the receipt. He dared to consider it too late in the afternoon for office hours; tossed the note aside to be obeyed on the morrow and, at the very moment when the adjutant general sat at his desk in the dark old War Department building of the early sixties, awaiting Wallis's coming, that debonair officer cantered buoyantly away to the northward suburbs, and Thomas waited in vain. For this reason had the major's reception on the following day been frigid in the last degree.

But if Thomas was icy Wallis was not, when told of the charges against him. He had, of course, demanded explanation of Hoyt at the camp of the Seventh and in the presence of Bronson, Barclay and the others present at the moment. "The matter is in the hands of the Adjutant General, sir," was that officer's reply, "and full explanation awaits you there, where you should be at this instant instead of here."

For reasons of his own Wallis had believed that the charge to which Hoyt referred was in some way connected with Barclay. Not until he appeared before the General did he find that in nowise was Barclay mentioned. But for one thing he would have gone in search of Lieutenant Hoyt the moment his interview with General Thomas closed. A soldier of the old school and of the old army, his first thought was to "call him out" and if possible shoot him, but the thing that prevented was his being sent summarily to his quarters in arrest,

and there for five days and nights had he to stay until powerful friends and the War Secretary prevailed.

Confident of the major's guilt and believing that all necessary and incriminating evidence could be forthcoming, Hoyt never foresaw the possibility of his charges being "turned down." A man of almost puritanical purity of life, of most delicate honor and gifted with a sense of duty almost abnormal, Hoyt had long looked upon Wallis as an officer whose influence in army circles was bad throughout, and it was a peculiarity of his nature—a flaw, if you will—that where he saw so much to condemn he could find nothing to approve. The two had been antagonistic from the start, and the breach had been widened irreparably by an episode at St. Louis only the year before. A court-martial at Jefferson Barracks was sitting in judgment on the actions of a certain officer of the supply department, and Hoyt had been called thither as a witness. On the steamer from Leavenworth, down the Missouri, he was surprised to find the young and winsome wife of a senior officer whom Hoyt held in much esteem—much more than he felt for her—and on arrival of the steamer at St. Louis he was not surprised to see Harold Wallis on the levee, first man to board the boat as the stage-plank lowered.

What passed between the two men later at the Planters' was known only to themselves. What passed between Hoyt and the clerk just before that meeting was known to many. Hoyt had entered the office of the

popular old hostelry, much frequented of army folk in the days before the war; had glanced over the register, then turned sharply on the clerk. "Captain Wallis is here," said he. "Have the goodness to show me to him or send that card."

"The captain is not registered," was the reply, yet there was hesitation in the manner of the speaker, but none whatever in that of the officer as he took up the word. "I *see* he is not registered, yet I know he is here. Send that card at once, if you please."

The darcy bell-boy came back in a moment. "De capt'in says he's engaged and would prefer to see the gem'man an hour later."

"Show me to him wherever he is," was Hoyt's instant response, and, scared, the servant led the way to a little annex to the ladies' parlor, where Hoyt dismissed him, entered and found Wallis pacing the floor, impatiently awaiting another coming. The door closed behind him and the darcy heard nothing further. He saw, however, a lady coming tripping down the corridor; saw her open that door as though to enter; saw her stop short, turn abruptly, and hurry back to her room. He told his fellows her face was like a rose the first time she passed him and like chalk the second. Then presently the parlor bell rang, and when the boy went thither for the third time the captain was pacing up and down excitedly, and the lieutenant sitting back on the lounge "lak he was goin' to stay all night," and the lieutenant took out his card case and said, give his card and his compliments to the lady, and he'd wait

her convenience to see him. At the barracks, whither the story flitted within a day, it was conceded that Hoyt had simply "sat Wallis out." No wonder the latter hated him.

And now the two had clashed again.

"Wallis will challenge Hoyt the moment he's released," said one who knew Wallis well, and said it to the venerable Pennsylvanian at the head of the War Department.

"I'll make it a condition of his release that he refrain from anything of the sort," said Cameron.

"Then he will publicly insult Hoyt and force *him* to challenge," said the staff officer, for the day of the duello had not yet closed.

"*I'll* see to that," said Lorenzo Thomas; and to Wallis's keen chagrin he found on his release that Hoyt had been sent a thousand miles away on a mission to buy mules and mounts by the thousand. Not until after Bull Run was Hoyt recalled from the West, and by that time matters of far greater moment had closed on Harold Wallis. The one man he loved, his boy brother Eugene, stood, if caught, in peril of his life.

There had been the very devil to pay, as the major put it, at the officers' mess on the Island. Reporting there as ordered, and, finding among his new associates Barclay, and comrades who cold-shouldered him from the start, Eugene Wallis had adopted toward them a bearing of haughty and almost insolent defiance, and had speedily become conspicuous for neglects of duty and protracted absences. It was found that he was

spending nights at the New York Hotel when he should have been at his quarters; that his associates in the city were almost exclusively of the Southern set; that his most intimate friend in society was Jimmy Granger; and Major Blunt took occasion to warn him that he was laying himself open to sharp criticism. Eugene flushed, but had been well coached. For the time at least he curbed tongue and temper and asked for further indulgence later in the day. It was reluctantly given, with a "rider" to the effect that he must return to the post by midnight. He did not come until reveille, and was then given to understand that not for a week would he be permitted to leave the Island.

Two days later, among the visitors arriving at 11 o'clock, were two young ladies chaperoned by a society leader of Southern birth and escorted by Granger and a man of middle age, obviously no Northerner. They asked for and were shown to Mr. Wallis's tent, and found that young gentleman in his best uniform ready to meet them. Very natty looked the second lieutenant, even in that queer, clerical, single-breasted frock then worn by company officers throughout the service—very handsome, too, if a bit boyish—and Lorna Brenham's beautiful eyes softened at sight of him. Hard, defiant, disdainful, they had flashed like the bayonets of the guard when she and her party were politely requested to state their names and business at the landing. The officer of the guard, a newcomer, but a keen one, glanced quickly from his note-book as Granger gave the replies, and, sending a drummer to show them the way,

the officer wrote a line to the post adjutant, which he sent by another.

Major Blunt was at the moment in conversation with his staff officer, and his eyes kindled at the latter's quick announcement. "Wallis has visitors—young Granger with them. One of the ladies is that beautiful Miss Brenham, of Georgia—secesh to the backbone."

The major stepped out in front of the dingy old building that in those days served as post headquarters. Sauntering along the shaded walk in the afternoon sunshine came a picturesque little party—two attractive young women, most stylish in garb. The foremost, a brilliant picture of Southern brunette beauty, was leaning on the arm of young Wallis. The second seemed well content with the attentions of the middle-aged stranger, unmistakably Southern in dress and language. Third in column came the duenna, escorted by Mr. Granger—the one man of the three obviously dissatisfied with the situation. They passed so near the commanding officer that every word of their talk was distinctly audible. Indeed, so far as the ladies were concerned, it would seem as though they intended that such should be the case, for Miss Brenham's silvery tones were uplifted beyond the usual pitch. They passed so near that it was the soldier duty of Lieutenant Wallis to salute his post commander, but it pleased that young gentleman to fix his eyes and attention on Miss Brenham's glowing face and to utterly ignore his superior. Chatting volubly, Miss Brenham sailed by with only one brief, almost contemptuous, glance at the

glowering major. The distinguished-looking Southerner who came second looked hard at the official and, moved by a spirit of courtesy and probably by soldier instinct, lifted his broad-brimmed Panama and bowed with grave dignity. Granger, a Gothamite, and the supervising matron, sedulously looked the other way and would not see him.

"By God, Mr. Webb," said the angry officer, to his right hand man, as he turned and re-entered the office, "I won't be braved here in my own bailiwick by notorious rebel sympathizers. Do nothing discourteous, of course, but as soon as possible send young Wallis here and let those others rest awhile out there under the shadow of the flag. To think that young jackanapes should put on such impudent airs when he knows well I have condoned all manner of misdoing! Now, by Jove, I'll have to give him a lesson, if he *is* a Wallis!"

Ten minutes later as the sextet came sauntering back, laughing and talking animatedly, excitedly, the tall, bearded adjutant met them and, raising his cap, bowed with much *empressement* before Miss Brenham. She knew him well. They had met at a dozen dinners or parties during the winter. She had liked him well, too, but it was now her humor to accord him but a haughty and distant greeting.

"Your pardon, Miss Brenham," said he, "I am come to play substitute a few minutes, for Mr. Wallis is needed at the office. Mr. Wallis will report at once to Major Blunt, and during his absence, by your leave, I will be guide. Should you like to see the Castle?"

There will be time, you know, before the next boat for town."

"The prison part of your fortifications, I believe, Mr. Webb," said she, almost pointedly ignoring the proffered arm. "Why should you fancy we care to see the dungeons? That is the one part we have no present use for. Why, pray, does Major Blunt select this time to send for Mr. Wallis? I had still more to say to him before we returned."

She looked daringly into the tall adjutant's eyes, as she spoke.

"That, Miss Brenham, may be the very reason," was the significant reply.

Meantime in the office Mr. Eugene Wallis was getting his first sharp official wiggling and any one could see that Blunt was well wrought up. He was tramping up and down the bare little room as was his wont when excited, and laying down the law in vigorous Anglo-Saxon. Finally he stopped short and faced the visibly angering junior.

"For the old name's sake, Mr. Wallis, I have shown you more indulgence than any officer at the post, and you reward it by rank discourtesy. You passed me ten minutes ago without the faintest recognition. What possible excuse have you?"

"Among Southern gentlemen, sir, a lady takes precedence. Miss Brenham was speaking to me, and under such circumstances gentlemen shouldn't—expect to be recognized," was the amazing reply.

Blunt's eyes nearly popped from their sockets. His

face turned purple as his old sash. The veins swelled. The hands clinched. The table shook with the force of his wrath. Then at last "fierce he broke forth":—

"Well, of all the— Go to your tent at once—in close arrest, sir!"

CHAPTER VIII.

AN ARREST EVADED.

TO hear Lorna Brenham's vehement account of that day's visit to the Island, as told in many a gathering of sympathetic friends and fellow Southerners, and even in the parlors of such tolerant households as the Leroys', one would suppose that Major Blunt had robbed Eugene Wallis of his liberty for no other reason than that he had dared to escort her and her little party about the post. Heavens, how her eyes blazed and her tongue cut and slashed! Blunt was a cad—Blunt was a low-born—Blunt was a nigger worshipper—Blunt was a mudsill, whatever that may have meant. But when Lorna appealed to the two men who had been in attendance on this exciting day they failed to support her to the extent this imperious queen could have wished. Granger, sulky and silent, could only be induced to say that Blunt seemed glad of a pretext to discipline Wallis, whereas her other aide-de-camp—the distinguished-looking Georgian, who was North on some mysterious mission and who had been presented to her circle of acquaintances as Major Forno—very stanchly said that, from Wallis's own account of the affair, Major Blunt could have had no alternative. "That young fellow," said he, "has no business to be

wearing the federal uniform and is too big a fool to be permitted to wear ours." Forno had the carriage and manner of a man bred to camp as well as court. Soldier was stamped in his every pose. What then was he doing here in Gotham and in civilian dress?

The news that Eugene Wallis had been ordered in close arrest was not long in reaching the Rutherfords, and then another odd thing happened. In spite of the fact that Major Wallis, the elder brother, was connected in the minds of most people with the disappearance of those important papers belonging to Mrs. Rutherford, that lady heard the tidings with obvious concern, and sent Gerald forthwith to the Island to express her sorrow, if not her sympathy, and to inquire if she could not do something to ameliorate the prisoner's condition. Like almost any other woman unacquainted with army ways, Mrs. Rutherford supposed that the military arrest, which simply required Mr. Wallis to remain in his tent except when visiting the officers' mess for his meals, involved incarceration in some gloomy dungeon within the walls of Castle William. Gerald knew better and tried to set her right. He little liked what he had seen and heard of Wallis and was reluctant to visit him, but, curiosity as to the situation, a certain change of heart, as it were, in his mother's attitude toward the Wallises, and finally the desire to see and talk with Ned Barclay prevailed, and he went. No obstacle whatever was thrown in the way of his going to the young officer's tent and conveying his mother's message, coupled with an inquiry for the address of the older brother.

Rutherford found young Wallis enveloped in a cloak of gloomy distance and dignity that first irritated and then amused him. "My brother, sir," said Eugene coldly, "is on duty at Washington, organizing his new regiment. Any letter sent care of the War Department will reach him at once. No, I do not expect him here at all. There is no reason why he should come. This temporary inconvenience will be terminated the moment the Secretary has had time to read the statement I forwarded two days ago. Then our doughty major here will wish he'd kept his temper. I expect the order for my release to-morrow without fail. It isn't the first time the Department has been called upon to disown the actions of malignant enemies toward me."

But Barclay and his brother officers scouted this idea when, a little later, they heard it from Rutherford's lips. "He made an ass of himself at Camp Cameron," said they—"was excused because of youth and inexperience, but with a very solemn warning. Now he's behaved like a lunatic here. Blunt will court-martial him sure as shooting, and he richly deserves it. Ask Webb."

Rutherford did ask Webb, a "regular" several years and many "files" the senior of the new appointees, and a man, moreover, who in days gone by had been a comrade and associate of the elder Wallis. The peccadillos, moral and professional, of that brilliant but erratic officer, however, had gradually undermined the friendship of the frontier, and when Webb came to the Island on the return of the ill-starred *Star of the West*, he had but a cold and perfunctory greeting for his erstwhile

chum. Indeed, little by little, Wallis had succeeded in alienating nine out of ten of the comrades of the old days, even among those, who, siding with the South, had followed their native States in the general revolt against the federal government. It boded ill for Eugene, therefore, that Webb should have been selected to serve as adjutant of the post, for Webb was a soldier from the ground up and one intolerant of soldier solecisms of any kind.

“Certainly it means court-martial,” was his answer to Rutherford’s inquiry. “Charges have been preferred and sent to Department Headquarters. Blunt might have listened to an apology yesterday, had the youngster come to his senses, but he seems doubly defiant and surly—insists that he was right and that the War Department will sustain him. I fancy he has some bad, but persistent, advisers in that Cranston gang. Mr. Rutherford, your mother’s people are Georgians—who is this Major Forno and what is he doing?”

They were seated at the moment on the north veranda of the building then used as the officers’ mess. Before them, from the rear gallery, it commanded an almost unbroken view of the two magnificent streams—the Hudson to the left, the East River to the right—with the roofs and walls and spires of the great city fringed by the forest of masts, lying like a thronging hive between. No towering tenements as now, broke the sky-line. The graceful spire of Trinity, piercing the heavens far above the cornice of the highest buildings, the belfry on the old post office, the white

cupola of the city hall and the lesser spire of St. Paul's capped the picture of the city of '61. The greenwood shades of Battery Park, the circular, embrasured walls of the old battery itself—once the great theatre that had thrilled to the witching voice of Jenny Lind, then had fallen to the base uses of an emigrant depot—lay in plain sight across the tumbling waters. The boats of the South and Staten Island ferries churned the tossing waves into a wake of creamy foam. Occupying the recent berth of the Minnesota, a British frigate swung at anchor on the tide, barely five hundred yards above the Island, her white-streaked side pierced with a dozen ports. A well-manned rowboat, sweeping sidewise with the swift ebb, was nevertheless heading straight for the dripping stone steps of the landing, and the pacing sentry, his gleaming rifle at support, eyeing it narrowly, had already summoned the corporal of the guard. It was the Island ferry on its third trip from town, and the stern sheets were filled with passengers. Even as he asked the question, Webb had unslung the field telescope that hung at the wall and, quickly adjusting the focus, leveled it upon the dancing barge.

"I haven't an idea, Mr. Webb, who or what he is," said Rutherford, slowly, "nor does my mother know, and as yet we have not seen him. Miss Brenham might tell, or Mr. Granger, but we rarely meet them now."

"Well," said the adjutant, slowly, still peering steadily through the long brass tube and steadying it

against a pillar, "unless this thing deceives me, here comes the gentleman himself, and it's *my* business to ascertain *his* business. Orderly!" he shouted, suddenly whirling about in his tracks.

"Sorr," was the instant reply, and in trim, snug-fitting tunic, in quaint, bulging, stiff-brimmed felt hat, adorned with feather and brazen bugle, his shoulder scales, brasses, buttons, boots and belt gleaming with polish, a soldier of the old school, an Irishman, sprang up the steps and stood attention, his white-gloved hand at the precise salute of the venerated Scott's tactics, palm to the front and finger tips just touching the edge of his hat brim.

Rapidly Mr. Webb scribbled a few words on a scrap of paper. "To Major Blunt, quick!" said he, "and bring the answer here." The orderly vanished. The adjutant closed and returned the glass to its place, then turned on the waiting group. Rutherford in civilian garb, Barclay and Cutting in uniform, were the three others present at the moment. It was almost time for the drums and fifes to be sounding "Roast Beef of Old England" as the city bells struck noon. The fatigue parties were already drifting barrackward in response to the recall hammered by the drummer of the guard a moment ago. The officer-of-the-day, his red sash over the shoulder, was stalking briskly toward the guardhouse near the dock, and the sentry was watching him as he came, waiting until he passed the shot pile at the office angle before ringing out the martial summons, "Turn out the guard!" in

honor of the approaching magnate, but, individually, members of the guard, old "Permanent Party" men, were reaching for their rifles and straightening out stray kinks in their clothing against the summons, for it was a fad at the Island that the guard should be in ranks when the noon boat came over from town, and the noon boat to-day was evidently loaded to the guards. All this they noted from the veranda of the old "mess" and then, back came Orderly Flannigan on the run. But the halt and salute were precise and rigid before he delivered himself of his message:

"The Meejor's compliments to the adjutant, sorr, and he'll be at the office directly."

"I'll see you again before you go, Mr. Rutherford," said Webb. "There's a matter I much wish to ask you about," and with a touch of his forage-cap he strode away, Cutting speedily following.

For a few moments the two friends, chums of college days, sat there in the shade of the veranda, silently studying the marvelous picture before them. They had had their talk and there was little more to be said. Barclay's secret was no secret to Gerald. Well he knew the explanation of the cloud that seemed to have fallen upon the life of his cherished friend—knew and was powerless to aid, for, though Ethel had never spoken to him of Barclay save as a man she frankly liked and would gladly help to happiness, the brother well understood, as did Barclay, too, that it was only a frank, friendly, girlish liking. Playmates in childhood's hour, they had grown up together,

seeing each other day after day until her visit to Europe, and never once had she known the faintest response to the love that seized upon and possessed his soul when the bonnie lassie blossomed out as the lovely and winsome *débutante*. The hopelessness of his suit was accentuated by the misfortunes of his father's house and the further complication that followed upon his intimacy with Wallis. It had cost him over two thousand dollars to redeem the notes of hand that he had given the captain in the course of the early spring, and Wallis had pressed for payment at a time when not a dollar could be had from the father. It was Gerald who had gladly come to the rescue, though he hated to think his money was going into such unscrupulous hands. Barclay's sad face and subdued manner, even now when he had his heart's desire and his commission in the regular service, told plainly how his combined sorrows had worn upon him, and Gerald's big, boyish, loyal heart grieved over the change that had overmastered his friend.

He was studying Barclay furtively as they sat there in the warm noontide of mid July. Barclay had been striving to get orders to join the army in front of Washington, for it was evident that McDowell was about to move and stirring times were expected—something to wipe out the humiliation of Big Bethel and our luckless first encounter on the Sacred Soil—but Barclay had proved a most efficient officer in licking the new material into shape, and Blunt would not consent to let him go.

Sitting there they watched with languid interest the snappy parade of the guard, the honors to the officer-of-the-day, and then the arrival, one by one, of the barge's passengers at the head of the stone stairway. Two or three residents on the Island were passed by the vigilant corporal without detention. Two or three others presented cards which he sent at once to the officer-of-the-guard, and then came a slender, soldierly form, spare, erect and sinewy, that, even at the distance, Mr. Barclay recognized at once. "There," said he, "is Major Forno. Now, watch!"

Rutherford gazed as bidden. They saw him standing conspicuous in a black frock coat of foreign cut, full, peg-top trowsers of a pearl gray color, a white necktie, and a broad-brimmed Panama hat—patiently submitting to the questions of the corporal; saw him courteously raise his hat and bow when accosted by the young officer-of-the-guard. "He must be over forty," said Barclay. "His moustache and imperial are already turning gray. Just see how he stands. Wouldn't you know that man had been a soldier?"

Young Rutherford had risen, and, with keen interest in his eyes, was staring across the intervening pyramids and stacks of cannonballs. Suddenly he turned. "Come on, Ned. I want to have a closer look at that fellow," said he. So together they passed through the mess and ante-rooms to the southern front and, following the old brick wall, went swiftly round toward the guardhouse, only to find Forno had gone.

"He said he knew the way to Wallis's tent," said the officer-of-the-guard, "and I let him go. I had no orders to the contrary. But I've sent the names up to post headquarters. There were others to see Wallis."

"Let us wait a moment and watch Webb," suggested Barclay, in a low tone. "He's going to have a look at Forno unless I'm mistaken." So they sauntered slowly back toward the office, and presently, surely enough, the bearded adjutant came forth, and with quick, springy step went briskly away toward the little clump of officers' tents pitched on the northward slope of the glacia, and the two friends followed.

Wallis occupied the second tent on the row and, the walls being triced up for air, it was easy to see that he had visitors before the party reached the front. Two men were seated on his camp cot, Forno and a stranger, while Wallis himself, standing at his little camp desk, was stowing away some papers when Webb's tall figure loomed up at the entrance and Webb's deep voice was heard:

"Your pardon, gentlemen, but I have received instructions concerning Major Forno and should be glad to speak with him a moment."

"Certainly, sir," was Forno's prompt reply as he arose and stepped quickly forth. He never noticed the young officer who, with his civilian friend, had halted irresolute a dozen paces away. He was looking straight at Webb, a shade of anxiety in his deep-set, gray eyes. As for Webb, he had drawn a paper

from a long, official envelope, and his eyes flitted from the written page to the slender figure before him, as though comparing some description with an interesting personality. Forno saw it and the color surged up to his temples, but neither by look nor word did he offer objection or remonstrance. It was some seconds before Webb spoke again. When he did there was something in the tone that told of both doubt and disappointment.

“Pardon me, major,” said he, “but we have received orders concerning a certain Southern officer said to be masquerading around here in civilian dress. I am glad to say you in no way answer his description.”

“You have my word of honor, suh,” said Forno, with grave dignity, “that I hold no commission in our Confederate service—at least, not yet. My business, though urgent, is entirely private and personal.”

“And the title?—major?” queried Webb.

Forno smiled gravely. “That is what might be called a Southernism. I never attained that rank, suh.”

“Yet you have served, I’d swear to it,” said Webb.

“Yes, as a boy at Buena Vista—and later I saw a campaign or two—abroad.”

Webb touched his forage-cap. “You have lifted a load from my shoulders, sir, and now, as your friend Mr. Wallis cannot do so, I trust that I may be permitted to tender you the hospitality of the mess. Will you not lunch with us to-day? Permit me to introduce myself. My name is Webb.”

Forno raised his Panama and bowed with cavalier grace. "I thank you sincerely, suh, but I should hardly like to leave Mr. Wallis. In fact, we were planning a little luncheon here—*al fresco*. Mr. Soutter, who is with me, had a basket filled this morning at Delmonico's. Mr. Wallis's servant has gone for the necessary tableware."

"As you please, Major Forno, but I shall renew the invitation later. You may find it convenient to visit us before you return, and, as I may not be there, let me present"—and here Webb turned and signalled—"my friend Mr. Barclay of the —teenth Infantry. Barclay, Major Forno," whereat again Panama and forage-cap were raised, and with much grave courtesy the two shook hands.

"Recently of the Seventh, if I mistake not, Mr. Barclay?" said Forno, his fine face lighting with a pleasant smile. "I had the good fortune to meet several of your comrades when you visited Richmond a few years ago. You probably remember John Cochran's speech."

"I was not with the Seventh at that time, major," was Barclay's quiet answer. "Indeed, I only squeezed in last April in place of a friend who couldn't go. Let me present him—Mr. Rutherford."

Whereat Gerald's light straw hat was uplifted from his light, straw-colored hair, and his slender white hand was half extended in civil greeting.

But only half, for at sound of the name and sight of the man every vestige of color fled from Forno's

face. His hat slowly settled back upon his head; his lips, twitching painfully, seemed striving to frame a word. In astonishment Webb and Barclay stared at him a moment until he broke silence. Hoarse and barely audible his voice was heard, and he slightly reeled as though dizzy.

"Pardon—but—the sun, I think. I'm subject to these—" and, abruptly turning, Forno plunged beneath the spreading "fly" and dove into the shaded shelter of the nearest tent.

That night there came a "wire" from Washington that set Blunt to swearing. He was directed to order Lieutenant Eugene Wallis to report in person without delay and in arrest, to the adjutant general of the army.

"Damn him!" said Blunt. "He'll get there among all his father's old friends, Northern and Southern, and between them they'll coax old Cameron to let him off again when he should have been tried here. However, give him the order, Webb, and tell him to go first thing in the morning."

In ten minutes Webb was back, his eyes glittering, his face pale.

"Mr. Wallis cleared out, sir, two hours ago, bag and baggage. He has more than broken his arrest—he has deserted."

CHAPTER IX.

BETWEEN TWO DUTIES.

THREE months went by without other tidings of the missing officer than that he had been seen and recognized in Richmond and had offered his sword to the South without the formality of first submitting his resignation to the United States. Very possibly he well knew that, tendered under a cloud of charges, that resignation would not be accepted. Lorna Brenham came no more to Governor's Island. Major Forno had disappeared from the New York Hotel and Jimmy Granger was doing his best to keep in society, yet out of difficulty. The main trouble with him, said loyal girls of Gotham, was that he had not the courage of his convictions.

"If you are such a determined Southerner, go and fight with them. Then we'll have some respect for you," said Ethel Rutherford, one summer night at the Leroy's, and most remarkably had that hitherto reticent and retiring young woman developed since the Seventh came back from the war. She who had been content, apparently, to hold a modest place in social matters and to spend hours in reading to her invalid mother, had become an avowed agitator in matters both military and political. She had organized sew-

ing circles by the dozen, whereby the regiments at the front were being deluged with the output of a thousand fair fingers—"Havelocks" innumerable, which the wondering soldiery received, searched for notes, bank or *billet doux*, and wore not more than once or twice—night-caps, needle cases, woolen mitts, with a slit for the trigger finger; worsted shoes for tired soldier feet to wear when the day's march was done; cholera bands, camphor bags, coffee cakes (a curious compound purporting to be sugar, cream and coffee in due proportion—each cube dissolved in a quart of hot water warranted to produce a full measure of fragrant, steaming, stimulating beverage)—what did not these blessed women send to the boys in blue the first summer and winter of the war? Then, too, Miss Ethel had become a vehement patriot, a self-appointed chairwoman of the household committee on the conduct of the war. Oh, what a fiery raking fell to the lot of the rector of Grace church that hot August Sunday when, all inadvertently, he omitted the prayer for the President! And, though it was one of the hottest Augusts known to Gotham history, families that hitherto had spent that month at Newport or Long Branch found it to their better interest to remain behind closed shutters in their city homes the livelong day, and to take the evening air upon the brownstone steps. "What's the use of going to the seashore?" said the girls. "There are no men there—at least, none worth knowing." Truth to tell, many of the girls were not a little bored by Miss

Ethel's persistence and fiery patriotism, though her castigation of Jim Granger met their almost undivided approval. Truth to tell, Jim Granger more than once had screwed his courage to the sticking point and sought to talk his ageing father into giving him a substantial outfit and a lump sum in gold and letting him join the staff of a Georgia general in front of Washington; but that was only when Lorna Brenham talked of going home to be a nurse. Bull Run put an end to her plans in that direction. "Why go South, when within a few weeks the South will be here in full force?" was the exultant question of the coterie at Cranston's. There may have been other reasons, but at all events, Lorna went not at all. No more did Granger; and after that woful lesson had opened the eyes of the North to the fact that a war in grim earnest was upon them, the line between the Union and Southern sympathizers was far more sharply drawn, and when, late in the summer, Bernard Hoyt reappeared in Gotham, wearing the brand new bars of his captaincy of cavalry, ordered thither to aid in the organization and instruction of a regiment of volunteer cavalry and occupying once more his old quarters around the corner from the Rutherford mansion, he found social circles vastly changed, and Ethel always too busy and absorbed in her new, self-imposed duties to have much time for him. All day long, and day after day, she was flitting from one meeting or sewing bee to another. Then, as the first wounded were brought home—members of the Four-

teenth, Sixty-ninth, Seventy-first and Seventy-ninth regiments of New York militia—she and the sisterhood she had enlisted obtained the addresses of the men (for as yet no general military hospitals had been established on Manhattan Island), and the attending surgeons were embarrassed by the offers of aid and the cabloads of dainties with which they were bombarded. Fine was the scorn with which Ethel and her associates referred to the hapless home battery, that, demanding its discharge on the expiration of its three months' service, just as McDowell's advance was fording Bull Run, "marched to the rear to the sound of the enemy's cannon," as that irate commander most justly expressed it.

Those were days, too, in which Hortense, the housekeeper, declared that life was made a burden to her, for Ethel's maid caught cold and broke down from exposure and incessant running about, and Hortense was not only compelled to supervise the packing and sending of basketloads of broths, creams, jellies, whips and other comfits supposed to be of special benefit to convalescent warriors, but time and again had to go with her now restless and imperious young mistress when her Gallic heart was anything but in the work. Foreign born, Southern bred, she had come into the household through the Gordon connection and had far more interest in the Georgia friends of her youth than in these of the austere, unemotional North. There had been a wavering week when it was rumored that LeGal's red-legged regiment of militia

—the French Fifty-fifth—was to take the field for liberty and union, but save through de Trobriand—their gallant lieutenant colonel—little was ever heard of it again, and Hortense reverted to the original *status*—that of a secret sympathizer with the South.

But Ethel had one assiduous and devoted backer in the domestic establishment, and that was Forbes, the butler. Day or night, at any hour, alert, silent, watchful, that invaluable servitor seemed ever ready to come and go at her bidding. Indeed he was forever coming, prolific in proffer and suggestion. More than once Gerald, letting himself in with his latchkey and speeding up the stairs three at a bound to his mother's room, had been surprised to find Forbes in the upper hall, when his bailiwick was really confined to the main floor (on which were the parlor, library and dining room, with the silver and china closets, the butler's pantry and the broad, glass-enclosed back porch), the basement, in which was his own immaculate apartment (Forbes's little family being maintained in modest comfort around near Sixth Avenue and Thirteenth Street), and then of course, the famous Rutherford cellar, which was his exclusive charge. To Gerald's look of surprise and impatient question, Forbes most respectfully explained that he was in search of Miss Rutherford to report the result of certain missions entrusted to him. Forbes begged pardon for presuming to mention it to Mr. Rutherford, but he feared some of Miss Rutherford's soldier patients were imposing on Miss Rutherford's charity

and goodness in the matter of the port, Bordeaux and Burgundy Miss Rutherford had ordered sent to Sergeant Shaughnessy of the Sixty-ninth, shot in the arm, and to other semi-invalided heroes who found vast comfort in the life giving juice of the sun-warmed grapes of the Côte d'Or and the Douro—it was so easily swapped for more than its bulk in poteen. Gerald was spending hours each day now, watching with eager and envious eyes Captain Hoyt's vigorous, soldier work with his would-be troopers. Gerald was spending other hours gently, gradually, persistently besieging his unhappy mother with plea and argument to the effect that his father's son should not be dawdling here in the luxury of home when every friend he had in the world was wearing the sword of Uncle Sam—when nearly every family was represented at the front. Well did the poor lady read the restless heart of her boy and long did she strive to hold him, but, as week followed week and he grew more haggard, nervous, irritable, unhappy, she felt her last hold slipping, slipping away and in anguish unspeakable realized that she was only postponing the evil hour—that sooner or later his dogged Rutherford persistence and obstinacy would win the day.

But time and again as the autumn wore on and all was quiet on the Potomac, Gerald brought Bernard Hoyt, nothing loth, to dinner. Mrs. Rutherford was keeping her room much of the time now, and but rarely appeared at table. Ethel, therefore, did the honors and listened with eager interest to all that the

young cavalryman had to say of the war. She, in her boundless impatience and enthusiasm, was for having McClellan and his half drilled, half disciplined brigades push on to Richmond before the winter set in. "They should be as well drilled and disciplined as the Southern volunteers," said she, "and surely they are more numerous!"

"They are pitted against a united people, defending their own homes, fighting on their own ground, and under most skillful leaders," said Hoyt, his blue eyes dwelling on the softly flushing cheek and drinking in the beauty of her glowing face. "McClellan can afford no defeat, you understand, and is working now night and main and night and day to make his army invincible. Be patient, Miss Ethel. And then, too," he added with a smile, "remember that we have hardly any cavalry as yet, and to whip the South we must have horsemen as many and as good as theirs. It will take time—much time, I fear—and they have not yet begun to realize it at Washington."

"You will be weaning Gerald from the Seventh and making a trooper of him, Captain Hoyt," said she, half wistfully, half dreading. "I know he's mad to go—but for mother."

"Mad—yes," broke in Gerald, in nervous irritation. "If it weren't for Hoyt here I would go mad surely enough. Every man I know, worth knowing, has gone. Every loyal name except ours is borne on the rolls—some of them six times over. I envy Barclay, Benkard, Bronson, Cutting—why, I could call the roll

right down the alphabetical list of the old company and show you man after man commanding his own company now in the regulars or volunteers or riding as aide to some wide-awake general far at the front! Look at them—Lydigs, Smedbergs, Winthropps, every unmarried man of the name gone! Look at the Leroyes—every able-bodied fellow of the tribe—two generations of 'em—sons and grandsons—all off to the war, and we haven't so much as one! I'm ashamed to show at the club—or anywhere, by Jove!—and it's—it's simply killing me!" And with that poor Gerald sprang from his chair, nearly colliding with the statuesque Forbes, and tore away out of the room.

Ethel's eyes were brimming and for a moment she could not speak. Hoyt, sympathetic, yet well aware of Dr. Tracy's declaration of what it might cost the mother if Gerald were to insist on volunteering, held his peace. It was she who broke the silence.

"I believe he talks of it in his sleep—when he sleeps at all," said she at last, her downcast eyes unlifting for a moment and shooting one swift glance at him. "Could he really—would you help him—get a commission in the cavalry you are drilling?"

"I could at least try, but the easiest way—the best way—would be for him to do it himself. Three troops are yet unfilled. If he could enlist fifteen good sound men it would insure his being made a second lieutenant. All he needs is a start. But, Miss Ethel—your mother?"

The brimming eyes were again downcast, the heavily

fringed lids in violent action. The girl was struggling against the surging, unshed tears. She strove to answer, but her voice broke, and hurriedly she rose, faltered an excuse and fled through the heavily curtained archway to the darker library beyond. Hoyt's first impulse was to follow, but again the old restraining thought, the stubborn soldier pride withheld him. What right had he, what excuse had he, to seek her at such a moment, when in her weight of care and distress on her mother's account, her sympathy for Gerald, her intense love and enthusiasm for the cause of the Union, and, in her deep and obvious emotion, she might well need to lean on his strength—she an heiress—he a penniless trooper with his way yet to be won? At least there was no excuse for remaining longer at the table. He did not smoke. He arose and slowly followed, letting the heavy curtains fall behind him and leaving the brilliantly lighted dining room to Forbes, who quickly tiptoed to the curtained archway; peered one instant between the heavy folds; sprang back; extinguished several of the gas jets over the table and side-board; stepped catlike to the broad porch at the rear, and set a candle with a brilliant reflector on an iron flower-stand at the northward end. The white waxlight was thrown out over the vista of rear doors and windows of the side-street houses. Then he returned to the sheltering folds to listen further, but there was nothing to reward his vigilance. Ethel had hurried after Gerald only to find that he had bolted down the avenue toward the Brevoort. Hoyt, still following, heard the swish of her

expansive skirts as she sped upstairs to her own room, and noiselessly he let himself out through the marble-tiled vestibule; softly closed the door behind him; and, catching sight of Gerald's retreating form, went swiftly in pursuit. He had heard news that day—news that he had meant they should not learn through him, but in a very different way, yet news that might do much to banish Gerald's misery, possibly give him a happier night. Hoyt's rule for many a year had been based on the old adage that only a fool tells what he's going to do, but it was a rule that had its exception. Something must be done to rouse Gerald from the slough of his deep despond.

CHAPTER X.

HIS SUPERIOR OFFICER.

“GOOD riddance to bad rubbish,” was the verdict at the Island when, as months rolled on, the desertion of Eugene Wallis had become an accepted fact. But there was one man, at least, on whom the stigma of the lad’s disgrace fell with crushing force—his elder brother Harold.

For weeks that brilliant commander of the infant regiment of regular infantry, shunning all verbal mention of the matter nearest his heart, seemed devoting himself assiduously to the duty of drilling and teaching his new-made officers and men. No one dreamed of the hours of anguish and distress he spent between the darkness and the dawn. He knew well, within the fortnight following Eugene’s reckless breach of arrest and mad-brained desertion, just where he was and what he was doing. He knew because he had means of knowing denied the commanding officer at Governor’s Island and even the venerable Secretary of War. He knew, and had sent that erring brother a scathing letter of rebuke, yet with it a substantial sum in gold. He attended dinner after dinner, dance after dance, ball after ball, welcomed and fêted in the most exclusive houses in the capital. He entertained lavishly—his officers con-

tributing far more than warranted by the means of most of them—the score of invited guests that came each morning, with throngs of the unbidden, to watch the beautiful battalion drill of the —teenth and to admire the commander's form, ringing voice and splendid horsemanship. Only Harry Clitz could begin to handle a battalion like Wallis, said the experts, and men who hated him for his superior, supercilious manner and distrusted him for his past peccadillos and present associations, came and studied his methods and went away wondering no more that the line officers of the —teenth were so enthusiastic in his praise. The regiment was rapidly becoming the “show battalion” in all the circling camps or the wooden barracks about Washington, and the name of Harold Wallis was on every lip. Dashing, debonair, *distingué* and, so said certain maids and young matrons, “so romantic”—even at the War Department, where Thomas still ruled and Cameron yielded, he had his admirers, while at army headquarters—at McClellan's—Wallis was a prime favorite. In all the brilliant staff with which the brainy young organizer had surrounded himself that wonderful autumn, there were few men except Marcy who knew much of the frontier records of the officers of the Old Army. As for rumors of lukewarm allegiance, of declared Southern sympathies, of acknowledged correspondence, these were things to be ignored, as was the well-known fact that, at this very moment, of Wallis's kith and kin, the greater part were in and of the South.

The colonel of this not yet year old, yet distinguished,

regiment, was commanding a division of volunteers out near Arlington—the lieutenant colonel a brigade at Chain Bridge, both well content that the major should be the one to break in the raw battalion, and though Willard's and the War Department fairly bristled with the stars and buttons of new-made brigadiers, it is safe to say that few, if any, of their number were so well known to the populace—civil or military—as the envied and courted major at the head of the —teenth.

But none of these ever saw Harold Wallis as did one faithful friend, his young adjutant and amanuensis, a former playmate of Eugene's, in the bitter hours after midnight when the major sat striving to find a way to rescue the lad whom his dying mother had confided to his care—whom long years before—in '46—his soldier-father had taken on his knee and held one moment to his strong heart, then had risen, and, leading the little fellow to his tall brother's side, had solemnly said, "I may not come back, my boys; be you both devoted to your country and your mother, and, Harold, promise me that you will shield and aid Eugene always. Something tells me he will need you."

And this was the skeleton in the closet of the debonair commander in these, the days of his greatest glory, for all social if not official Washington seemed at his feet. This was the state of things when there came to him one brilliant night in late October, in the whirl and crush of a crowded ballroom, a little note, accompanied by the soft, warning pressure of a slender, kid-gloved hand, and a pair of lovely eyes beamed on him sig-

nificantly only a second as the fair girl went in to supper on the arm of the French minister. Wallis had notes and hand pressures galore, but this—this meant something far more stirring.

It was not until half an hour later, however, that he could extract the mite of a billet from within the palm of his white glove, and by the light of a street lamp read its contents. They were brief enough, but sent the blood coursing through his veins, yet he rejoined his companions, from whom he had excused himself just thirty seconds, and with all the old airy nonchalance sauntered down the avenue, tearing into little fragments the flimsy note and scattering them on the soft night wind, listening most deferentially the while to the words of the venerable statesman whom he was escorting homeward. It was but a few steps to the senatorial mansion. The great man from the Hudson bade his martial friends good-night, then Wallis, replacing his natty forage-cap, turned on his inseparable companion—the young adjutant:

“Forney,” said he, “I wish you would drop in at my quarters when you return to barracks and tell that vagabond of mine to have my civilian clothes ready. I may need them for the day. Captain Hulin can look after the passes and things, but you’d better order drill by company and—Forney, see that nothing is changed in my absence and—ah—er—good-night, my boy. I’m going over to the—ah—Department.”

And go he did *to*, but not *into* the Department. The sentries saw and recognized the tall, slender, soldierly

figure that came striding down Seventeenth and disappeared northwestward up a dimly lighted side street.

Neither he, however, nor Forney, nor the escorted senator saw what was seen by an observant correspondent of a New York journal who had been "covering" the ball for half an hour previous—that dozens of those little white fragments fluttering from the white-gloved hand, were gathered in and carefully hoarded by one keen-eyed, alert young fellow, while another chap sauntered guilelessly along a block behind—but unerringly on the trail of—the debonair major. It set the "Harbinger's" representative to thinking, and thinking, he too followed the trail, and in ten minutes' walk overhauled his man, whistling softly to himself and, with hands deep in his trousers' pockets, wandering aimlessly about within range of the one house showing a light in a block some three squares from the war office. The scribe went swiftly by, apparently indifferent to any consideration other than that of getting home and to bed; popped round the first corner; walked steadily, even noisily, a full hundred yards riverward; then turned; tiptoed back and, peering cautiously round the corner, finally located his detective friend leaning against the tree box nearly opposite the dimly-lighted windows.

And there they stayed, the watcher and the watched, until from somewhere over Georgetown way the deep, mellow tone of a church bell tolled the hour of three. Once a cavalry patrol, leading a squad of belated soldier roisterers to the provost marshal's, passed down the

street, and then as the sleuth saw fit to come strolling toward him, the journalist took refuge under the wooden stairway of the old frame house at the corner. Once, chatting in low tones and marching at route step, a "relief" of the guard, coming in from changing certain outlying sentries, trudged on toward the War Department, but never did either of the watchers for more than half a minute lose sight of the house waking at this unusual hour, and not five minutes after the stroke of three their vigilance was rewarded.

The door opened; a beam of faint, mellow light was thrown athwart the misty street; a young man came bounding down the steps and hurried away southeastward. In less than twenty-five minutes the lamps of a hack shot into view from Seventeenth Street and were speedily brought to a stand in front of the shadowed premises. A young man—the same young man—sprang forth; was instantly admitted to the hallway and very soon thereafter the door again opened; Major Wallis's tall figure was seen against the soft glow within, and beyond his, enveloped in a cloak, another form—shorter, but no less martial than his—and somebody with fine, clear-cut features, a moustache and imperial *a l'empereur*, was bowing bareheaded and with cavalier grace to some invisible somebody else. Then a soft slouch hat, with wide curving brim, was placed on the shapely head. Then down the steps came the two; past them darted the young man to the carriage door which, with evident deference and respect, he held open until the gentlemen were seated therein; then softly closed it;

muttered some direction to the driver, and away went the hack by a quick turn about and whirled to the left at the first corner—two lithe, active fellows sprinting in pursuit, but giving up the chase before the bounding lights had flashed across Pennsylvania Avenue.

When Lieutenant Forney, adjutant of the —teenth Infantry and of the post of Greble Barracks, entered his office after mounting the guard at eight A.M., he found the morning report book lying, as usual, on his desk, together with the customary array of passes, permits, ration returns, etc., and was not greatly surprised to see the signature of the regimental and post commander already in its appropriate column on the outspread page. That had happened before when it had pleased Major Wallis to absent himself on “urgent personal affairs” without the formality of a leave of absence. Army regulations providing that post commanders were empowered to grant themselves leave not to exceed seven days had been suspended by War Department order for the time being—a necessary result of the war, the capital being approximately in a state of siege—and as the major’s signature appeared on the report at orderly hour he was constructively present and for duty.

Yet Thomas, at the adjutant general’s office, knew better when ten o’clock came—knew that in civilian dress and accompanied by a stranger, also in civilian dress, yet having a decidedly military air, Wallis had driven from his quarters close to the barracks toward six in the morning; had stopped five minutes at the old National Hotel—leaving his friend in the hack—and

that later and separately the two had boarded the early train for New York at the Baltimore & Ohio station.

When toward four o'clock in the afternoon an orderly came trotting in to the barrack square with a note marked "Immediate," addressed to Major Harold Wallis and bearing the War Department brand on the upper left-hand corner, the officer-of-the-day gravely receipted for it; said it would be delivered as soon as the major returned, but that he was "at the moment not in barracks." The orderly said he was bidden to wait for a reply, so the adjutant was hunted up and found with a jovial party of fellow subalterns testing the comparative merits of three or four samples of Monongahela submitted for selection by the mess, also of the five cards each held in his hand. Forney had just called a full with an ace flush, and it wasn't the note he passed over the blanket, but the one slipped into his hand that made him lose color. He quit the game and followed the grave-faced captain into the hall.

"Do you know where he is?" asked the latter. "Can you reach him by man, beast or wire?" By which it would seem that already in the —tenth the major's idiosyncrasies were known and, despite them, officers and men were attached to their chief.

"By wire, possibly," was Forney's answer, as he hastily buttoned his frock coat. Then he darted over to the office; took a note sheet headed Headquarters —tenth U. S. Infantry, Greble Barracks, Washington, and wrote thereon, "Major Wallis is not at his quarters or about the post. I feel unauthorized to open the en-

closed, as it is addressed to him personally and not as regimental or post commander," signed his name as adjutant, popped missive and his own note into a larger envelope, bade the orderly give it to the officer from whom he received his instructions, and then, sending a drummer boy on the run for his horse, held brief confab with the officer-of-the-day. Ten minutes later he was scandalizing foot patrols by galloping down Fourteenth Street toward Pennsylvania Avenue, and within half an hour a message was clicking over the wires to New York.

"Major HAROLD WALLIS, U. S. A.,

"New York Hotel. (If not there send to Union and New York Clubs or residence of G. Rutherford, Esq., Fifth Avenue.)

"Significant inquiries from A. G. O. Suggest your telegraphing Thomas, if not already done.

"FORNEY."

By a roundabout route, so as to avoid the recently ignored patrols, the adjutant trotted back to the barracks, and by the time he was out of riding trousers and into his best uniform for parade, that War Department courier was again at his door with another note, this time for himself. It bade him report in person to the Adjutant General at 9 A.M. the following day, and, in what he termed a "blue funk," he sped across the hall in search of a senior captain who more than once had been his counselor; told him just what had happened and what he had done, and begged advice, just

as the drums began to rattle and resound through the echoing quadrangle, sounding first call for parade. The captain's response was a long whistle of doubt and dismay, then the words, "By Jupiter, His Highness has hanged himself this time or I'm a home guard!" which failed somehow to comfort the adjutant.

Hour after hour that long evening the youngster watched, waited, sent messages to the telegraph office and prayed for the coming of a reply. Just as "taps" was sounding on the trumpets of a cavalry squadron camped across the street, a carriage drove into the barrack square and a man of middle height, rather spare and angular and wearing an ill-fitting military frock coat flapping open over that abomination of the soldier who properly wears his uniform—a civilian waistcoat—stepped from the vehicle and briefly said, "I wish a word with Adjutant Forney."

"That's me," said Forney, disdainful alike of syntax and the stranger, "will you come in?" and ushered his visitor into the office.

The newcomer gazed dubiously about him a moment; went over and closed the door leading into the clerk's room; then turned and began a very deliberate study of the younger man, looking him over from head to foot. Forney reddened under the scrutiny with mingled irritation and impatience. "Well, sir, you want something. What is it?" said he.

"Perhaps I'd better say I represent the adjutant general and am here by his instructions to ask you a question or two. There's my credentials," and he

handed the adjutant a folded paper which Forney gingerly took, read, colored deeper, looked embarrassed, coughed and returned with a gesture that seemed to say, "Well, I'm in your hands—go ahead!" then stood expectant.

"When Major Wallis called you away from the ball last night did he acquaint you with the contents of a note he had—in his hand?"

"No," said Forney, shortly.

"You knew it concerned you in some way, did you not?"

"No," shortly as before.

"Yet your name was the first word in it." And the stranger's eyes were very searching now.

"I know nothing whatever about it," said Forney, bluntly.

"Look at this and say whose writing it is," said the elder, laying before him on the plain, wooden table a card on which were pasted a number of scraps of thin paper, fitted to each other like the fragments of one of those dissected maps that were the delight of our youth.

In mingled curiosity and disinclination Forney bent and looked. Pieced together, many scraps being evidently missing, the young adjutant made out the following inscription in a woman's hand—one that more than once he had seen on the major's desk.

"Forn See . . efore . . . out fai
 . . . t once Need . . est. . ate."

"Well," said the visitor, finally, "what have you to say?"

"Nothing," was the sharp reply.

"Does it convey no idea to you?"

"None whatever."

"You know the writer?"

"Not from Adam—or Eve rather."

"Then I shall bother you no more to-night, lieutenant, further than to say it is the General's orders that no mention be made of this," and taking up the card the officer started for the door.

"What General?" shouted Forney after him, irritation in his tone.

"The only one to whom I report outside the office of the Secretary of War—General L. Thomas," was the cool reply, and out into the hall and down the wooden steps clattered the stranger, leaving Forney bewildered. Oh, for a word from Wallis!

But not till midnight came that longed-for answer, characteristic and consistent. Who ever heard Wallis admit himself either in danger or in error?

"Lieutenant FORNEY, Greble Barracks, Washington. Message received. No occasion for alarm or appeal to Thomas. If sent for to-morrow say the major will do himself honor to call during day. H. W."

Faithfully had the messenger made the indicated round, fetching up at the Rutherfords' last on the list. The man servant answering the bell said the major had not been there for months, but as the lad turned away, a portly personage in black issued from underneath the

steps and called to him. It was then after dark, almost seven, but holding the yellow brown envelope near the lighted basement window Forbes read the address.

“Leave it with me,” said he, “and I’ll see that the gentleman gets it.” But this the lad would not do, in spite of inducements, and so was bidden to say that it would be well to come back again toward ten o’clock.

Just at ten o’clock, therefore, the messenger returned; found a carriage standing at the curb, and, being admitted to the vestibule and bidden to deliver his dispatch—the major being now within and engaged with Mrs. Rutherford—asked for a receipt, and thus having to wait became witness to a singular scene and conversation.

Down the broad carpeted stairs, five minutes after his arrival, came the tall, soldierly form so well known to every bell boy of the old New York Hotel, Forbes following with catlike steps at his very heels and speaking in low tone, and hurriedly, over the major’s shoulder. They had not reached the marble-tiled hallway when brisk steps were heard without; a key clicked at the latch; the front door flew open—“After you, sir,” exclaimed a blithe young voice, at which both Wallis and the butler visibly started. Then entered in undress uniform, a blue “circular” thrown over his shoulders, Bernard Hoyt, close followed by the young head of the household, Gerald Rutherford. Then under the brilliant gas jet four men, two on a side, two at the door-

way, two near the foot of the spiral stairs, stood staring each at the opposite pair.

Wallis was the first to speak. Low and stern was his voice, though tremulous with passion, as with quick, impatient stride he crossed the intervening space and stood squarely confronting his younger yet utterly undaunted antagonist.

"You are the man I've been seeking for three months," said he, all the drawl and dawdle gone from voice and manner, a snap and ring to every word. "This is a most fortunate accident, yet I should have found you in the morning. Where, sir, can a message quickest reach you outside these walls?"

"From you, Major Wallis," was the cool, firm, self-contained reply, though the speaker's blue eyes were blazing, "*nowhere!* Even if I would accept a challenge at a time when my country needs my life, I should deny you a meeting. Now, sir—move out of my way."

"By heaven!" cried Wallis, for once unmanned and beside himself with fury, yet even then and there remembering that women lay within earshot and that no encounter by any possibility should occur at a gentleman's fireside. "Be a coward if you will, but don't tempt me to thrash you—here. My coat, Forbes," he ordered, turning trembling with wrath to the butler. Then, throwing the overcoat over his arm, hat in hand, he stepped a pace nearer his immovable foe. "Make way yourself, Captain Hoyt. It is your superior officer who speaks."

"You are in error, Major Wallis," was the cool reply,

and the dark cape, falling back from the broad shoulder, revealed the new, glistening strap, the silver spread-eagle within its frame of gold. "You are speaking to *your* superior—Colonel Hoyt of the —th New York Cavalry."

CHAPTER XI.

WHO IS MAJOR FORNO?

THE wintry days came on in the camps about Washington. The flag of the South still floated defiantly at Munson's Hill and in sight of the unfinished dome of the great white capitol. Infantry drilled hard by brigade or battalion, artillery by battery and cavalry by—escort,—it being apparently the theory in the minds of those at the head of matters military that horse troops had no higher function. It was not the first, nor was it the last, time the War Department essayed a campaign without "the eyes of the army." Later on, as in later wars, the government sent its squadrons with lavish hand, but decidedly late in the day.

And thus it happened that that gallant regiment of light dragoons—the —th New York, Colonel Hoyt,—remained about its wooden barracks, and spent long weeks practicing "right cut" and "raise pistol," and wondering when they might hope to see Virginia or to straddle a horse. Officers and men grow restless, not to say vicious, under such monotonous inaction. Colonels have hard times keeping order in their commands. From shouting with joy at having that accomplished

young regular, their zealous instructor, placed at their head as colonel, the —th had gone to the opposite extreme of cursing, both loud and deep, the inflexible disciplinarian who demanded that officers should attend drills, roll-calls and recitations, and men all manner of duties by day, and all be in bed instead of bar-rooms by night.

It was then that the saloon-inspired writers of certain journals began prating of martinets in office and misery in the ranks of the gallant volunteers, and that legislators at Albany, with other candidates in view, leveled ringing denunciation at West Point satraps in general and this one in particular; encouraged whereby, certain of the disaffected among the commissioned list thought the time ripe for rebellion, and, by way of giving the colonel to understand that he couldn't run that regiment, deliberately cut drill one December afternoon and took the adjutant with them. Not a sign did the colonel give that anything was amiss. When the officer-of-the-day suggested that probably the colonel wouldn't care to have parade, the adjutant and several officers being away, the colonel replied that he had for some time thought their places could be better filled, and directed Second-Lieutenant Rutherford to act as adjutant, and certain subalterns to command the four companies whose captains were missing. The regiment was then surprised, if not chagrined, to find that "young Tow-head" had far more snap, style, and a much better voice and word of command than the Albany-appointed adjutant whom Hoyt had found in office when first assigned

to duty. The regiment was not so much surprised, perhaps, to learn on the morrow that four captains and the adjutant, together with half a dozen misguided subalterns, were ordered in close arrest. Then down came angry assemblymen from up the Hudson, and aldermen from both sides of the East River, and they stormed among themselves and sent a deputation to lay down the law to the colonel, who received them with calm civility, but countered heavily by quoting laws that, being national, were unknown to pothouse politicians, and sent the solons back to the saloons, discomfited. There was a brief ebullition about the barracks that evening, owing to fiery remarks—and potations—indulged in by certain of the visitors, to the end that two more officers went into arrest, twenty men into the guard-house and four prominent local “heelers” into outer darkness, forbidden to return to the barrack square on penalty of finding themselves, with their friends, behind the bars. Heavens! Didn’t certain Brooklyn and Gotham journals rave over the High-Handed Outrage!!!! Didn’t the papers generally exploit the ringing resolutions passed by the Michael D. Groggins Club, the P. M. Sheehan Assembly, the Manhattan Minute Men, and still the imperturbable colonel “stood pat.” The legislature failed to pass the vote of censure demanded by the law-makers of the lower districts. A level-headed governor sent a soldier of his staff, himself a power in Manhattan politics, to report the situation, and the soldier went back and said the colonel was right, the cabal all wrong, and then, rather than face court-martial or further

service under a man who could make them do what they never before had done—obey, three captains and four lieutenants resigned. Others apologized and were told to take their swords and return to duty, and the final “kick” and protest came when, matters quieting down a little, the colonel issued an order relieving First Lieutenant M. P. Phelan from duty as adjutant; appointing First Lieutenant Gerald Rutherford (recently promoted *vice* Lynch, resigned) to succeed him, and directing Lieutenant Phelan to report for duty forthwith to Captain Rasp, Troop “K,” a veteran dragoon sergeant who had served ten years in the regulars and was the terror of the laggard or the lax. Then, indeed, did there come protest, even from official sources. Young Phelan was the son of “Old Man” Phelan who swung the vote of a whole ward; ran with Big Six; spent money lavishly at every election and absorbed it unblushingly between times. Adjutant Phelan, said the statesmen, could no more be made to do duty as any other kind of lieutenant than could a captain be reduced or a major be made captain by order of the colonel. He was appointed and commissioned adjutant, said Phelanites by the hundred, but Hoyt refused to be Phelanized and referred them to the laws of the United States. An irate party went on to Washington to “fix the thing” with the new War Secretary—a good Democrat, it was said, and so not past reasoning with—and came back stampeded. The new War Secretary told them in so many words that the regiment, having been mustered in, was no longer a New York but a national

organization, and would be governed by the laws and regulations which obtained in the army.

“Moreover,” said he, “I should like to see that colonel of yours,—he has the right stuff in him.” So Hoyt was sustained and the valiant “Light Dragoons” submitted with modified sorrow, and then, to the exuberant joy of most of that chastened command, there came intimation that it would be sent forthwith to Washington:—Stanton seemed to think that colonel might be of use in Virginia.

Three months earlier Hoyt would have welcomed the order. He had been most eager to go, and might have been spared very much of all this wear and tear had the regiment been sent to the front in the first place. But matters far removed from the professional, yet appealingly near to his heart, had taken a strange turn in Gotham. Ethel Rutherford, who had been so cordial in her welcome when at first he came with Gerald; who had been so grateful when he handed Gerald his first commission, and who should have been so pleased and proud when later this man, who had proved himself so fitted to command, had chosen her brother as his confidential staff officer and given him the most prominent and desirable berth a lieutenant could hold—had barely thanked him at all; was becoming constrained and fitful, if not actually cold and reserved, and this, too, when her manner had begun to give him reason to hope that, after all, a soldier might aspire.

For the week following that rencontre between the two field officers—Hoyt of the volunteer cavalry, Wallis

of the regular infantry,—Gerald when with his mother and sister could talk of hardly anything else. He gloried in the triumph of his friend and hero. He marveled that his mother seemed so strangely distressed that Major Wallis should have been braved and defeated within her doors. She hoped—oh, she hoped no harm would come of it!—that he would not be deeply offended!—that he would not allow it to influence him against them! until Gerald stared at her, open mouthed, and Ethel gazed in wonderment and distress. What possible difference, demanded Gerald, could it make what Wallis might think? He was clearly in the wrong, and in view of all that had happened and the suspicions attaching to Major Wallis, Gerald considered her anxiety—or sympathy, or whatever it might be—inexplicable.

And so, too, at first did Ethel; and, though she could not speak upon the subject to Colonel Hoyt, she could and did to Gerald, and several serious talks had the brother and sister. Twice or thrice, indeed, over the breakfast toast and eggs they found themselves impelled to refer to it. Then one evening at dinner when Hoyt was there something was said about an item that had just appeared in the *Post*, then lying on the library table—a letter from Washington, announcing that an important arrest had been made by secret service officers the previous day,—the arrest of a civilian for whom they had been looking for some time,—and who, having been “shadowed” on arrival by train from Baltimore, had been arrested as he came forth in totally

different garb from that he wore on entering the house of an officer of high rank.

"It is high time something was being done," said Gerald. "We know Washington is full of spies."

"Do you know at whose house this arrest was made?" asked Hoyt, quietly, "or, at least, who lived in that house?"—this with a glance at Ethel, and then a long look at Forbes, just leaving the room, tray in hand, and Forbes stopped suddenly and busied himself about some trifles on the stand at the doorway.

"No," said Ethel, looking up expectant. And the colonel's eyes were still fixed on Forbes as, with some little emphasis, he continued:—

"Major Wallis's, and the arrested man was—Forno."

Whereat the tray slipped with a bang and rattle to the floor, and Forbes seemed long in recovering it—and his own balance.

Then it seems Hoyt had been writing letters to officers who had been with Anderson at Fort Sumter—to Seabrook who was Ralph Rutherford's second when he fought that fatal duel, and to others cognizant of club talk at the time, for Gerald saw letters come for his colonel addressed in handwriting he had seen before in his mother's possession, for she, poor lady, had importuned almost everybody who knew her martyred, murdered boy—murdered wantonly, she would have it—and so taught her surviving children to believe, and so told Hoyt when first he came to see her on his return from the West, and one day when Gerald went suddenly into the colonel's office at the barracks he heard these

words from the lips of a stranger officer, in well-worn uniform, with tarnished red shoulder-straps, who finished his sentence as the new adjutant entered and before he noted the colonel's sign of warning:—

“A woman was the real cause—not the quarrel at the club.”

The speaker colored to the brows when, on the instant—almost cutting off his words—the colonel said, “Captain Seabrook, let me present Mr. Gerald Rutherford, adjutant of the regiment,” and colored still more when Gerald innocently asked:

“Captain Seabrook, of Fort Sumter?”

“The same, Mr. Rutherford. I had the pleasure of knowing your brother—the sorrow of being his second. Your mother has honored me with a few letters.”

And when Gerald told his mother of this meeting she became much agitated and begged to know where the captain was to be found; she wished much to see him, and—had he said anything?—had Gerald heard?—and Gerald, remembering what he had heard, and remembering the shock with which he had heard, replied that in no other way whatever had Ralph's name been mentioned, which, though misleading, was true. The young man felt well assured they were talking of his brother and therefore sought to draw particulars from Hoyt, but all to no purpose.

Then the invalid herself asked that the colonel should come to her, and there had been a talk that left her sad, tearful and unstrung. She begged that Seabrook might be found. She longed to see him, too, but Sea-

brook was gone. Then Ethel almost demanded of her mother that she tell her what all this mystery meant, but the mother would not, and the poor lady begged her daughter not to press the question now—that later, if she survived, she would tell her all, please God—and then both women looking up, startled, saw that inscrutable Forbes, apologetic and super-respectful, bowing at the curtained entrance. He begged the ladies' pardon, but he had given Joyce "permission to go h'out a w'ile—Joyce's 'ead was, beg pardon, h'aching. Would the colonel and the captain be 'ome to dinner?" Forbes revolted at the idea of a Rutherford in arms being of lower rank than captain. But the ladies could not answer. Only at rare intervals did these zealous officers permit themselves to leave their station at the barracks back of Williamsburgh, and rarer still were they able to send word of their coming—a matter that gave to no one in the household more concern than Hortense, who spent many an hour abroad now, yet was never away, if she could help it, when Hoyt was in the house.

It was an odd thing that, though he slept at barracks with his regiment; spent all his days and most of his evenings there, and had moved much of his belongings thither, Colonel Hoyt still retained one of the rooms he had occupied in Eleventh Street—the one whose windows opened on the interior of the block and gave a glimpse, at least, of that glass-covered gallery at the back of the Rutherford mansion—the gallery wherein Forbes had set that light and its strong re-

flector. It was odd, too, that Forbes should have taken measures to ascertain if it were the case that the colonel was frequently there. Prince, the darky who tended door, answered the calls and blacked the boots of the half dozen lodgers in the house, mentioned casually to the colonel when that officer looked in on his trunks and boxes one November evening, that Forbes had asked such questions, and Hoyt had merely said, "Indeed!" All the same the colonel never went to the room that he didn't go to the windows and gaze from there at the rear of the Rutherford house. Prince saw him from the yard, and went to see, whenever the colonel came, and Prince's theory was that the colonel was looking at Miss Rutherford's windows, for servants' halls along the block were quite well informed as to the colonel's evident regard. But no more did Forbes set that dazzling light to shine along the back porches.

Then one bright December Sunday they came walking home from church,—Hoyt and other officers being conspicuous, for all was quiet on the Potomac, the South blockading it at Mathias Point and fever housing McClellan in Washington. Miss Rutherford flushed a bit at the piercing glance from Lorna Brenham's bright eyes, as that brilliant and unterrified upholder of Southern rights encountered them. Miss Brenham was pleased to be in exuberant mood and hailed them, blithely:—

"You and Colonel Hoyt ought to stop in and see the Charleston papers at our house," said she, saucily. "Lots of news about people we know. Colonel Gordon,

Colonel Haines, Major Forno, and who else, Mr. Granger?" she demanded of the devotee at her side.

"What about Haines?" asked Hoyt, in smiling amusement, raising his forage-cap to the lady, but quite ignoring Granger. He exasperated Lorna Brenham because he would never take her seriously, and only laughed at her diatribes. Her dark eyes flashed as she answered him.

"He counts on coming North for the summer, as usual, and bringing a host with him," was the half merry, half defiant answer. "And Forno's with him now, you know, wearing the gray. Won't Newport and Saratoga and the Point be heavenly? And where on earth will we put them all?" she continued; then, radiant and beautiful, turned laughing away to greet others of her friends. Lorna's manner at this stage of the game was that of a queen, with estates and orders and honors to confer on those she fancied. Beyond all doubt she counted on seeing the star of the South floating speedily over the City Hall.

"Why don't you tell her what you knew of Forno? I shall. I *won't* have her triumphing over us in that way," said Ethel, angrily, her own eyes flashing now, her cheeks burning, as they went on homeward in the decorous, solemn promenade.

"Because—I am not sure," he answered, slowly, "that I *do* know."

"You *said* he'd been arrested at—at—in Washington," spoke Miss Rutherford, with something very like asperity—the tone that the best of women will some-

times employ in rebuke to the man of whom they feel sure.

"I should have said, Ethel, that the dispatch shown me at the General's that afternoon so stated."

"Do you mean—you don't believe it?"

"Wait—we're almost home. Good morning, Mrs. Leroy—good morning, Miss Gertrude," and again the cavalry cap came off in greeting to these near neighbors, and Ethel's eyes beamed with the sweetness of expression the well-bred maiden commands even at moments of much irritation. There had been too many—far too many secrets in the house of late that Hoyt seemed to share, and from which she was excluded, and the time had come to make him feel it. Gerald, in his becoming uniform, was striding slowly up the avenue by Grace Minturn's side. Mrs. Rutherford had felt too feeble to attend service that morning, and had been left in the charge of Hortense. There was no one in the parlor, said the servant at the door, and Ethel thither led the way; then turned upon her escort:—

"First, what is this mystery about Major Forno, for I think you know?"

"Ethel, I do not know, unless it be that—he has a double."

"What has he to do with Major Wallis? What have they—either or both—to do with mother? What have you heard? What do *you* know that they know of Ralph?" And now Ethel stood confronting him; her fair face flushed; her clear, brave eyes flashing. Well she knew he was her own soldier, her knight, her cham-

pion, her brother's loyal friend and defender, yet there was something he and they and all of them were keeping from her—something about him whom she had loved and looked up to with all the adoration a young girl feels for a fond, indulgent big brother—something Gerald did not know—something mother would not tell—something Bernard Hoyt *should* tell here and now or feel the weight of her displeasure.

“Ethel, ask yourself whose letters were those you—lost—that Sunday so long ago,” he gently spoke.

“Three—of Ralph's,” she answered promptly, “that mother gave me to carry—that she meant to show the rector after service, but was taken ill. What has *that* to do with—this?”

“Think again, Ethel. Do you not know what letters were stolen from your mother's desk?”

“Ralph's, yes. And knowing how she prized them, read them over and over, no wonder she wept at losing them. But what earthly value would they have—to any one else?”

“Some one has risked state's prison to get them, or else others filed with them, dear, and risked it, as I believe, to bring harm and shame on a name that I love as I do my own. You have not been kind to me of late—”

“You have not been fair with me,” she broke in hotly. “You have withheld from me what I ought to know, if I am to be of any use to mother—if I am not to be treated as a child, and again I ask you, and for the last time, Colonel Hoyt, what is the story that is sap-

ping mother's life? Is it of Ralph?—for I *will* know it!"

"Ethel," he said, gravely, gently, sadly, "I ask you to trust it to me a little longer. I beg you not to make me tell you now, because—because, as I live, I don't and won't believe it—because, please God, I hope to live to learn the true one, and then to lay it, with—What is it, Forbes?" And with angry stride the soldier sped across the parlor and tore aside the heavy curtains at the archway.

"I beg pardon, sir," said the butler, most respectfully, caught as he would have stolen away, "but I heard voices and thought the colonel called me, sir."

And then came Gerald bursting in from the front door, joyous, excited. "A telegram, just sent by the officer-of-the-day, Colonel—came this morning."

In breathless silence Hoyt tore it open, read first to himself and then aloud:—

"Have your regiment in readiness to move to-morrow." Slowly, thoughtfully he folded it, his blue eyes on her paling face. "I had hoped to know—more—to tell you more before I left New York," said he, his voice trembling just a bit. "Now I see no way—until the war is over."

CHAPTER XII.

GARRY OWEN NA GLORIA.

MEANTIME, despite sore trials never mentioned to the world, the dashing commandant of Greble Barracks was still hard at work perfecting the drill and discipline of his new, yet already famous, regiment of regulars. Most of his officers were gentlemen of education from civil life, college-bred men, society men, "cadets" of good families. Several had been schooled in the New York Seventh, and, though all were made to feel the distance by which they were separated from the regimental commander, all, without exception, conceded his brilliant attainments and admired his skill, knowledge and unquestioned gift for command. "If he were only a general," said his senior captain, "Wallis could do something in this war."

"He will never get to be a general or anything like it," was the answer of a thoughtful elder. "He has antagonized the adjutant general; he ignores the Secretary; he truckles to nobody, and in his contemptuous independence he persists in being intimate with *persona* decidedly *non-grata* with the government. I tell you that he is simply killing his own chances and he's booked for trouble."

The words of Captain Campion seemed actually prophetic when, one sparkling winter morning, when even Washington felt the sting of the frost, secret service officials tracked a bundled-up traveler in slouch hat, spectacles, muffler and cloak from the Baltimore cars to a hack and from the hack to the lodgings of Major Wallis, and, less than an hour later, arrested the new arrival as he came forth minus slouch hat, spectacles, cloak and muffler, looking very dapper and soldierly, and whisked him away to a room at the old War Department.

Thither, too, was Wallis speedily summoned, and anything more dignified than the demeanor of these two attainted gentlemen could not be imagined. Mr.—or Major—Forno, as they called him, before the arrival of Wallis, had submitted with calm protest, but unruffled composure, to the search ordered by the chief officer present, and not a paper of consequence was found upon his person. Wallis, when called upon by an official of the War Department to account for his entertaining a man who was known to have been in Charleston and Savannah, consorting with Confederate leaders, within a fortnight, replied with utter *sang froid* that he could not be expected to possess the information of the secret service—that all he knew of the gentleman's movements was what he derived from the gentleman himself. The gentleman said he had just come from New York, and had spent some time there and in Boston and other cities. The gentleman had entertained him in days before the un-

happy difference between the sections, and he had most assuredly sought to return the gentleman's hospitality. If the gentleman were in any way connected with the Confederate service the fact had not been confided to him, Major Wallis, and so, having at no time referred to the suspected person as either Mr. or Major Forno, with a languid yawn, Major Wallis begged leave to acquaint his examiner with the fact that it lacked less than an hour to drill time.

This, too, was told at dinners and receptions during the gay holiday season, and made Wallis even more a marked man in every gathering he attended. What struck many people as strange as the winter wore on, was that the less Wallis was seen about the White House or War Department the more was he in evidence among McClellan's chosen friends. Intimates the latter had but three or four, and these, unhappily, were not of the administration circle. And so, while the new —teenth Infantry, with its thoroughbred looking officers, its veteran sergeants, culled from many an old line organization that Wallis had known, and its superior class of young soldiers in the ranks, was forever being paraded under its brilliant commander for review, inspection, or some other full dress function at the instance of the general heading the army, and by consequence Wallis and his favorite officers were perpetually figuring in "high society," he and his fellows were referred to with ominous words when referred to at all by the advisers of the grim new Secretary, already beginning to take the bit in his strong

teeth and to pull hard at the restraining hands in the White House.

Then another incident occurred that meant more trouble for Wallis. Of course he had made no mention of the scene between himself and Hoyt the night at the Rutherfords, but you may be sure it was something Gerald could not keep to himself, and had told with consummate glee in letters to Barclay, Bronson and others who were his intimates at Columbia and in the Seventh, and were now young officers of the regular service. The story fairly flew about the scattered camps of the batteries, the cavalry and the two or three battalions of foot in town. Then one glorious day in January, all but the mud, a great regiment in absolute uniform, complete equipment and fine condition as to foot drill, marched into camp alongside a veteran troop of regulars, and in less than a week, with its brand new horses chosen and colored according to squadron, with ambling, wall-eyed, "cream-laid" whites for the band, the whole command, coached by experienced soldiers,—Hoyt's own old frontier friends and devoted followers,—was learning the mysteries of grooming, feeding, biting, bridling, saddling, sitting bare-back, blanket-back or in the split-tree pignone. So engrossed was the colonel in his work he seldom if ever went to town, and so never saw the wrathful Wallis until mid February and then only by the latter's planning and contriving.

A strange unrest had seized on Mrs. Rutherford ever since she heard of Forno's capture, his subse-

quent release,—because nothing whatever of incriminating character had been found,—and then his total disappearance. She wished to see Wallis, who said he was refused leave to go to New York. She begged for the address of Captain Seabrook, who, with his battery, had gone to West Virginia. She plied friends of influence with questions as to Forno, to the end that great curiosity was excited, but nothing definite learned beyond the fact that the bearer of that name had been traced to Port Tobacco, and, as the Confederate guns at Mathias Point still ruled the Potomac, it was an easy matter for any one with money or influence to come and go across at will. Forno was doubtless back under the sheltering wing of the Confederacy.

But why the mischief, was the question, did he risk that visit to Washington? What could he possibly have gained?

There were no secret service officers to search him on his return to Richmond. Even had there been, the papers found would have failed to attain him of political crime, though they might have landed him before a police court.

Then, with Forno gone beyond reach, Mrs. Rutherford decided she must be near Gerald again while yet there was time, and good Dr. Tracy said by all means take her; she was fretting her heart out here at home. Willard's was crowded, but a parlor was fitted up as boudoir and bedroom for the invalid lady and her daughter. Hortense was given a tiny closet

on an upper floor, whereat she grumbled greatly. Gerald had been sent to town to meet them, and the day after their arrival Hoyt rode in to pay his respects.

So long as the colonel remained at camp and refused to mingle in society there had been no way in which Wallis could reach him. A note he had sent by a distinguished civilian friend, a man who had conducted more than one cartel in the past and had been an authority on the code duello in Congressional and social circles as well as such clubs as then existed. Briefly, Wallis stated that the wrongs and indignities he had received at the hands of Colonel Hoyt were insupportable, past amende, and he demanded the satisfaction due from one who considered himself an officer and a gentleman. Wallis did not mince words in the least. Trial by court-martial would have been the result had Hoyt betrayed him, but that officer contented himself by saying flatly that he would not accord Major Wallis a meeting and would receive no more communications from him. The gentleman messenger expressed amaze and said that a year ago such refusal would have subjected an officer to ostracism in both army and civil circles, and began to say something about "posting" as a necessary consequence, whereat Hoyt said that if his principal considered it advisable to make the matter public by all means let him do so, and then bowed his visitor to the door.

Wallis was furious, yet prudent. His civilian friend

was a Virginian and a Southern sympathizer who, while seeing that times had changed, could not yet realize how very much, and so was for having Wallis pull the colonel's nose in front of the regiment, but Wallis laid the case before a veteran on McClellan's staff who had himself been "out" on more than one occasion. The old soldier listened thoughtfully.

"You can't post Hoyt," said he. "'Twould do no harm to him, for every man of us that ever served in the West knows how brave a fellow he is. It would only hurt *you*, for the War Department loves you none too well and might order an investigation. Two years ago I would not say what I must say now, that is—drop it." And the decision was unalterable.

But Wallis burned with hate and sense of wrong. Something he must and would do to punish Hoyt, and this is what he did and how he did it:

The colonel rode in to dine with the ladies the third evening after their coming; dismounted in front of Willard's and sent the orderly with the horses to a neighboring stable. Gerald, previously arrived, was with his mother on the second floor. The marble-tiled office was crowded with men, many in uniform and of all grades from general down, though the provost marshal's people saw to it that only those duly authorized to be absent from camp or station were allowed to loiter about town. Hoyt's soldierly form, youthful face and the high rank betokened by his handsome uniform attracted much attention. The roads were deep with mud, and his high cavalry boots

and glistening spurs, that had been immaculate when he left camp, now needed the attention of expert hands, as some of Willard's boys had learned to be. Chatting awhile with certain New York relatives of one of his officers, Hoyt remained some fifteen minutes in the porter's room. Meanwhile another lad slipped up to the parlor floor and presently the tall, strikingly distinguished figure of Major Wallis came sauntering down. It was noticed at the time that the major's face was strangely pale; that his eyes glittered eagerly as he glanced about the lobby, and that he nervously switched the light rattan cane he carried. He, too, was in complete and immaculate uniform, but, like Hoyt and others of our army when not on duty, wore neither belt nor side arms. He languidly, drawlingly responded to the many salutations, but was evidently looking for some one and presently that some one came.

Still listening to the eager talk of the Gothamites, Hoyt walked forward through the throng, making for the desk, his right hand fumbling in the breast of his coat in search of his card-case. He reached the counter, touching his cap to a general officer as he passed and never hearing the low-toned exclamation of an aide-de-camp, "By Jove, there's Wallis, too! We can't have trouble here!" It was while Hoyt was standing at the desk, his right hand still prisoned in his coat, that Wallis, with swift, elastic stride, burst through the crowd; made straight at the unconscious officer, and reached forth his left hand as though to

grasp the colonel's shoulder and whirl him about so that he might face him as he dealt his blow. Then up flew the light cane, poised for the fierce attack—and there was seized and grasped by a muscular hand, while a stern voice said: "Drop it, sir, at once or I'll send for the guard," and Wallis, with livid face, looked into the eyes of a soldier with whom there was no trifling, whether he wore the garb of a troop commander or, as now, the guise of a general.

"I yield, sir, to your rank and authority," said Wallis, with mechanical salute, and left his stick in his superior's grasp, as without another word, he turned, stalked through the curious throng and disappeared upon the crowded avenue.

"Something's got to be done to bring that fellow to terms," was the verdict of the War Department when the story reached there, as it did next day, and opportunity was not lacking. Old "Meejor" Mullins, nearly thirty-five years in the army and only just promoted lieutenant-colonel of one of the old single battalion regiments, was there in Washington,—a brave, brainless, butt-headed campaigner, laughingly known to all the line as a pompous incompetent of the fossiliferous class, who could neither drill, discipline nor command any more than he could ride, yet sturdily believed he could do all that man could do. He had good backers in a powerful political element not entirely dissociated with the Church of Rome. The lieutenant-colonel of the new —teenth knew well that he would never have to join with that rank, and that the

double stars were ahead if he had any luck at all. A telegram was sent and answered. A transfer was ordered—Lieutenant-Colonel Brinton (Brigadier General, U. S. V.) going from the —teenth to the — and Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Mullins, recently promoted, coming from the —d, in which he had legged it over the Llano Estacado and charged at Chapultepec, ordered to assume command of the post of Greble Barracks and the swellest regiment of regulars in the Army of the Potomac—McClellan's pets, the social lions, the splendidly drilled, the "Silver Spoons" (an envious reference to their handsome mess kit)—the officers and men whom Wallis had made and moulded and from whose head he must now step down to the insignificance of second in command.

But the —teenth were wild with wrath, as certain others were with wicked glees, and the —teenth nearly revolted at the thought of red-nosed old Michael, with his brogue and his gay Irish banter, seated at the head of the mess table (Wallis's pride and glory), receiving guests and visitors; commanding with his squat, bulbous figure on parade and drill, and lording it over these men of standing and substance in their communities at home. If the enemies and detractors, the maligners and slanderers of Harold Wallis thought to see him crushed, chagrined and humiliated (and, mind you, there was a gang of them there to witness Michael's first parade and to crow over Wallis's coming up with the line at command

of his heart-broken adjutant), there was disappointment in store for them and a sore one. "He'll shirk it," said they. "He won't be there." But they little knew Harold Wallis. There he was, more blithe and debonair than he had seemed for many a day. With all the officers in full dress uniform assembled at the mess hall; with the regimental colors at the head of the beautifully garnished table; with the fine band, that he had worked so hard and spent so much to perfect, stationed just without the walls; the board set with all their bravery of snowy linen and glistening silver and crystal (much of it borrowed for the occasion, as was the huge punch bowl, from a neighboring caterer); with guests bidden from McClellan's staff, and from adjacent camps, aye, even from the walls of the War Department; the champagne flowed and frothed and bubbled, and men marveled much at the wondrous ease and grace with which Wallis presided; at his courtly greeting to every guest, some of whom he had airily snubbed within the week; at his glowing cordiality to honest old Mullins, who, expecting anything but this, knew not what to make of it all, but beamed and blushed and tossed his glass to man after man. And then, when as master of the informal feast, the major had formally toasted the President of the United States, and called on a distinguished Senator to respond (the Senator who had gone with his grace of St. Patrick's to plead the cause of Lieutenant-Colonel Mike with both President and Secretary, and so lead to the unseating of the brilliant

host himself), and that rotund and equable statesman had nimbly responded, the band, in some way failing to get the cue, did not strike up as expected, but Wallis, never at a loss, was at once on his feet and in eloquent words referred to the long and heroic services of the distinguished soldier to-day their guest of honor. His foot had trod almost every mile of the broad frontier; his hand had been ever as open as his honest heart; his sword had cleft its way from the battlements of San Juan de Ulloa to the sacred halls of the Montezumas, following the flag of his adopted country. His fame had been long linked with that of one of the historic regiments of our ever glorious service, and now, honored and acclaimed, he had come to assume the leadership of this new but enthusiastic command, and with bumpers all and a three times three he pledged the faith and loyalty of every officer and man to the gallant veteran on his right, and proposed long life and health to the genial, great hearted and gladly welcomed colonel—Michael Mullins, long of the famous fighting —d and now commander of the loyal —teenth.

Up rose everybody but the abashed, overwhelmed, yet delighted Michael. Glasses were drained; napkins tossed in air; the table, sideboard, walls and windows hammered; and in the midst of it all the triumphant strains of the band at last became audible in the glorious national air it should have played when the President was toasted, and Wallis, turning to a little group of men, some few of his own set, but most all from

other commands; never heeding who heard, speaking only in whimsical wrath at the *contretemps*, impetuously cried:

“Oh, damn the Star Spangled Banner! That should have been Garry Owen!”

CHAPTER XIII.

A NIGHT PATROL.

MARCH came and went. The army went and came. The President took the bit in his teeth and ordered McClellan to move. McClellan moved as far as Fairfax and back to Alexandria. Some few of his people went forward as far as did McDowell the previous summer and stayed about as long—the enemy obligingly falling back to the line of the Rapidan, and politely inviting McClellan to come that way or any other he might select and be sure of a warm reception. The Army of the Potomac took a ride on the river from which it took its name; landed at the lower end of the storied Peninsula, and felt its way out to Yorktown, where it spent some weeks practicing siege operations, losing some men and much time, trying to manœuvre, among others, one J. B. Magruder out of his trenches. An old friend of Wallis was Magruder and a famous entertainer in his day—so good that even now higher powers at Richmond thought it needless to supplant him and only moderately to reinforce. His old battery of the First Artillery was there before him (its gallant captain, his successor, being behind him much of the previous Fall at Libby, a result of wounds re-

ceived at First Bull Run), but the mess silver was still at regimental headquarters, whither Magruder could not go, and in that silver had he long had almost parental interest. It was pleasant, however, to see, even at a distance, the familiar old guidon. It was pleasant to realize that, even in hostile array, there were so many old boon companions in the blue ranks investing him. It was charming to surround himself with the fortifications first thrown up by Lord Cornwallis, and with something of the state that ever hedged that accomplished officer and genial gentleman. It was delightful to receive through the lines facetious greetings from his erstwhile companions in arms, and, in the contemplation of certain visiting cards bearing old familiar names, to permit grim-visaged War to smooth his wrinkled front. It did no great harm to the cause of either side at the front, at least, and the mention of it did so stir up Stanton at the rear. It tickled Magruder to hear that Stanton waxed wrathful over the accounts that began to reach him instead of those he had hoped for—to the effect that McClellan had carried the lines by assault. It amused Major Wallis not a little that he should on two or three occasions find himself within saluting distance, almost, of officers high on the roster of the Confederate service as well as on that of his personal friends, and, on the two or three other occasions when a flag of truce passed between the lines, it happened that Wallis was on hand to hear everything that took place. It was even said that, without

the medium of the flag of truce, or of the signal corps, communication had been held with the enemy, mainly at night, and of this no man knew more than did Harold Wallis, who was forever riding about from camp to camp. A staff officer was he now, no longer on duty with the "Silver Spoons," and, being no longer under the spur of the Secretary or his chosen coterie at Washington, there was nobody who cared to cross purposes with a man so manifestly favored as was this envied and gifted major.

It had been thoroughly understood at the Department that Wallis was to be subjected to the humiliation of serving as second in command to honest old Mullins—kept on duty in a subordinate capacity with the officers and men he had practically "formed," if not made, and compelled to feel that he was being punished for his sins. There were men about Washington to whom he might have been sent for discipline—old campaigners who would have rejoiced in giving it. Indeed, it had been planned that the "Spoons" should be attached to a brigade of regulars where Wallis could be made to do duty and toe the mark according to the views and wishes of men of the Stanton type. But, so far from showing the least chagrin or concern, Wallis had apparently accepted the changed conditions with the utmost complaisance. He fairly overwhelmed Mullins with cordiality on all social occasions and with demonstrations of respect and esteem when on duty. He responded with apparent alacrity to every requirement or order. He

took Mullins into his confidence, as it were, and told him of the innumerable wheels within wheels of diplomatic society at the capital; consulted him as to invitations to dine here, to dance there, to drive with this or that fair one; giving the veteran to understand he was embarrassed at times in choosing between them because of the atmosphere of disloyalty, if not treason, that permeated the social sphere about them. He whispered little "pointers" as to prominent matrons in the court circle, all to the end that the delighted elder declared "the meejor is a divil of a fellow, and by no means the stuck-up snob so many people make him out to be." In a week Wallis had him as plastic as putty, and was coming and going with almost as much freedom as when himself in command. In ten days he was practically again in command of the regiment, for he could most adroitly steer Mullins into almost any plan of action by convincing that rotund patriot that the project was of his, the senior's, own devising. Then, however, when the War Department would have interposed and had somebody warn Mullins of the actual state of affairs, McClellan made his start for the Peninsula and conceived it necessary to have another staff officer—one to shine at headquarters and properly impress his foreign volunteer aides, the Prince de Joinville and his nephews of the House of Orleans, as well as one or two gentlemen from other sections of Europe, studying the art of war as practiced in the United States of America. Wallis spoke French fluently if not well, and French

was the court language of Christendom. The Secretary, it was reported, swore volubly when told of McClellan's choice, but the law endorsed it, and with well simulated sorrow Wallis bade adieu to Mullins and the —teenth; predicted their speedy meeting again on the Peninsula, and left them for the flotilla before Stanton could find means to overthrow the plan. Wallis was there at McClellan's headquarters, blithe, full of chat and spirits, ready for anything day or night as they lay in front of Yorktown. He was much given to studying guards and pickets; much interested in outpost duty; a most accomplished, if somewhat patronizing, instructor of the volunteer regiments of which the army was mainly composed, for, except a detachment or two for provost guard, the regular infantry that later made up Sykes's Division were not sent to McClellan until toward summer. In fine, Wallis made his mark in the April camps of the lower Peninsula almost as indelibly as he had upon the Silver Spoons at Washington, and there were statesmen from the North, visiting their home regiments and being received with much *empressement* at certain headquarters messes, who went home quite full of the idea of urging their respective governors to tender a regiment to Major Wallis, and were quite as much surprised at the summary refusal of the War Department to permit the major to be so employed.

One soft May evening there was a late gathering about the headquarters tent of a famous division commander, a prime favorite with the commanding gen-

eral, who, while himself a prime favorite with most officers and men, was still chary in his own selection of friends and counselors. There had been a heavy cannonade from the Confederate lines earlier in the evening. It was a dark night, too, as many remembered later, for the waning moon was obscured by heavy clouds. A moist wind was sweeping up from the southeast, yet campfires were at a discount because they attracted gnats and mosquitoes. Officers having occasion to make the rounds took lanterns, as a rule, and when Wallis came riding in from the front and, throwing the reins to his orderly as he dismounted, joined the circle seated in the dim rays of the swinging lamp, some one ventured to remark that it was taking chances to be prowling about in such pitchy darkness so near the enemy's lines. "You look sharp, Wallis," continued the speaker—"first thing you know we'll hear of *your* dining with Magruder."

Even in that faint and uncertain light there was no mistaking the sudden start with which Wallis turned. His eyes fairly glittered as they fastened on the offending officer. There was a moment of awkward silence—just a second or two—yet even then there were men who marveled at the quickness with which Wallis recovered himself, and at the almost insolent nonchalance of the reply:

"No such luck, I fancy. Prince John has a better table than de Joinville and can lisp a better story. I'd like it, of all things, for a change." Then the airy manner vanished on the instant as he turned all sol-

dier now, to the handsome, bearded division commander, "General, may I speak with you a moment?"

And rising, the general led the way within the tent. The broad white flaps dropped behind them and another silence, awkward almost as the first, fell on the seated circle. One officer, a young aide-de-camp, who had been an attentive listener, arose and started away. Another hailed him—he who had so recently accosted Wallis—"What's your hurry, Barclay? I'll go with you."

But Barclay gave no heed. Swiftly he was striding away toward the dim lights of some neighboring tents. Every man in the party had heard in some way that there was a feud between the dashing major and this young New Yorker, now serving at headquarters of the Fourth Corps. Some few had heard of the affair at Camp Cameron the previous summer. One of them, he who hailed, was himself a New Yorker; a man of the old Seventh; a friend of the Rutherfords and, as Barclay had almost palpably ignored him, he spoke his next words in apparent pique.

"Don't want to have to meet Wallis, I suppose, yet they used to be thick as thieves! What made Wallis turn on me so pointedly I'd like to know? *I've* said nothing to rile him."

The question was hardly asked in hope of answer. It was propounded rather through the necessity of utterance than with the expectation even of a hearer. At more than one campfire had the story been whispered that, on more than one occasion, the pickets de-

clared Major Wallis had passed beyond the lines at night, alone and unattended, carrying no lantern and remaining out at the front sometimes more than an hour. At more than one mess was it known that Eugene Wallis, after changing his coat, had risen to a captain's commission in the Confederate service, and had been on duty in and about Richmond during the winter. These two stories made a combination Wallis the elder might well have looked upon with anxiety had he been a man regardful of public comment. One officer there was, riding with the chief of the little cavalry brigade, who had thought enough of Wallis to tell him bluntly of the tales in circulation, and was either hurt or angered by the gay disdain with which his well-meant warning had been received. At all events he no more favored the dashing soldier with his counsel. One general there was, not of the McClellan coterie, who had known the Wallis family many a year; had loved the father and was near him when he fell in Mexico, and now would gladly have stood between the son and scandal; but ever since the early winter, when the veteran officer had sought for old times' sake to warn the younger, a gulf had begun to grow between them. Wallis had treated his remonstrance as cavalierly as he later had the warnings of his trooper friend, and now, there was one corps headquarters which he never visited save when sent on duty. But that, said those who noted it, might be due to Barclay's presence there, for he and Barclay passed each other without recognition of any kind. And, on this moist May evening, of the dozen officers gathered

about the tents of the division staff, probably not one had failed to note how sharply Wallis turned on the unwitting disturber of his equanimity, and then how suddenly Barclay had turned away.

It was a trait of Wallis's when his personal affairs were trenched upon, even in thoughtless speech, to make the offender feel the sting of his displeasure, generally by exaggerated *hauteur* of manner, coupled with some icy sarcasm. To-night, however, he had quit the field content, apparently, to get away without having to encounter further question or comment. "Riled" he might have been. Startled he certainly was, but sharply though he had turned, sharply he had *not* spoken. Something seemed to warn him in the nick of time that it were best to stir no rancor, but even to pass the matter over as too trivial for further remark. Not so, however, did the others regard it; for, in the silence that followed that one comment on Barclay's withdrawal, men looked at each other and then at the tent within whose walls the general and his visitor were now in low-toned conversation. There was not one that did not see in Wallis's manner something that lent confirmation to the story floating about the camp, and Barclay had gone rather than see or hear more of it.

That night, somewhere about twelve, the field officer-of-the-day in passing the front of the Vermont Brigade was accosted by a young lieutenant, commanding the support of certain pickets along the Warwick. "Major," said he, "my sentries out near the creek report a great deal of stir and movement among the rebs.

Lights have been flitting about over there toward South-all's Landing. We reported it to Major Wallis, who was out here half an hour ago, but he said it meant nothing. He went out and looked and listened."

"Where is he now?" asked the division officer, with evident interest.

"Gone over to the right, I suppose, sir. At least he didn't return this way."

The officer stood in silence a moment and in deep thought. He was one of those many soldiers that came the first few months of the war, high in rank among the earlier regiments from the New England and Middle States—men of reading, knowledge and professional standing, imbued with lofty patriotism and deep sense of duty, lacking almost everything in the way of experience in matters military, but gifted with the reasoning powers and general education that speedily set them on a plane with those possessing all that constant touch and contact with the regulars could possibly furnish, but had studied little else. To such as these Major Wallis had been an object lesson all the days he rode in command of the newly raised —teenth. They watched him on drill and parade with eyes that envied not a little the ease and grace, the power and swing of his command; then went back to their tactics and read, memorized and compared to the end that they found themselves constantly benefited by the lesson and speedily able to drill and handle their own battalions with far more skill and celerity than would otherwise have been possible. To such men as this New England

major, learned in the law, and steadied and strengthened by Harvard schooling, Wallis was a soldier who gave promise of great results. They looked upon him, for the first few months, with infinite admiration and respect, and were slow to confess to themselves and loath to admit to others that, as they speedily broadened in the field of martial experience, he as surely narrowed in their esteem. It was not good in the eyes of men so loyal to the flag, so fervently alive to the national peril and need that this mould of military form, the observed of so many observers, should seem to hold so lightly men and methods that were the necessity of the hour, and deserving, so they thought, the most zealous and conscientious support of all loyal soldiers. It shocked them—there is no lighter word for it—that Wallis should so often speak contemptuously of the new war secretary and so often refer in terms almost disdainful of their great executive and commander-in-chief. It startled them to hear this brilliant staff officer, and therefore, possibly, *ex officio* exponent of the views of the commanding general, so frequently sneer at the plans, and so flippantly dispose of the members of the President's official household. And it rankled in the breasts of many of their number that Wallis should so often speak in terms of boundless admiration of men prominent in the Southern service and so seldom find words of confidence or respect for those that wore the blue. Add to all this the incessant buzz and talk about his disregard of the observance of ordinary precautions; his constant goings to and fro at the far front; his

nonchalant treatment of officers and sentries along the picket line, who, in the performance of their duties, sought to curb or at least to warn him; his excursions and long absences after dark, and the soldier reader can see at a glance that Harold Wallis had more than undermined his own reputation, for stories such as these are most destructive. It nettles men to have their cautions or commands ignored, and among these "thinking bayonets" of the volunteers were dozens who had seen and talked with the major along the front, and of him not too guardedly at the campfires later; and this particular field officer-of-the-day of the Fourth Corps was thinking of all this as he remounted after listening to the report of the officer of the picket and thinking, too, of the events of the earlier evening. That cannonade had been of unusual vehemence for two or three hours—the Southern guns from Yorktown clear over to Southall's on the Warwick, opening furiously on the Union lines, and keeping up their fire with lively interest long after the sun went down. Some officers held it to be the prelude to a sortie, and there were division commanders who thought it wise to hold their men in ranks, and to double their advance posts. One or two had gone so far as to acquaint McClellan with their theories, and were rewarded by the placid and imperturbable smile which that courteous commander had ever in reserve for those whose views were at variance with his own. Whether sortie or not, the cannonade portended something, however, said men like Keyes and old "Bull" Sumner. McClellan had not taken the War

Department into his confidence during the long months of weary waiting, and, when it came to naming corps commanders in the spring, there may have been retaliation. At least, more than one was not of McClellan's choosing, and he little liked it that any of their number should say Magruder or his fellows meant a move of any kind when he would will it otherwise.

Yet here was confirmation of the views expressed by generals not of the court circle. Something certainly was astir beyond the Warwick, and it had been reported to one of the headquarters staff, had it?—and he said there was nothing in it, did he? and was still somewhere out there to the right front, was he? H'm—Major Holman stroked his beard; left his horse with the support and, taking his bearings from the sergeant of the nearest picket, the stars being obscured, felt his way out to the Warwick front for further observation on his own account.

Only toward the center and right of the Fourth Corps had there been comparatively close touch with the Confederate pickets. The center and left were covered by the swampy banks of the lower Warwick, and no reports of consequence came this night from the outlying sentries there. It was over in front of Southall's, and along the road to Lee's Mills, the flitting lights had been seen, the sounds of movement noted; and somewhere toward one o'clock Major Holman, crouching with a corporal and sentry at the side of a muddy lane, and straining their ears to catch the sounds still coming at intervals from the farther side of the stream, were

joined by another officer creeping through the darkness from the rearward line. In muffled whisper he gave his name, Lieutenant Barclay, and accosted Major Holman:

"They told me you were out here somewhere, and the general was anxious to hear further, so I came on in search of you. Anything new?"

As if in answer, somewhere ahead, in the dim vista of the narrow roadway, there sounded the shrill, impatient neigh of a horse.

"Odd," muttered Holman. "I should think those fellows knew enough not to ride so close to us. That horse can't be a hundred yards away."

"It isn't those fellows, sir," answered the corporal, with quiet decision. "That's one of our own—Major Wallis."

"You don't mean you permitted him to go out, mounted, in front of the line!" exclaimed Major Holman, angered and excited at once.

"Permitted nothing of the sort, sir," was the answer, prompt and aggrieved. "He must have passed out somewhere else. He was outside and rode in from the outside half an hour ago—said there was a tree there from which he could hear everything going on across the bridge. I had no order to make him come inside."

"I feel that *I* have some authority in the premises, however," spoke the major, in low yet excited undertone. "If he can be safe out there so can we. Shall we try it, Mr. Barclay?"

And without verbal answer, Barclay rose at once and

followed. Fifteen, twenty yards they gropea through the darkness, and finally reached the little clump of bushes near the roadside. Noiseless and wary, speaking no word, they crouched here and listened. For a moment only an occasional stir of leaf or stamp of hoof rewarded their patience. Then again began that shrill, impatient neigh, close at hand; then followed the sound of a sharp blow, a low-toned, angry "Shut up, you fool!" half drowned in the instant sputter of iron-shod feet, as the animal started at the blow. Then deeper, quieter tones—reproach and sympathy intermingled.

"Steady, old fellow! Steady, boy!" Then "How *can* you be such a brute, Eugene? If your horse won't stand away from his mates you shouldn't bring him." And Holman felt that Barclay's hand, landing at that instant on his arm, was trembling violently. It was the voice of Major Wallis beyond shadow of a doubt.

"Are you armed?" whispered Holman.

"Revolver," answered Barclay.

"We must get that fellow with him. Better shed our swords here."

Silently Barclay strove to unfasten the slings, but his fingers twitched unaccountably. Impatient, therefore, he drew off belt and all and laid them on the sod, as Holman had done with his. The clumsy weapon of that day would indeed only have been in the way in the darkness. The low murmur of voices still continued—one voice querulous, protesting, complaining, the other deep and commanding, yet at times almost pleading. "Come on," whispered Holman, and together the two went

creeping forward, only to step, one of them, on some dry, fallen branch that snapped short under the heavily booted foot and gave instant alarm. Sharp and sudden, but still low, came the soldier challenge. "Halt! Who are you?" emphasized by the click of a lock.

"Field officer-of-the-day! Halt *you* and him with you! Surrender!" came the vehement answer in Holman's firm tones.

"Oh—ah!" and then an airy laugh. "Is that *you*, major? We're out on the same errand, I fancy. They've been doing some hauling to and fro, apparently. Guns, I should judge——"

"Major Wallis," burst in Holman, insistent and determined, "there was some one with you! Where is he?" for in the dim light no other form was distinguishable. Nor was there sound of retreating footfall.

"Did you hear them, too? Why didn't I know you were there—we might have nabbed them! Two of them, I think—ah—if not indeed more—a Confederate patrol, probably, that I ran across here in the woods, and had some difficulty in—ah—in persuading them that I was one of their own people. You can imagine how—ah—relieved I was to hear your footsteps."

CHAPTER XIV.

A GRAVE ACCUSATION.

AT two o'clock on the moist and misty morning of the fourth of May all about McClellan's field headquarters in front of Yorktown, with the exception of the guard and one staff officer, seemed wrapped in peaceful repose. Major Wallis, returned to his tent, had not even stirred up his negro servant to pull off his wet riding boots. Major Holman, on the other hand, at a distant point of the line, had stirred up half a dozen officers in the Fourth Corps, and gone again to the front, convinced that matters in the neighborhood of Lee's Mills would bear looking into.

To begin with, while he had stood for the moment, parleying with Wallis in front of the picket line, Barclay had made a dash forward in pursuit of a figure only dimly seen apparently stealing across the road some dozen yards away. In the thick darkness, however, he had missed his man. But the fact that one and only one was then seen, coupled with the further fact that a horse was heard trotting off through the trees and then galloping toward the Warwick, threw grave doubt on Wallis's tale of the patrol. Furthermore, Barclay had heard both voices and the mention of the name Eugene—things he had no time to explain to Holman then

when that officer insisted on escorting Major Wallis back to the line, but that had determined him not to abandon the search. He was still there when Holman left with Wallis in practically enforced escort, but he was gone, and no man within the Union lines could say how or whither, when, ten minutes later, Holman again reached the spot, bringing with him a sergeant and a squad of Green Mountain boys. They searched; they whistled low; they called in cautious tone; they even advanced the sentry line as much as a hundred yards, and, having passed the point where the interview had taken place, dared to light lanterns and scout the road and the scattered timber, and all without rousing a shot from the usually over-ready riflemen along the stream. The early dawn brought to Holman the unwelcome conviction that his young comrade had been spirited away, and that after all there must have been a patrol. The later dawn, the rosy light that tells of the speedy coming of the sun, told even more,—that the muffled sounds of stir and movement in the Southern lines across the Warwick had indeed meant something more than shifting guns. All that was left of Johnny Reb was a brace of scarecrow, dummy sentries, in tattered gray in front of the mills. Magruder and his accomplished fellow soldiers, Longstreet and D. H. Hill, had been skillfully withdrawn by their commander, Joe Johnston, and were now in leisurely retreat toward Richmond.

And not for a moment, would it seem, had the movement, though begun early the night of the third, been credited or suspected in McClellan's charmed circle at

headquarters. The news came like a shock, but found the chieftain calm and placid as before. Not until noon was a column ready to start in pursuit. Settled down for siege operations as was the army, even the cavalry could not set forth without something to eat; but when they finally started, Harold Wallis went with them. He had been riding about in a fume of energy and eagerness since the coming of the news soon after sunrise. He knew something of the country, was the explanation,—more of it, at least, than did any other officer of the staff,—for he had spent much time at Richmond and at Fortress Monroe years before, and had been the guest of old-time families along the York when snipe and canvasback, respectively, were ripe for shooting. He, at least, had shown unwonted excitement at the tidings; had indeed seemed for a moment almost dazed; for, only the evening before when more than one officer of rank had come in to speak of the significant sounds along the front, Wallis had been heard to pooh-pooh the idea of a possible evacuation of the rebel works. “Joe Johnston wouldn’t think of such a thing,” said he, “so long as we can only attack in front.” Yet morning came to prove Joe Johnston gone and Wallis a much mistaken man—a much disgusted and disturbed man, too, unless all signs failed, for never had the debonair major been known to show such haste and discomposure. He seemed to dread the possibility of being questioned. He seemed consumed with eagerness to get away, and, in all the scurry and excitement that prevailed along the Union lines only scant attention was given the story

that Lieutenant Barclay of the Fourth Corps had been captured after midnight, and there was no time until some days later to investigate the strange report of Major Holman, late field officer-of-the-day.

Holman, of course, had gone with his division,—one of the two started soon after noon. Hooker, from the Third Corps, pushing out on the right, skirting the abandoned works at Yorktown, while “Baldy” Smith, of the Fourth Corps, filed into the road where Wallis had had more than one scout on his own account, and strode away through the gathering storm, *en route* for Williamsburg by way of the Mills. Even in the eagerness of pursuit, some men would stray and go to exploring the vacated camp grounds of their recent entertainers, and some of these unhallowed spirits came upon curious mementos of Magruder’s occupation of a comfortable, old-fashioned Virginia homestead, not so very far from the Skiff’s Creek Road. Champagne bottles were there in profusion, and the *disjecta membra* of not long finished feasts. And while the general movement of the rebs had been leisurely and composed, there were indications of unseemly haste about Prince John’s premises—indications later explained by the fact that he had been called upon to head the procession toward the interior, leaving to young Jeb Stuart, with his Virginia Horse, the duty of covering the extreme rear. In point of fact, Prince John must have quit in something of a hurry, said officers who glanced over the mementos picked up by the men, for some of these were of such a character that, when they were shown to

the general commanding the last brigade in column to cross the Warwick by the lower road, he gave vent to an expletive that startled every man of his staff.

It was late in the afternoon when the cavalry caught up with the Confederate rear guard, well out in front of Williamsburg. The latter had some six hours' start, but waited—and wanted—to be caught and wondered when they reached the Half-Way House why Stoneman's troopers were not in sight, and what all this placid indifference to their coming or going could possibly mean. If this was a specimen of Yankee curiosity, there was nothing harmful in it. If, on the other hand, it was all meant as indicative of contemptuous disdain, then was it indeed offensive, and something should be done forthwith to show McClellan the Southern cavalier was not a fellow to be trifled with. So Stuart's men deployed; and when, through the lowering rain clouds, the dripping ponchos of the regulars began to show down the muddy road, they saluted the coming force with a crackle of carbines that brought the skirmishers' "front into line" at swift trot, and so, despite the inclemency of the weather, the May day picnic began in all its jollity.

But meanwhile the imperturbable head of the army was leisurely, after his fashion, proceeding to make himself comfortable in Yorktown. After investing a position something like a month, and much money in siege trains, mortar batteries and big guns; employing engineers in planning trench approaches, parallels, platforms and the like, and many men in making sap

rollers, fascines and gabions by the acre, it did seem to him disappointing on the part of Johnston to permit all this outlay of time, money, field works and war material and then, just when Little Mac felt prepared for a big time, and had invited his guests to see the bombardment begin, these unchivalric Southrons should slip quietly away and leave none but grinning darkies to receive the strangers within their gates. Field officers of the Holman type knew not what to make of this sort of a siege, anyhow. In all they had ever read or heard of, the doomed city was surrounded by the besiegers,—cut off from supplies or reinforcements, and compelled, eventually at least, to capitulate with the honors of war. But here this noted organizer and distinguished engineer laid siege to a practically straight line, flanked by impassable streams and provided with a natural ditch, a line the defenders could hold with small force against a big one,—hold as long as they cared to or quit when they liked. Yet there was astonishment and deep chagrin in these well arranged headquarters that Johnston should have been so unfeeling as to abandon works as yet unfelt. Headquarters moved within the lines of the historic town, content with having sent Hooker and Smith to keep the enemy going; and, from having felt sure that Johnston would stay to fight along the Warwick, headquarters seemed now as sure he wouldn't stay to fight at all, even at Williamsburg, where he had another line of forts. So Stoneman, with the cavalry, and Sumner and Heintzelman, with

a division apiece instead of a corps, and conflicting instructions instead of concert of action, rode out to the west, each of the two leaders supposing himself to be in sole charge of the pursuing force and both getting boggled up through orders and cross roads alike confusing. Smith's men got into the way of Hooker; Hooker crossed over and took, as a result, the way intended for Smith; and neither, as a consequence, was near at hand when needed late that afternoon, where good old Uncle Bill Emory, with Dick Rush's Pennsylvania lancers and Jeff. Davis's former pets of the Fifth regulars, stirred up Stuart himself and might then and there have headed off the most brilliant and daring career known to cavalry tradition had there been any kind of support. Then came a night of wet wanderings through mud and tangle, and marchings to and fro till after ten, when the battle lines lay down in the woods and woke up fronting the bristling works of Williamsburg.

Sumner by this time was sore-headed; Heintzelman in a pet; Hooker, who had started on the right, had got over to the left. Smith, who had started on the left, was now over at the right; and Couch, Casey and Kearny, who had followed the advance with their divisions, were bivouacked along the wood roads within supporting distance and without supper. Three corps commanders put their heads together in the early morning and tried to put their corps; but, only five divisions being on the ground, and inextricably mixed at that, division was impossible. In pelting rain, in

sticky mud and minus plan of any kind except "pitch in," the battle of Williamsburg began soon after the dripping dawn, and lasted here and there until the night, Hooker bearing all the onus on the left, Hancock all the honors on the right. Through utter lack of concerted action or a common head, five fine divisions fought or fumed through much of the livelong day, while McClellan, back at Yorktown, was placidly supervising the steamboat excursion planned for his friends of Franklin's and Fitz John Porter's fine commands, and seemed quite surprised when told toward three o'clock that things were more than mixed, and that he would better hie him to the front. We had lost five guns and twice a thousand men in fruitless fighting when, at five o'clock, staff officers came spurring out to say that victory and Little Mac were coming. Whereat, like little men, both volunteer and regular, our gallant lads set up their heartiest cheer and straightened out their lines to do him proper honor. Three heads are better than one, say wise-aces who know nothing of war, and if that be so, what blessed mercy it was we had, like Cerberus, the tripled cephalus:—with only one we might have lost our all.

But there were men that day that fought magnificently, and for many it was their baptism of fire. Hooker hammered away and got hammered for hours at a time, with never a man or musket to help. Hancock led his brigade across a narrow dyke, and handled it as daintily in battle as ever he did on drill,

winning two redoubts and nearly all the glory; while among the soldiers conspicuous for energy, daring and ceaseless effort, having two horses killed under him before the sun was half-way high, and having personally led the charge of two battalions faltering for lack of field officers of their own, Harold Wallis, the debonair major of the Silver Spoons, the brilliant aide-de-camp of the commanding general, the gifted entertainer of the House of Orleans—Harold Wallis, more than any one man in the six divisions present on the field, had most attracted the cheer and admiration of the fighting lines. Harold Wallis it was who, splashed with mire from head to foot, was first to meet his little chieftain as the latter, late toward evening, reached the still smoke-veiled field, and won from the grateful young leader's lips a word or two of praise that went like wildfire through the bivouacs that dismal night, and made him the envied and applauded of ten thousand stalwart men, not one of whom that would not gladly have given a hand for half the praise bestowed on him.

But the envied man is seldom too secure:—there is no mark so sought by calumny. The very fact that Wallis had so distinguished himself and had further been so singled out for highest commendation was in itself sufficient to start the stings of those whose deeds had been as inconspicuous as their words were now malignant. The army went on up the Peninsula, and so did the story, until the former reached the Chickahominy and the latter the Secretary of War, by which

time both had outgrown the proportions of the early part of May. The regulars had come to reinforce the one, the Silver Spoons among them, and further tales had speedily been told to reinforce the other; nor were they groundless.

Williamsburg had made a hero of Harold Wallis among the rank and file as well as among many of their officers. Whatever may have been their opinion of him, based on the stories of his venturings beyond the line and his communication with the soldiers of the South, no man could now say in their presence that he shunned a soldier's part on the field of battle, for braver man they never saw. Even Hancock had not been more superb in leadership. Those who remembered all his midnight prowlings would now have it that he was periling his life to obtain needed information for his chief. Those who said he had means of meeting rebel officers between the lines were told he met them as McClellan's confidential officer, to arrange exchange of prisoners or other amenities of war. Yet, at the headquarters of several brigades and those of at least two divisions and one Corps d'Armée, it was known that matter of a compromising character had actually been found and sent to Washington soon after the advance began,—that report concerning it had actually been made before the halt at Bottom's Bridge,—that McClellan had actually called on Wallis to explain, and there was amaze and incredulity in certain quarters when, with the sanction of high authority, the report was set in circulation

that Major Wallis had explained and his explanation was entirely satisfactory to the commanding general.

Little wonder is it that after this episode the demeanor of Harold Wallis to those he knew to be detractors, and to the dozen he believed to be, became, if possible, more affably disdainful than ever before. He never so much as uttered a word of reproach to Holman, the originator of the first official report to his discredit. "Major Holman," said he, "was a stranger to my past and to my profession. He saw what he could not understand and what to his limited education in such matters looked suspicious. He acted from sincere motives and supreme ignorance. I have nothing but commiseration for him."

But when a fellow Silver Spoon told Wallis that there were men in the cavalry brigades and in the horse and field artillery, as well as the Fourth Corps, who were of Holman's way of thinking, his attitude knew instant change. Barclay had not yet been exchanged, so he could not be responsible. Bernard Hoyt, with his volunteer troopers, was still scouting in front of Washington, so his avowed and open enmity was not the cause of this growing conviction among even the professionals of the Army of the Potomac that Little Mac was being deceived in his trusted staff officer, and Wallis, affecting utter indifference to the calumnies of the envious, as he declared all tales at his expense to be, and feigning lazy nonchalance even when there were moments when he must have felt the coldness and constraint of soldiers honored among their

kind, was now praying for another Williamsburg to help him stifle scandal by further show of brilliant and daring services in action, when there came an episode that set all tongues again to wagging and brought matters to a startling climax.

It was the night of the almost awful tropic storm that preceded Johnston's furious attack at Fair Oaks; and, in all the crash of thunder and the vivid play of sheet lightning, some horses of a field battery far to the front stampeded, and in their terror broke away westward, straight for the Confederate lines, where they were doubtless made welcome. It so happened that Harold Wallis had been riding that part of the front not twenty minutes earlier, and had taken temporary refuge at General Casey's headquarters, when a young Confederate officer, stunned and drenched and well-nigh senseless, was borne in on a blanket. The pickets had heard faint cries for help, and venturing forward, had found this luckless soldier close to the line and alone, evidently knocked down in the tornado-like rush of the frantic brutes. While surgeons tenderly examined and aided him, some papers fell from the open breast of the gray uniform. A major of the staff stooped; picked up the little packet; turned it over, glanced at the superscription, then, visibly paling, looked straight at Wallis, at that moment in low-toned conversation with the veteran division commander. The almost deathlike stillness that fell on the group was broken by his words:

"Why, Major Wallis, this is addressed to you!"

CHAPTER XV.

A SUPREME MOMENT.

IN all the mud, rain and misery of the fortnight that followed on the heels of Fair Oaks, men went wading about among the shifting camps from Golden's to White Oak swamp, and talked—for they couldn't help it—of this queer business concerning Major Wallis. The story grew as a matter of course. Incessant rain will expand almost anything but tent-cords. Wallis had been sent to the rear in close arrest. Wallis was to be tried by drumhead court-martial—that being the most summary of the summary courts then known to military procedure. Wallis stood in danger of being shot or hanged. Even among officers of rank there were not lacking advocates of extreme measures, if only for the example. Wallis and Wallis's disregard of all martial conventionalities in presence of the enemy were declared to be proper subjects for severe measures, even by those who had witnessed Wallis's heroism in the battle front. It was not good that so prominent an officer of the Army of the Union should be in such frequent communication with the Army of Virginia—no matter what the object. He might satisfy Little Mac and his chosen few of friends that his motives

were honorable, and that no correspondence of a treasonable character had been carried on, but he could not so easily hoodwink the men of the army, where feeling against him was now growing hot and strong. This last episode was the pound that broke the camel's back.

Perhaps he saw it himself. Perhaps others saw it who stood sufficiently near to the commander to whisper a word of advice. Certain it is that during that flooded fortnight Wallis was seen no more among the camps to the south of the Chickahominy. The story had gone the rounds that the men themselves swore they'd shoot him if he showed along the picket line. No matter how brave or brilliant a fellow might be in battle, he shouldn't try playing a double game with the soldiers of Uncle Sam.

But all this time there was another corps in a widely separated camp to the north of the Chickahominy, covering the low ridges beyond Boatswain and Powhite swamps, and forming almost an independent command under McClellan's brilliant friend and fellow-soldier, Fitz John Porter. It was an odd state of things, this straddling an army across an unfordable stream, whose bridges—those that had stood the tests of years, like Bottom's, and these only of the Engineers—had been swept away and floated toward the James. So thought the patient President at Washington until, under the spur of Stanton, he began to wax impatient and speak. But, the base of supplies being at the time at the White House on

the Pamunkey, it may have been considered necessary to have it thus covered; and then, said the thousands of stanch upholders of the commander, no matter what the loss of "touch" between the Fifth Corps and the Army, there was still the closest understanding. This was comfort even though the bridges of Duane and Woodbury—the only material connecting links—had vanished, and the breach, consisting of broad acres of back water that made lakes of Powhite and Boatswain swamps, had more than visibly widened. There was a week when even gossip couldn't pass 'twixt Porter's Corps and that of Franklin, its next of kin, now corduroyed out to the right of the main line, and when gossip can't travel, official matters lag.

Perhaps this was why it was not generally known that, so far from being in close arrest as the result of the dramatic discovery of the night of Fair Oaks, Harold Wallis was on duty with Fitz John Porter. Even the discovery of a packet plainly marked "For Major H. Wallis, U. S. A.," taken warm from the breast of a Confederate prisoner had not served to stagger him. Silas Casey, soldier and gentleman, had started at sound of the announcement made by the searching officer; had stood erect and looked sternly and scrutinizingly at Wallis, as the suspicious package was handed to the chief of the division staff, who in turn had faced the attainted major, as who would say: "Explain if you can, but remember whatsoever you say may be used against you."

Long years afterwards they used to tell of that re-

markable scene—of the almost deathlike silence that fell on the entire party present, broken only by the sullen roar of the rain on the taut-stretched canvas roof—of the dim flare of the candle light—of the pale, bearded faces and glittering eyes of the few officers present, most of them garbed in waterproof coats and cape caps, such as were worn at the time. In all there were within earshot, including the two doctors and the half drenched, half stunned young Confederate, perhaps a dozen men, and all looked at Wallis, and all, with the exception, possibly, of the prisoner, were amazed at the *sang froid*—the almost contemptuous indifference—of his manner on finding himself thus suddenly forced to the “center of the stage.” Nothing so surely seemed to put Harold Wallis on his mettle as some public and dramatic attempt to overwhelm him, and never did his placid composure and his superb self-command manifest themselves as on this memorable occasion.

“For me?” he drawled. “Ah—tobacco, possibly. *You* open it—ah—captain,” said he, addressing the staff officer; then deliberately turned his back upon the group, and again, as though the episode had been a mere interruption—annoying, perhaps, like a mosquito, but as easily brushed aside—addressed himself to the division commander, “As I was saying, sir, the lines across the Richmond road”—and then dropped his voice to the low and confidential tone in which he had been speaking, while the chief of staff, as bidden, was slowly, somewhat reluctantly, indeed sul-

lenly, tugging at the fastenings in the midst of a silence now both awkward and wondering. Then, opening the package, presently he spoke:

“These are papers—letters of some kind—apparently.”

And Wallis heard, yet with unruffled composure, finished his remarks to the mystified general before permitting himself to refer to the interruption. Even then he never turned:—

“Letters of any kind, manifestly, are things I cannot touch. Seal them up, captain, and send them to general headquarters—or anywhere you like. Then, general, I shall report to General McClellan that I have examined the position and find it as you say. Good-night, sir. Good-night to you—ah—gentlemen,” and, without a glance at the prisoner, even stifling a yawn as he strode forth into the pelting night, and drawing on his wet gauntlets, Wallis passed them by, called for his horse and rode away into the darkness, leaving a silent, if not indeed, a defeated, party behind.

The papers—some soiled letters they seemed to be—without examination were rolled up, sealed and, with a memorandum of the facts connected with their discovery, had been duly forwarded to the headquarters of the commanding general. Possibly their coming was by that time expected. At all events they were duly receipted for, and the officer bearing them waited in vain for the faintest expression of opinion. Not a word was vouchsafed.

“The peculiar circumstances under which these were received,” he presently remarked, with an embarrassed cough, “rendered it necessary in the opinion of our—of a number of those present, that they should be sealed and sent to General McClellan himself.”

“They’ll get there,” shortly said the aide-de-camp on duty, and the bearer rode away, dissatisfied. Some men hate to see a sensation spoiled, and this was bilious weather.

But what cannot be accomplished by direct means, under a republican form of government, may be reached in other ways, and ways to Washington were far more numerous than to the right wing of the army, for when calumny is to be carried, the bridges are never down.

So passed the first fortnight in June. So began and progressed the second, and, whatever might be doing along the Potomac, all seemed quiet here at the front, where the skies cleared, the roads dried and life again became hopeful and joyous. Little Mac had been clamoring for reinforcements without getting them, in the desired number; and the Army of Virginia, now led by Robert E. Lee, had been getting reinforcements without clamor. Moreover, more were on the way whose coming might well have given our little leader bitter anxiety. Cutting loose from the Shenandoah and swinging unopposed clear across from the Blue Ridge to the green-bowered outskirts of Richmond, Stonewall Jackson came with his famous “foot

cavalry" and prepared to creep in and crush that isolated right wing, that splendid corps of Fitz John Porter, stationed there across the now subsided stream. Already the whisperings of deserters and negroes had given warning, and, with the finest divisions, the flower of McClellan's Army at his back, the brilliant, bright-eyed soldier changed front to meet the new danger. Jackson might "play horse" with such fellows as we then had in the Valley and in front of Washington, smilingly said the commander of McClellan's crack corps, but what can he do with these?

And well might he feel implicit confidence as he studied the splendid line facing the Cold Harbors—old and new—and encircling his headquarters here on the pretty, wooded slopes about the Adams house, this glorious noontide toward the close of June. Off to the east, the right of his line, stood the stanch regulars in front of the McGee homestead. Then, in semi-circle to the left, through the leafy woods, along the gun-dotted curve of low heights lay the brigades of Lovell, Warren, Griffin, Martindale and Butterfield; with Slocum coming in reserve, and a strange, battered angering little division, grouped about their riddled colors, bivouacked under the wing of the line. These last were the men of McCall, the Pennsylvania Reserves—sent to McClellan, in answer to his insistent plea, from the far-away corps of McDowell; stationed for a week "watching bridges" far up the Chickahominy to the west of Porter; left there almost

by themselves, instead of being welcomed, as it were, within the lines; and there they were hemmed in, pounced upon and pounded heavily by concentrated thousands, until at last their new parent sent forth and brought them within the lines. But the Pennsylvanians were sore over such treatment, and some of them showed it. They had gone down to help McClellan's fellows, and McClellan's fellows—or rather McClellan—had left them to shift almost for themselves and get hammered in full hearing of the whole army. Barring the well-grounded disgust of these sturdy but mishandled fellows, there was enthusiastic devotion in Porter's lines to McClellan and his fortunes. There was universal hope that "Old Jack" might indeed be lurking there in the shady groves to the north and northwest; that those heavy clouds of dust, seen all the previous day, might indeed indicate his presence, ready to try conclusions.

And down in the level bottom, now dry, between the left bank of the Chickahominy and the swelling little uplands where were posted Porter's men, there had been stationed a Spartan band of troopers—Dick Rush's picturesque Lancers and a handful of regulars. With less than twenty thousand men, all told, to oppose to Old Jack and his comrades of unknown numbers, Porter had bidden McClellan adieu the night of the 26th; the latter bent on breaking a way into Richmond, whose vesper bells could be heard ere the sun went down; the former and his hearty fellows singing:—

*“With squadrons square, we’ll all be there
To meet the foe in the morning.”*

But the way things looked at sundown on the 26th and the same hour on the 27th had had the effect, coupled with intermediate incidents, of stopping McClellan’s precipitous move on Richmond. Up to June 26th the Army of the Potomac, drifted round here to the Peninsula, had steadily advanced. Now, with the sun, it began to slip the other way. Mechanicsville marked the summer solstice of both, and Gaines’s Mill, as is called the battle of the 27th, though fought far south, and quite out of sight of that once useful structure, marked the first real red letter day of the ultimately Lost Cause.

It had its brilliant hours, heaven knows. It had its record of splendid, stubborn fighting. It had its temporary triumphs, and it was not without its helping hand, for Slocum and his gallant men had got over in time to take manful part in the fight; but, all things said and done, what could Porter hope to do against the overwhelming odds hurled upon him by the superior generalship of Lee? While a moderate force held McClellan in check, both A. P. Hill and Longstreet cut loose from his front, and, after driving McCall back from the Beaver, bore down early on the hot June afternoon of the 27th in an assault on Porter’s eager line. Then Jackson came in crushing force and engaged the entire corps, while the charging columns, mass on mass, were dashed upon Morell at the ex-

treme left, and finally burst through. Then it was, just about dusk, that a brilliant, possibly forbidden, yet by no means futile or fruitless effort, was made to cover the withdrawal of the threatened guns—a charge of cavalry that was devotion itself.

It was the supreme moment of the day. The westward face of the plateau, deluged by shot and shell from the opposite wood, had become untenable. Morell's long-suffering infantry had begun that slow, sullen, yet utterly uncheckable backward surge that left the batteries shorn of their supports. Already in some of these the order had been given "limber to the rear," and such drivers and horses as remained were making frantic effort to haul the hot guns from the clutch of the coming foe. Already in others both limbers and caissons had been run back out of the storm or lay crushed and dismantled among the mangled bodies of the horses; while the half blinded cannoneers, they that still remained upon their feet, some with rammers and hand-spikes, some with pouch and lanyard, came ducking and crouching back in search of shelter. Wounded men could be seen through the dust, feebly crawling for the partial cover to be found between the wheels, for the terrific yelling, beyond the low-hanging cloud of battle smoke along the flats, told that Longstreet's fellows were coming in force to claim their prize—to complete the rout of the left wing. Rout it is, there is no other word for it, despite all the hard fighting of the day, for every foot of Porter's convex line has been heavily engaged, and he has not a man to send to the support of his recoiling

left. Charge after charge has been repulsed, but still the human waves come rolling on. At the far right, toward McGee's, even the regulars have been so engulfed and surrounded that, with nearly half their officers down and the ammunition of their batteries exhausted, they have all they can do to hold their own; and Porter, surrounded by his anxious staff back of the Watts house, peering through the drifting smoke, sees those abandoned guns along the bluff; sees the backward drift of their bleeding supports, and, even among the men of McCall, held for a time in reserve, even among the freshest troops to reach the scene—the "bear-a-hand" brigade of Slocum—he can find no battalions stanch and strong enough to dare the effort to restore that westward line. With him, up to a few moments before, were de Joinville and his gallant nephews, but Frenchmen have seen no sight like this since Waterloo; and, almost in tears, the young count has begged of Porter that he send his uncle from the field. It takes a special plea to do it, for these chivalric visitors, having shared all the blithe days of the campaign, are not the men to quit in the moment of disaster. "You have the swiftest horse, M. le Prince," says Porter. "Gallop with all speed to McClellan and say I must be reinforced at once," and Harold Wallis is sent to guide him toward the Woodbury Bridge.

Five minutes and Wallis is back. The charging masses in gray have snapped the line and crowned the bluffs to the northwest, beyond the Watts house. The reserve batteries down at the left and far to the rear of

those on the bluff are already hurling shell and shrapnel high across the low ground, bursting at the skirt of the opposite wood. Porter and his staff have retired toward the Adams houses, and a tall, silent, soldierly man in the uniform of a general, is standing in his stirrups and gazing out toward the blazing edge of the opposite timber, across those undefended flats, then turning in saddle and intently studying a little command, just back of the reserve batteries along the southward slopes, drawn up in compact, close column of squadrons—less than three hundred troopers of the Fifth Regular Cavalry, with their comrades of the First in easy supporting distance. There, out to their right front, are the deserted or imperiled cannon. There, across the low ground, just bursting into view as they break through the timber, are the blood red battle-flags of the triumphant foe, now swooping on their prey. Here sit in saddle the only men with ranks aligned in sight upon the field, the only possible means of checking and holding the enemy long enough to admit of running off the guns—these disciplined, yet devil-may-care *sabreurs* of the famous old frontier regiment, once the pets of Jeff Davis, Lee and Sidney Johnston, yet ever loyal to their country's flag. Wallis sees the whole scheme in the soldierly face of Philip St. George Cooke. "By the gods of a thousand battles," he grinds the words through his strong, white teeth, "the old war horse means to charge!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CHARGE OF THE FIFTH.

AND charge it is! Another moment has decided it. Riding swiftly down to the left, the tall, dark eyed Chief of Cavalry reins up in front of the silent band in saddle and hails their grim commander, Whiting. It is another of the same name who heads the gray masses that have burst a way through the ranks of Morell. Few words says Cooke, but they tell the tale:—"We have got to save those guns if possible. It looks like a whole division coming at 'em. Charge and stop them!"

When, less than a year later, Pleasonton sends in Keenan with his Pennsylvanians, in column of fours along a narrow road, dashing to certain death in the effort to check the enemy until the Union leader can align his guns, the order is lauded as timely and right, though a charge by fours is something absurd. When von Bredow at Mars la Tour launches his light brigade of horse against overwhelming masses of infantry, simply to check and hold the surging French until the German foot can unite to bar the Chalons road, the soldiery of a watching world acclaim. It is bold, brilliant, superb, though it cost him half his men. But,

when in 1862 the foremost Union cavalry leader of his day dares to send in his squadrons in genuine charging form, full front, at the Confederate infantry emerging in triumphant disorder from sheltering woods, hoping thereby to stem and hold them, even at bloody cost, until others can save the then abandoned guns, he is hounded as a dolt, held to blame for disaster he had done his best to avert, and accused of quitting summarily the field he was the very last to leave, and all this by the commander whom he was most loyally serving. Though he sees his devoted squadrons dart in with flashing blade and ringing cheers, vanishing in the thick cloud of their own dust; though he hears the terrific crash of their impact as their long line bursts upon the astonished foe; though he knows the advance is checked and stayed—that even Longstreet has to halt and stand off these slashing, shouting horsemen—yet is he powerless to order the men of Morell to rush to the rescue of the guns. All in a fury of dust and smoke, gallant Chambliss at its head, the Fifth has been swallowed up in front of these black-muzzled boomers, the plain in the rear of the rush dotted with many a fallen steed and swordsman. But it looks as though the heroic effort that cost the gallant corps full half its number, might indeed be fruitless, when Harold Wallis comes spurring forward, a dozen determined gunners at his charger's heels. Riding thither and yon among the crippled teams and scare-faced drivers, he half storms, half coaxes them, man after man, to turn again in their tracks and sends them, with still unwhipped

subalterns and sergeants, to tackle the guns as best they may and drag them to shelter below the hill.

The sun is down in the west. The roar and crash of battle go billowing through the wooded slopes. The wounded in streams are hobbling back to the rear. Ambulances and wagons, limbers and caissons, in crowding, crushing torrent, are struggling through the roadways toward the bridges. The din of the charge has died away and, singly or in little squads, the survivors come drifting in to the batteries, and, finding no officer on whom to rally and reform, bear a hand at the guns wherever help is needed. Only one lieutenant rides back from that wild, magnificent dash unscathed. His brother officers are either killed or crippled; but, for the time at least, their sacrifice is not in vain; for, in amaze, the coming hosts of Longstreet are held in mid career, and but for the semi-panic that reigns among Porter's bewildered batterymen, more—many more—of the guns might have been dragged to safety. But now, once again and this time for good and all, the red battle-flags of Longstreet's yelling lines are waving onward through the drifting smoke, and popping up here, there and everywhere along the bluffs north of Boatswain's Swamp, and now in turn the reserve batteries are catching the heavy, plunging rifle fire that beats down the men at the guns and sends the terrified horses screaming and kicking to earth, or scurrying away for shelter. And still Wallis labors on, a word here, a hand there, calm, placid, undismayed, yet at times blazing with sudden and unnatural enthusiasm as

he notes and praises some gallant deed. Soldierly men, there are among the infantry leaders, supervising and steadying the slow withdrawal of their lines, who have abundant cause to mark his daring and devoted work and commend it then and thereafter—soldierly men like Meade, Griffin and John F. Reynolds—men who know him well by repute, and are hardly prepared for the cool heroism, coupled at times with fiery energy, that enables him even in the midst of the ever increasing force of the plunging fire, to hold his fellows at their work, and to bring off, one after another, half a dozen guns almost from the teeth of the foe.

“Bravo, Wallis, old boy!” “Well done, Wallis!” come the encomiums from bearded lips, as more than one general hails him on the field. “Bravo, Wallis!” cries a wounded officer, borne by on a stretcher, “What wouldn’t the Spoons have given to have you at their head this day!” Spoons, indeed! He has hardly had time to give them a thought. Yet, only a few hours before the attack began, they had come swinging up the road from White House, honest Michael in saddle in the lead; had reported to Sykes at the far right flank, and taken their station in line of battle within supporting distance of the guns of Weed. Not since the days of Greble Barracks had they met and, in the meantime, what tales have not been told—both good and ill. And now, just as darkness is settling down, with the dust cloud of the charge, upon this field of death and dismay, and in long, blue columns, the infantry, covered by the deploying lines of fresh brigades, sent from the south-

ern shore, are twisting away toward the swirling Chickahominy, leaving the crest with a score of abandoned guns to the yelling and triumphant foe, a rifle ball tears through the shoulder of his frantic horse, and Harold Wallis, debonair and dashing rider that he is, taken suddenly unawares is hurled by furious plungings from his saddle under the very wheels of an ambulance, deep laden with wounded, and one heavy tire tears partially away the major's "rectangle" of the right shoulder ere it grinds the shapely neck into the thick dust of the roadway. "Good night to Marmion!"

And all this while, holding a long, thin, shadowy, sham of a line, north and south in front of the masked brigades of the Army of the Potomac, one sorely tried, hopeful and, for this day anyhow, prayerful soldier guards the approaches to Richmond, marveling that McClellan does not seem to realize that now, now is the chance of a lifetime; that now, with Hill and Longstreet detached to aid Jackson in the plan to crush and ruin Porter, there is barely force enough left between the Confederate capital and the threatening advance to withstand the onslaught of a strong division, and strong divisions stand idle all the day long, after the unique McClellan manner. "Baldy" Smith, Richardson and Sedgwick, Kearny and Hooker, Couch and Peck, all under such corps leaders as Franklin, Sumner, Heintzelman and Keyes, all listening and waiting throughout the livelong day, all doing absolutely nothing, while Lee has dared to strip his lines to effectively ruin the Union right, leaving our old friend, and Harold's, Prince John

Magruder, to the sleepless task of watching McClellan and most effectively has he done it. Most scientifically has he kept his battalions twinkling from pillar to post, with much show of bold challenge, from dawn till dusk, "bluffing" McClellan into the belief that he has thousands at his beck, where he hasn't a baker's dozen. It isn't the first game of brag the veteran entertainer has played, but he never played it better in all his checkered life. With Richmond within easy reach beyond that flimsy veil, McClellan dare not stretch forth a hand to pluck the rich fruit of all this loyal labor. He does not know the game of which Magruder is past master.

Something like a fortnight later, in company with a number of maimed and wounded officers, Harold Wallis found himself disembarked at Washington. His physical hurts were practically healed. He bore with him in writing the glowing thanks and commendations of the commanding general, and letters of similar tenor from others high in authority who had won distinction even in that ill-starred campaign. He had left his general on the James, the Army entrenched in safety at Harrison's Landing, and with a two weeks' leave for the benefit of his health, and a packet of valuable and important letters which he desired to take to New York, and the urgent invitation of the governor of a grand old commonwealth to accept the command of a new regiment of cavalry then being raised, the major sought at Willard's certain senatorial friends of the halcyon days of the Silver Spoons, hoping through their influence to overcome the old obstacles at the War Department, and,

through the prestige of his brilliant, soldierly conduct at Williamsburg and Gaines's Mill, wring even from the reluctant Secretary the desired authority to enable him to accept the proffered colonelcy of volunteers. He was in high hope and spirits. He breakfasted with a senator of the Empire State, showing him his glowing recommendations and giving him such vivid description of the campaign that the senator sent for certain cronies to come and hear; and, at ten o'clock of this warm July morning, Wallis found himself the center of a circle of absorbed listeners in a parlor room on the second floor, a circle made up of men of mark and distinction—four of them senators prominent in the affairs of the nation. Small wonder was it, therefore, that he gave little thought to the possibility of a fuming Secretary over at the "Shop" on Seventeenth Street until somewhere after eleven, when the door opened, and, instead of the frequently-summoned bell boy, a man's face, a white face, bearded, looked calmly in and round and vanished without a word of explanation.

"That's what I call cool," said Senator Number One.

"That's what I call impudent," said Senator Number Two.

"That's that fellow Carmichael, of the Secret Service," said Senator Number Three. "Now, what the devil is he speiring about here for?"

They found out less than an hour later, when, very confidently and jovially, the committee rose and reported itself ready to go over and see Stanton and have the major's matter fixed. No one of their number

doubted his individual ability to "fix" it on sight, but then it was better to have a party. Then, despite the hour and the heat of the day, somebody suggested just one round of champagne to drink the health and wish long life and speedy promotion of Colonel Harold Wallis of the —th Massachusetts Volunteer Cavalry, the pride of the commonwealth, and glasses were actually raised on high when there came a sharp, imperative knock at the door and the entrance of an officer in complete uniform; belt, sash, sword and gauntlets added to the frock of a field officer of the staff.

"Your pardon, gentlemen," he briefly spoke, "but my orders are imperative. Major Wallis, I am directed to place you in close arrest on charges of disloyal and treasonable conduct. By order of the Secretary of War."

CHAPTER XVII.

TRASH OR TREASON?

AUGUST, 1862, was a month of many worries for the War Department. The campaign on the Peninsula had proved a woeful failure, and the idol of the Army of the Potomac was in a wordy wrangle with the Iron Secretary. Lee's heroic divisions, however, had been fearfully repulsed before the belching guns at Malvern Hill, and again such fighters as Phil Kearny had declared the road to Richmond practically open if only Little Mac could be made to see it and to say the word "go in." But that was hopeless. McClellan seemed to have no stomach left for fighting, save with Stanton. So, while his still loyal and valiant men restored their lines and set their sights for battle, the commander spent the precious hours writing pages of complaint and recrimination to Washington, and Stonewall Jackson, taking prompt advantage of the paralysis on the Peninsula, cut loose again to try conclusions with the new general come out from the West to command the hurriedly organized army in front of the national capital; pounced upon its foremost corps at Cedar Mountain, and then followed up his blow by a series of mad manœuvres that would have startled even Charles of Sweden; that scared the cabinet out of its seven

senses (they had no more at the time—the Department of Agriculture being a recent invention), and so bedeviled the headquarters in saddle that even memory could no longer keep her seat, and, in the distracted globe of the commander, fact and fiction became inextricably mixed.

And through all this month of military mishap, Harold Wallis was held in Washington, vainly begging for a hearing. General court-martial had indeed been ordered to try the case and the order had gone as far as the words, "Detail for the Court," and the Honorable Secretary had been in consultation with the Adjutant General over the choice of officers. But regular officers of sufficient rank, not generals of volunteers, were getting scarce about Washington, save those recuperating from wounds, and it was far too soon, said the surgeons, for all but a limited few of these to attempt to sit for hours in the August heat and the tight buttoned coat then demanded by regulations, whether the luckless wearer was serving on the shores of Pass à l'Outre or Passamaquoddy. Regulars could not try volunteers, but Stanton saw no reason why volunteers should not try regulars, and was for ordering a court of strongly loyal soldier lawyers, of whom there was ever an abundance at Willard's and the National. But certain senators had taken up the cudgels for Wallis, all men of mark and influence. A very distinguished jurist from the neighboring city of Baltimore had been retained as counsel, and the Judge Advocate General of the Army himself saw fit to say to the great Secretary

that even in the case of a man who was known to have been in correspondence with rebels in arms, in conference with Confederate officers between the lines, who had a brother in the Confederate service, and kindred in several of these States in rebellion, a man who was known to have derided the administration and damned the Star Spangled Banner, it was best to be sure of every inch of the ground. All this might be explained; and there was, on the other hand, one thing that could not be—how a man, at heart disloyal to the flag, could fight so superbly for it as had Harold Wallis at Williamsburg and Gaines's Mill.

In the midst of it all and just before the forty days had expired beyond which, except in defiance of law, an officer could not be held in arrest without being served with a copy of the charges laid at his door, there was brought back to Washington, shot through the leg and still on crutches, Colonel Bernard Hoyt, of the New York Cavalry. He took a room at Willard's, and in less than forty-eight hours thereafter, though the hotel was crowded, there came from Gotham Mrs. Rutherford, daughter and maid, and Mrs. Rutherford demanded accommodations at any price. The physician called to see her the evening of her arrival—the same who had attended her occasionally during her previous visit—was startled to see that during these few months her strange and mysterious malady had made grave inroads on her strength. Without a symptom that pointed to organic trouble or even to a seriously weakened heart, Mrs. Rutherford was manifestly in wretched

health and spirits. She begged that Colonel Hoyt would come to her at once, the evening of her arrival; sent Hortense out for a walk, a ride,—anything to get her out of the way for half an hour; bade her anxious daughter to withdraw on the colonel's coming, that she might see him alone, and Hoyt, who hobbled from his room, buoyed up by the hope of a look into the face he loved and a few words from Ethel's lips, saw her vanish, pale and shadowy, into an adjoining room, as Mrs. Rutherford, with difficulty, rose from the sofa to receive him. Ten minutes later the bell rang violently, and the answering boy found both the colonel and Miss Rutherford bending over a limp and unconscious form—Mrs. Rutherford had fainted away. The doctor was needed at once.

Two days later, when again able to sit up, Mrs. Rutherford had told her daughter that come what might, she must that day see Major Harold Wallis. On that same morning, despite his crippled condition, Colonel Hoyt had been driven to the War Department, whither he went to beg the Adjutant General that Lieutenant Gerald Rutherford, adjutant of the —th New York Cavalry, be summoned forthwith from the front because of his mother's serious illness. Ethel, bursting into tears as she greeted her wounded knight, far more concerned over her distress than his own suffering, had lifted up her streaming eyes to gaze one moment imploringly into his handsome, almost speaking, face, then veiled them at sight of the unutterable love and passion and pleading that glowed in every line. She could only

falter her prayer that he, their best, their only real friend, should bring her brother to them, even though the regiment were facing Stuart along the Rappahannock, and Hoyt had gone to do his best. Heavens! How he longed to clasp her in his strong arms, to kiss away her tears, to pour out the story of his deep, devoted, passionate love, to woo and win her ere again he rode at the head of his men! But, just as before, the dread overcame him that it was taking mean advantage of her helplessness, her bitter anxiety and distress, and so, soldierlike, manlike in his stubborn pride and sense of honor, he robbed her of what, had he but dared to dream it, would have been the sweetest strength and comfort she could have found. He had gone from her without a word, his hands, his lips still quivering, trembling, twitching in the tempest of their longing to lavish their caresses on her. He was tremulous still when he stood before the desk of the Adjutant General and made his plea. "You will have to see the Secretary," was the non-committal and discouraging answer, and after hours of waiting at last they let him in.

Stanton was pacing the floor, lacking only a lashing tail to complete the semblance to the caged lion—there was no lack of lashing tongue. Three officers were in the room at the moment of Hoyt's entrance, and each one looked as though he would far rather be out. Before the newcomer could balance on his crutches and raise a hand to salute the civilian head of the nation's soldiery, Stanton whirled on him:

"Now, here's another, I suppose! You are the man

who preferred charges against Captain Harold Wallis months ago for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. You accused him of robbing a woman's desk. Here are the men in whom I relied to prove him a rebel and a traitor. This man swore he heard him say 'damn the Star Spangled Banner,' and now he crawfishes and says he only meant the tune, not the flag. This man——" and here the irate lawyer whirled, as though he had him on the stand, on the second officer, and, such was his towering rage, well nigh shook his fist in his face—"this man declared he saw him twice in front of our lines at Lee's Mills, talking with rebels at night, and now he says the rebels might have been one of our own patrols. This man," and with threatening forefinger and lowering front, like a charging bull, Stanton turned on the third soldier, a trusted staff officer of the cavalry commander on the Peninsula, a man well known to Hoyt by reputation, the very one who had warned Harold Wallis while they lay in front of the Warwick, "this man," said Stanton, "who knew him at West Point and out on the plains, and again on the Peninsula—who knows his Southern proclivities, and has heard his sneers at McClellan's headquarters time and again, dares to come here and say that in spite of his sneers, in spite of his infamous traffic with rebels at the front and rebel sneaks at the rear, in spite of these letters picked up at Magruder's abandoned headquarters," and here the Secretary hammered on a little batch of papers on his broad desk, "in spite of the let-

ters found on a rebel prisoner that that weakling, Couch, should have sent to me—not to McClellan, whom a child could hoodwink, for now we've lost them—this brother graduate of your Southern-steered Military Academy has the face to come here and say Harold Wallis is a loyal man because, because, forsooth, he's a brave one!"

"Your pardon, Mr. Secretary," interposed the third officer, his face pale with mingled wrath and the strain of enforced subordination, "I came here because ordered, not because I wished. I spoke because you demanded, not because I desired. You showed me the Magruder letters and required my opinion, and I gave it. He had no business writing to Magruder, but what he wrote was trash, not treason," and now it was evident that one, at least, of Stanton's three victims could hit back, and meant to do it. Stanton stopped short; faced him, and simply glared for a moment as though amazed at such hardihood.

"You're a lawyer, sir," went on the West Pointer, rising to his full height of six feet, and speaking with flashing eyes and ringing emphasis. "What can you possibly find in these two notes that deserves serious consideration?—'Dear Bankhead. Make it a dozen. Dry Sillery or else Clicquot. Damn Green Seal.' 'Dear Bankhead. Two bullets and a bragger, nothing else.'"

"What may they not mean?" burst in Stanton, his hands clinching, the veins in his forehead swelling almost to bursting. "The second is full of significance.

I credit Major Wallis with brains enough not to write words that would hang him when he can convey his meaning in cipher or symbols. You are trifling with the subject, sir."

"So far as these letters are concerned," responded the soldier, gaining in calm as the Secretary lost in temper, "the subject trifles with itself. That second missive is merely the language of an old-time game that is fast giving place to draw poker. That letter has only one parallel in fiction or history—that *I* ever read."

"What was that?" demanded Stanton, with challenge in his blazing spectacles.

"Bardell vs. Pickwick, Mr. Secretary. 'Dear Mrs. Bardell. Chops and Tomato Sauce'——"

"Captain Reins!" thundered Stanton. "Leave the room!"

"Mr. Secretary," was the reply, "I obey with pleasure," and Wallis himself could hardly have answered with greater suavity. Indeed, the captain well nigh winked at Hoyt, poised in constraint and embarrassment on his crutches, as he calmly strode away. There was no responsive light, however, in the blue eyes of the cavalryman. To Bernard Hoyt the story of all Wallis's misdoings on the Peninsula was but the logical sequence of the reports he himself had lodged against him. Hoyt believed long years before that Wallis lacked principle, and proved it, as he claimed, at the Planters' months before the war. Hoyt believed in '61 that by foul means Wallis had

possessed himself of papers Mrs. Rutherford held sacred, and thought a court-martial would establish it. Hoyt believed that Wallis had not only taken the letters lost from Ethel's silken bag, but the others ravished from her mother's desk, and though he could not imagine their purport, he well knew that they concerned or were written by his old friend Ralph—the buried son and brother. Indeed, in addition to Ethel's admission to him, the venerable rector of Grace had told the Leroy's and others of his parishioners that he had an appointment to meet Mrs. Rutherford in the vestryroom immediately after service the oppressive April morning she was taken ill. She had some letters of Ralph's, she said, to show him. These, doubtless, had been confided to Ethel's care, and though the bag had been restored to its fair owner, the letters had disappeared. Hoyt well remembered the mother's dreadful agitation at the discovery that the desk had been rifled. He was marveling now over her collapse the previous night. He had been with her but a few moments after Ethel flitted from the room, when Mrs. Rutherford turned upon him, with eyes full of anguish, and in a voice that trembled in spite of her utmost effort, said: "You have been my Gerald's best and most faithful friend; you were the beloved and devoted friend of my murdered boy; you have grown to be as near to me and to—to mine as you were to him—to Ralph—as you are to Gerald, and, oh, Colonel Hoyt, I need a friend—I sorely need a friend. There are things I cannot tell you yet. There is something

I must ask you. They say Major Wallis is to be tried on several charges, but he declares they are frivolous. Major Seabrook writes me they cannot be sustained. General McClellan and General Porter are his staunch supporters, and Mr. Webb, who was at the Island, told my lawyers—they wrote to him at my request—that these charges would not be sufficient to seriously harm him. All they could do would be to censure him for indiscretion. The trouble is this: They say the Secretary is so determined to punish him that he has revived that old story about—about certain letters of ours, even though Mr. Cameron, his predecessor, examined thoroughly into the matter and ordered Major Wallis released. They say no great harm can come to him, unless—unless *you* testify, and Mr.—Mr. Barclay. Mr. Barclay is a prisoner in Libby. You are the only one. Colonel—Colonel Hoyt, if I should tell you that Major Wallis had really striven to defend my poor boy, had really tried to serve him, had really tried to be my friend, you wouldn't—you *could* not seek to injure him?"

"Mrs. Rutherford," answered Hoyt, gravely, sadly, "I believe you cannot realize how dishonorable a man I consider Major Wallis. If I am summoned to speak before the court I must tell the whole truth, and you too, and it will ruin him—as it should do."

It was then that Mrs. Rutherford fell back fainting, and that Ethel presently came running in. Hoyt was thinking of it all as the unterrified dragoon left the Secretary's office, and not until that dignified gentle-

man had gone some minutes did the Secretary cool down sufficiently to go on with the business before him. Then, the first man to be questioned was the blue-eyed colonel, still balancing on his crutches.

"Have you, too, come to say you wish to retract what you reported, and beg this man's pardon?" demanded he, glowering like a mountain lion, as he studied the silent officer before him.

"I came for a totally different purpose, Mr. Secretary," answered Hoyt, respectfully, though he, too, chafed at the tone and manner. "I came to beg that my adjutant might be ordered to report to me here for just forty-eight hours. He is with the regiment somewhere along the upper Rappahannock. His mother is here dangerously ill and craving to see him. He is now her only son. His elder brother was killed in a duel with Hugh Preston, of Savannah, barely two years ago—a forced quarrel, as Captain Seabrook, of the Artillery, bears witness, and the Oglethorpe Club decided——"

"Did you know Preston? Would you know him were you to see him again?" suddenly interrupted the Secretary.

"I never knew him, sir. I was in the Far West when it happened, but Ralph Rutherford had been my most intimate friend——"

Stanton held up a hand as though to say "That's enough," and Hoyt ceased. For a moment more no word was spoken as the Secretary still wrathfully strode up and down the room. Then at last he

stopped; stared again at Hoyt and his crutches, and seemed suddenly to wake to the situation. "Take a chair! take a chair, Colonel!" he cried. "Be seated, gentlemen. I quite forgot." Silently the three obeyed, Hoyt alone desirous of remaining. Thrice Stanton walked the length of the little room, his massive head bowed, his brows knitting, his bearded chin almost burrowing into his breast. Then abruptly he stopped in front of the crutches.

"Colonel Hoyt, I am refusing leaves of every kind; forbidding officers to come to Washington unless ordered here for urgent reasons, but I am going to send for your adjutant forthwith. Yet I wish you to do something for me. I wish to feel that one officer, at least, means what he says, and has got the backbone to stand by what he says. You accused Major Harold Wallis of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. You declared in writing your reasons for believing him to be in possession of stolen letters,—practically, in fact, to have stolen them. Other men," and here he glared at the two unfortunates on the settee, "weaken like women when it comes to the test. Do you still adhere to what you said? Will you so testify before the general court?"

"I do, sir—and I will."

CHAPTER XVIII.

WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION.

THE last week of August had come. A general court martial had assembled in the city of Washington for the trial of Major Harold Wallis, —teenth U. S. Infantry, and such other prisoners as might properly be brought before it, which limited the culprits to regulars, for none but regulars were of the detail. A venerable graybeard, of forty years of service, sat at their head as president; a keen Pennsylvania lawyer, well known to the Secretary, who had cut the bar for a commission in the army, figured as judge advocate. It was by no means his first appearance in that capacity. He had gained repute as a prosecutor on previous trials. Stanton himself had picked him for the case, and fully was he imbued with the importance of the occasion. A crowd of witnesses had been called to the capital, nor had they far to travel, for many were in the lines along the Potomac, and McClellan, with the bulk of his army, was disembarking at Alexandria. Sorely against his will, Major Holman was there, for the gallant Green Mountain boys were eager to get a chance at Stonewall Jackson, and that renowned leader, with his famous Foot Cavalry, was rumored to have circled

Pope's right wing and swooped down on his rear. Stories on the twenty-seventh were flying from lip to lip that the rebel host had crossed the upper Rappahannock; tramped night and day northward to the Manassas railway; turned eastward and, pouring through Thoroughfare Gap, were now twixt Pope and McClellan, twixt Warrenton and Washington. What did that portend?

But inexorably the court held to its work. One after another a number of witnesses had appeared for the prosecution, testifying as to the specifications supporting the charge of disloyalty and treason. Officers and men bore witness to the frequent goings and comings of the accused through the picket lines on the Peninsula, to his being seen in conference with an officer in Confederate uniform near the Warwick, to the finding of cards and notes among the débris of the Magruder camp, to the night episode that led to Barclay's capture, to the language used at the Mullins breakfast when the band struck up the national air. Several officers, too, had told of disdainful references to the household of the White House, if not to the head of the nation. Several more, unchallenged, spoke of contemptuous or disrespectful things said of the august Secretary of War. It was not until the morning of the twenty-eighth that Holman, chafing with impatience to get away, was summoned to the stand, a sort of triumphant clincher of the case for the prosecution. And still placidly, courteously, imperturbably, both the accused and his distinguished

counsel listened; took notes; held smiling, whispered conferences and—their tongues. To the utter and unconcealed surprise—to the manifest perplexity—of the Judge Advocate they declined his invitation, save in very moderate degree, to cross-question or to interpose. The soldier lawyer had looked for all manner of legal and forensic battling. The Secretary had expected and said as much. It was prophesied that Wallis would object to no less than four members of the court on the ground of bias and prejudice, if not malice, for they were men well known to be inimical to him. He had objected to no one. On the contrary, he had most gracefully availed himself of the opportunity to object by saying that he unhesitatingly placed his honor in the keeping of this tribunal of his brother officers, without doubt or fear as to the result. The Judge Advocate looked for vehement cross-examination of his witnesses,—for protest against their testimony, and nothing of the kind occurred. The accused and his Baltimore counsel listened to their most damaging statements with an expression of interest and tolerance that puzzled the prosecution beyond words. They had all the appearance of saying they would not interrupt for the world, and all the courtroom wondered. It was not until Major Holman begged to know if he might not hasten after his regiment, now somewhere out about Centerville, that a hint was given as to what might be coming. The Honorable Beverly Hanson regretted the necessity, but, as counsel for the accused,

he should be compelled to call Major Holman and probably several of the others for the defense. Holman had declared he heard through the darkness the voice of Major Wallis saying "How can you be such a brute, Eugene?" and Eugene, presumably, was the name of the unseen Southerner who had managed to escape. That, as was well known to many of the court, was the name of Wallis's younger brother.

At one o'clock there was a recess for luncheon. At two they were to reassemble and to sit without regard to hours instead of adjourning at three P. M., as was the method of the Mutiny Act from which we sons of old England took our system of court-martial. At two the Judge Advocate purposed opening the case on the second and glaring charge of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, Colonel Bernard Hoyt, —th New York Cavalry being summoned to the stand. But at half past two, the court having reopened, the room being packed with almost breathless spectators, the Judge Advocate was nervously darting in and out, orderlies were clattering through the resounding corridors, and a message had gone post haste to Willard's, for Colonel Bernard Hoyt had not appeared. It was nearly 2.40 when a carriage landed him on the red brick pavement without, and a brace of troopers aided him, pale and weak—a sore-stricken man as all could see—up the stairs and to a seat in the court room.

The President of the court, noting the sudden silence that had succeeded the buzz of low-toned talk

about the crowded room, looked up from the batch of papers he had been intently studying, pointing out from time to time to the cory on his right certain words or paragraphs that arrested his attention. The delay had nettled him, for matters at the front seemed oddly mixed and he was eager to adjourn and hurry over to the War Department for later tidings. The Judge Advocate, his keen face veiled in deep concern at sight of Hoyt, hurried over to greet and aid him; but before he could exchange a dozen words the President was speaking. There was reprimand on the tip of his tongue, too, for the veteran was a stickler for discipline, and court had been kept fully forty minutes; but one glimpse of Hoyt's pallid face checked the demand for explanation.

"We can proceed to business, Mr. Judge Advocate, I presume," said he, "if—if your witness is ready at last. The court will come to order."

So, without opportunity to inquire as to what was amiss, the conductor of the proceedings had to hasten to his seat at the foot of the long, paper-littered table, and begin. Up to this time the accused officer and his counsel had occupied chairs at a little table at the left hand of the Judge Advocate, perhaps eight feet away, and each witness in turn, after being sworn, had taken a chair placed to the right of the Judge Advocate and a little in front of him—an odd arrangement and one peculiar to military procedure of the day, since the junior members of the court, which corresponds to the jury in civil cases, sitting in their

order of rank at the left hand of the President, could only see the witness by turning their chairs about, thus bringing their backs to the table. Major Flint, the Judge Advocate, more than once, in the early stages of the trial, had referred caustically to the inconvenience of such arrangement. General Buckram, the President, had never seen it done any other way, and, with the conservatism of the old soldier, would brook no innovation. Now, as Colonel Hoyt slowly hobbled on his crutches to the indicated spot and stood facing the Judge Advocate, a deep silence fell on the assembled throng. The words of the solemn oath, without solemnity, were rattled off by the Judge Advocate, his right hand uplifted, his left thrust deep into his trousers' pocket, and were responded to with bowed head, in deep tremulous tones. "I do—so help me God!" Then, as Colonel Hoyt sank heavily into the plain wooden chair, two of the juniors on his side of the table turned their seats and gravely faced him. Few on the court were his seniors in rank in the combined services, regular and volunteer. All were his seniors in years of service in the regular army, and all knew him by reputation favorably and well. All noted with anxiety the symptoms of serious distress, either of body or of mind, perhaps both; but "the law's delay" could not extend to a possibly unwilling witness. The court to a man had heard of, and two had seen, Wallis's attempted assault at Willard's, and wondered, some of them, why that, too, had not been crystallized in a specification to the sec-

ond charge. Among the spectators crowding at the doorway stood a young assistant surgeon who had accompanied Hoyt from Willard's. Now he was narrowly watching his patient and suddenly stepped forward; spoke ten words in low tones to the Judge Advocate, who started and said, "Certainly," whereat the doctor straightened up and signalled to a soldier in the throng at the door, and presently this soldier came hurrying in with a brimming glass of water. Hoyt swallowed it eagerly and to the last drop. Spectators on both sides began edging down so as to be nearer the witness stand, and then it was noted that Major Wallis and his counsel, who had been content to remain at quite a distance from previous witnesses, now lifted their littered table and brought it close to the Judge Advocate's desk. The light entered the long room from two high windows back of the President's seat, and from three along the eastward side. Hoyt sat facing this side light, and, as though it hurt him, wearily lifted his hand and passed it over his haggard eyes. Then a newcomer, with an air of authority about him, forced his way through the wedge-shaped mass at the door, and stood revealed in the trim-fitting uniform of a captain of cavalry. It was Reins, he who had dared to remind the Honorable Secretary of the immortal case of Bardell vs. Pickwick. At sight of him there was for an instant a gleam in Hoyt's blue eyes, but not for long. Reins carried in his hand a cane campstool, opened it, and with utter placidity seated himself in the front row

of spectators, not more than five feet from the witness. The Judge Advocate looked at him in disapprobation; moved his lips as though to speak; thought better of it, and turned with pencil poised, on the pallid officer now seeking to bestow his crutches where they would be out of his way. Coolly Reins arose; stretched forth his hands; took the crutches, bent and murmured a few words in the colonel's ear, whereat the President rapped sharply, and the Judge Advocate started from his seat.

"Spectators must not presume to speak to witnesses in this court, sir," boomed the general, from the head of the table.

"I beg the pardon of the court," most penitently and respectfully replied the culprit. "I should not have presumed to do so had I thought it possible to speak to him elsewhere. I have ventured to inform Colonel Hoyt that I had just returned from Warrenton Junction, that I saw his regiment yesterday morning, and that they sent their love to him."

"Are you summoned as a witness in this case?" demanded the President, his choler rising with the titter faintly heard about the room.

"I am not, sir. I bore despatches from General Porter to General McClellan, and was bidden to take them on to the War Department. At five I return to Alexandria." And the very soldierly-looking visitor seemed deriving unsoldierly amusement from the situation. The President growled some inarticulate words; then wound up abruptly. "Proceed, Mr.

Judge Advocate, and let there be no more unseemly interruptions."

Then silence and attention were resumed as the Judge Advocate began the stereotyped questions as to the name and rank of the witness and his knowledge of the accused. At the second query Hoyt turned his pale face, and the blue eyes gazed squarely, yet strangely, at the distinguished looking prisoner before the court—then at his gray-haired counsel.

"I have known him, I think, since the summer of 1859."

"You were then stationed—where?"

"We were serving with the so-called Utah Expedition," was the answer.

"Where were you last associated with the accused?" asked the Judge Advocate, in calm, professional tone.

"In New York City, during the spring of 1861, and—I met him here for a moment—on one occasion, afterwards." Hoyt hesitated—even faltered—as he gave his answer. Resting his handsome, dark head on his hand, Wallis sat immovable, his eyes fixed on the speakers, glancing alternately from the examiner to the examined. The Judge Advocate penciled his next question with more than usual care, making certain erasures and substitutions, ere he raised his head and read aloud.

"Had you occasion last year to make report or representation to the War Department reflecting on the character of the accused? If so——"

"One moment, Major," interposed Mr. Hanson, eagerly, yet suavely, his gray head courteously inclined, his soft, right hand uplifted in mild protest. "We object to the form——" But almost in the same instant Wallis was on his feet.

"No—ah, Mr. Judge Advocate, and by your leave, ah, Mr. Hanson, I venture to oppose even my counsel. We object to nothing. I beg that the question be put—and answered." Then in low, yet eager tone, he bent and spoke some words in his counsel's ear. The great lawyer listened, flushed, looked queerly at his client and then at the pallid witness, and without another word resumed his seat.

"If so," continued Major Flint, after a moment's pause, "state the circumstances."

For ten seconds there was no reply. With a world of anxiety, even of distress, in his blue eyes, Hoyt sat nervously drumming with his fingers on the arms of the chair, Wallis calmly studying him the while. When at last the answer came, the tone was hesitant, faltering.

"I—had," said Hoyt. "The report, or rather the letter, is on file, doubtless, at the War Department, if it has not been placed in the hands of the Judge Advocate, and—I should rather it were exhibited to the court, than to repeat—verbally, and—in this presence," and here the troubled eyes glanced about him at the throng of soldier faces, "allegations which were based on the statements of—friends in whom I had implicit confidence, but who—in part at least, have within the past

few hours—informed me that their suspicions—and my accusation—were unjust—that the accused officer had made it clear that he was—unjustly suspected : in fine—that I was wrong. Here and now I accept the responsibility. The report was made in entire confidence that it would be fully substantiated. I must this day inform the Adjutant General that—it cannot be maintained.”

The silence that hung over the crowded courtroom was such that the labored breathing of the witness could be distinctly heard, even in the corridor without the open doorway, where men were standing on boxes and chairs to enable them to see over the heads of those blocking the entrance way. Major Flint sat like a man in a trance, gazing straight at Hoyt with wide open, yet almost unseeing eyes. As he expressed it later—“The whole room began to swim.” Old Buckram, in his box epaulettes—the only officer at the table in the full dress uniform of the ante-bellum days—grew redder and redder as he glared through his spectacles at the humbled soldier in the witness chair. Tears started to the eyes of two of the senior officers at the board—men who had known Bernard Hoyt from the days he wore the gray and bell buttons, and had never known him to say the word or do the deed that could shake his status as a gentleman. Captain Reins started from his chair with outstretched hand as though he longed to place it on the shoulder of the witness. Others sat in a sort of stupefaction, gazing, as did the mass of spectators, first at the last speaker, then at the accused before the

court. Men could hardly believe their senses as they looked upon that erstwhile debonair, disdainful officer, at once the envy and the despair of so many of his cloth. In all their knowledge or conception of him, never once had Harold Wallis been known to display emotion; yet a dozen witnesses, if need be, could now be found to declare that, under the drooping moustache the finely chiseled lips were quivering—that the long, sweeping lashes that shaded the dark eyes were suddenly dripping with a heavy dew.

Then, just as the astonishment of the throng of listeners, signalized at first by dead silence, began to find vent in low-toned exclamations, long-drawn breaths and sighs, there was sudden movement at the door. Hoyt had bent forward, bowing his head upon, and, as he finished, screening his eyes with his thin, white hand. It had begun slowly to sway, when the young doctor sprang from the spot, where, with all his soul in his eyes, he had been watching the witness. In a second he had reached the chair and passed an arm around the drooping figure. "Gentlemen," he said, "Colonel Hoyt is too ill to proceed. Some water, please!"

Another moment and half a dozen men were swarming about the stricken witness, ignoring Buckram's banging on the table and demands for order. Major Flint sprang to his feet; hurried to the President's chair and whispered a few eager words. A tall young officer, with very blond hair and faint moustache, wearing the dress of a cavalry subaltern, burst through the crowd

at the doorway and knelt at the colonel's side, his white face quivering with grief and dread. And over the hubbub and confusion that prevailed the voice of the President was presently heard proclaiming that court was adjourned until ten A. M. to-morrow.

CHAPTER XIX.

“GIVE HIM ROPE.”

WHATEVER the interest felt by the great war secretary in the proceedings of the Wallis court-martial, it was forgotten for the time at least in another whirlwind of excitement, following close upon the collapse of the case for the prosecution. Fierce battling had begun that very evening in sight of Centerville, barely thirty miles away, and continued much of the 29th and all of the 30th of August. The bulletins from the far front, signed by the commanding general, were of the most inspiring character. The right man had apparently at last been found, and now, with another general who had never yet been tried against Lee and Jackson, assigned to duty in Washington as General-in-Chief and commander of all the forces in the field, the hopes of the administration were high. Pope had lured and tempted the daring Virginians far forward from their legitimate line beyond the Rapidan; had successfully manœuvred them into a false position; had interposed between the widely separated wings of Jackson and Longstreet; had got the former “just where he wanted him,” and was now proceeding to crush him out of existence. Jackson had been coaxed by the heavily baited hook to Manassas Junction, between Pope and

McClellan, between Warrenton and Washington, as had been said, and now there was no hope for him. Skeptics, it is true, who had known John Pope and read John Phoenix, declared that the former's description of the situation bore odd resemblance to the latter's famous account of his fight with the returning editor of the San Diego Herald. Skeptics said that Pope pinned Jackson by a process as simple and satisfactory as that by which Phoenix held the editor, to-wit, by skillfully inserting his nose between the editorial teeth, thereby preventing the editor's rising. Cynics said that Pope's triumphal progress backward from Cedar Mountain to Centerville had historical parallel in the masterly march of Napoleon from Dresden back to Paris, and Pope's stirring reports had their parallel also in the bulletins after Preuss Eylau and Leipsic—if not in the memoirs of the late lamented Munchausen: “We have made great captures,” wrote the general, though the prisoners must have been later released, possibly on their own recognizance—and the captors were falling back on the heights of Centerville. “You have done nobly,” answered Halleck, from the shaded precincts of the War Department, even though he marveled at the recuperative powers of Lee's beaten army, declared the previous day to be in full retreat for the mountains. From Alexandria McClellan sent word that an officer just in from Manassas said there seemed urgent need of a head at the front, thereby adding to the head and front of his offending, and finally, when Jackson made another of his flanking marches; swooped a few miles closer to the

capital and killed brave Phil Kearny and "Ike" Stevens almost within sight of the unfinished dome; and Pope's heads of columns began to show on the hither side of Fairfax, while those of Lee, with Stuart's bold horsemen in the van, popped into view up the Potomac barely twenty miles away, it became evident to the administration that the Pope's nose was no longer the tit bit of the national bird, that it no longer held the teeth of the Southern war dogs. And when once more the Army of the Potomac crossed the Long Bridge in quest of the Confederate foe, it was northward, not southward bound; but Little Mac was again at its head, and Pope's headquarters had quit the saddle—forever.

In all the turmoil of that bewildering week, no wonder the court was well nigh forgotten. No wonder no note was taken of the fact that certain witnesses had slipped away to rejoin their regiments on the way to South Mountain, and that further proceedings were rendered impolitic by the fact that two of the detail, seeing no likelihood of another session in the near future, had dared to gallop after their regiments and to take part in the desperate, mismanaged fighting across the Antietam. It made little difference in one way, for the prosecution had proved its case only on certain minor counts. It had failed utterly to substantiate the grave charge of treason or that of conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman. Defense, except on these minor counts, was quite unnecessary; but Wallis and his counsel sought and demanded exhaustive investigation and a verdict in accordance with the facts estab-

lished. They presented themselves at the courtroom at every possible time of meeting, urging that, even with the absence of the two members, the court was not reduced below the minimum; that it was still competent to “try and determine”; that, despite Holman’s going, there were other witnesses; and they presented a list of names, begging that these officers, too, might be summoned. Major Flint went to the Judge Advocate General for instructions, and the Judge Advocate General to the exasperated Secretary; but the Secretary was in a quandary. If that court were allowed to continue its sessions, as he clearly saw, the chances were that, three to one, it would acquit Wallis on the most important points and punish him but lightly, if at all. Whereas, if Stanton could procrastinate, other witnesses might be found to fill the gaps created by Hoyt’s remarkable “slump,” a thing the Secretary could speak of only with wrath and amaze. It might even be possible to secure the exchange and return of Lieutenant Barclay, whose evidence would surely be damning. Ruefully had the Secretary been compelled to grant “extended limits” in response to the demands of counsel in the case of Wallis, and urgently had he been advised by friends of the administration to drop the whole fight, even though the court acquit. “Give Wallis rope enough and he’ll hang himself,” said one adviser. “Hold him another week and the press will hang you,” said another, for now September, too, was nearing its close, and the papers had time to turn to something besides the losses and disasters of the recent campaign.

But the court was held to await the call of the President and the coming of other witnesses. Stanton saw a way.

Meanwhile it really began to look as though, in spite of all his reckless disregard of soldier propriety, the star of Wallis was in the ascendant. It is infinitely easier to start a scandal than to stop or prove it. All over Washington men and women were talking of the trial and of the utterly unlooked for admission of Colonel Hoyt. For several days after his breakdown in court that gallant officer had been threatened with brain fever, the only thing that stood between him and a summons to appear in person before the Secretary to explain, if explain he could. Mrs. Rutherford, too, was seriously ill, constantly attended by her daughter, nurse and physician. Gerald, stunned and sore-hearted, had had to return to his regiment, now with Pleasonton somewhere up the Potomac. By the advice of all the doctors in the case, Mrs. Rutherford was taken to that old-time resort of old-time New Yorkers—Long Branch, on the Jersey coast—whither Hoyt had already been sent, and once again were they under the same roof, but, as all could see, no longer on the same terms. A serious estrangement had grown between the wounded officer and the sorely stricken woman—something Ethel had not failed to note, yet from the start had been bidden not to question.

Once again was Wallis the cynosure of all eyes as, in the September evenings, he sauntered airily into the lobby at Willard's, generally in the company of some prominent senator, never with man or woman whose

society did not convey distinction. He held his head higher, said certain correspondents, than many a general, and with good and sufficient reason. He moved in circles sought in vain by many a superior in rank, and for a time, at least, both in language and in the daily ordering of his life, was discretion itself—a thing that must have bored him infinitely. Judge Hanson, his gifted counsel, had returned to Baltimore in the belief that October would come before another session of the court, which was meantime pegging away in reduced numbers on other cases brought before it; and there was perceptible lull in the situation when, all on a sudden, there came to the city some unlooked-for visitors—Miss Lorna Brenham, under the wing of her maternal aunt and chaperon, Mrs. de Ruyter, of New York; Mr. James J. Granger, under the sway of a passion he was powerless to conceal, drawn as though by a single hair.

Not upon the register of Willard's or other caravan-serai did the names appear. Secret service officials alone took note of their coming, and a close carriage conveyed them in the shades of evening over the long, muddy, ill-paved route from the Baltimore and Ohio station, past the colonnaded Treasury building, past the White House, past the blue-coated guards at the old brown War Department, then, turning to the right, went up the street where Wallis led the officials their lively chase long months before. Mr. Carmichael, that keen-faced man in plain clothes, and a cab, was in no wise surprised when the carriage stopped at the very

same door whence he had seen Wallis issue in company with that distinguished looking stranger known as Major Forno. The parlor windows glowed. The hospitably open door permitted a broad beam from the hall to pour forth upon the night, and the solitary occupant of the cab noted that two trunks and several items of hand luggage were borne after the newcomers into the house, but the carriage was not discharged of all its load. It was still at the curb as Mr. Carmichael came sauntering back from Twenty-first Street, where he had dismissed his cab, and strolled along the opposite sidewalk. Then, in the course of ten minutes, Mr. Granger had bounded down the steps and been driven away. There would be no trouble finding out later whither he had gone; Carmichael's business was with the house itself. When toward 9.30 another carriage came rolling up the street and unloaded at the same door, Mr. Granger was the first to step forth, and, just as Carmichael expected, he was followed by the tall, soldierly form of Major Wallis. "Give him rope," murmured Mr. Carmichael, "that's what the Secretary said—give him rope. This time he'll get it round his precious neck."

This was the week that followed Antietam, during which time it seemed as though once again Little Mac and his chosen were, after all, to reign supreme in the military affairs of the nation. The men in high command, who seriously differed with him and his methods, had suffered curious discomfiture. Pope, of whom so much had been expected, found himself utterly out-

classed and presently relegated to a department at the distant rear. McDowell, who was supposed to know all about the neighborhood of Bull Run, had, when most needed, lost himself and his corps as a consequence. Kearny and Stevens, Mansfield and Reno, Rodman and Richardson were killed, Hooker and Sedgwick wounded. The faithful to the fortunes of the great little organizer were assured in their commands, while others, less susceptible to youthful enthusiasms, were relieved. The cavalry were taken from the sterling soldier, who well knew how to lead them, and given to untried hands. Cooke's charge at Gaines's Mill had developed Porter's counter charge of disobedience on, and disappearance from, the field; both unfounded, yet sufficient. Pope's Army of Virginia was broken up and merged in the Army of the Potomac—probably the best thing that could have happened to it, for there by hundreds were brave and brilliant officers and by thousands loyal and devoted men, destined despite the superb skill and valor of the opposing generals and the long-continued misfortunes of their own, to endure to the end and to win immortal fame and victory.

Meantime Washington was crammed with officers and soldiers, sick, wounded or astray, and the White House with would-be advisers of the President, full of suggestion, self-importance and importunity. All the efforts of the provost marshal to separate the martial sheep from the goats, to gather in the stragglers, deserters, absentees and over-stays were insufficient to greatly reduce the number of uniforms in evidence in

the streets and suburbs. Bars, billiard rooms and hotel lobbies were measurably purged of loungers and roisterers in the Union blue; but still the array of the temporarily incapacitated, bearing unimpeachable papers or claiming to have mislaid them, was something almost incredible. The city filled up with faces strange to the most expert of the secret service, and, so long as these faces looked pallid or haggard as the result of recent wounds or illness, they commanded sympathy and kindly aid. What stirred Stanton to the core was the sight of so many apparently sound and hearty men strolling about the quiet streets. His orders, therefore, had become more stringent. The patrols of the provost marshal were constantly on the move and, every few minutes, even wounded officers, taking the air in open carriages or hobbling on crutches along the shady side of the Avenue, were compelled to stop and show their passes or papers. Some of them took to hanging the envelope from a string about their necks or tied to a button. Some facetious volunteers displayed their credentials pinned to the broad of their backs. Almost every man, however, was strictly watched and accounted for. Even private citizens were not infrequently required to give their names and addresses and to establish their identity, for many a soldier sought for the time to hide his trade in the garb of civil life. Mr. James J. Granger was much incensed the morning after his arrival at being thrice accosted on the street, twice by officers commanding patrols, once by a soft-voiced stranger, in pepper and salt sack and "peg tops," who

displayed a star within his coat and anxiety as to Mr. Granger's name and business. Granger gave his name and address without embarrassment, but stumbled over the business, compromising finally on “visiting friends and seeking information concerning relatives.”

He had taken, as prearranged, a quiet room in a quiet neighborhood not ten blocks from Willard's or five from Twentieth Street. He had not been too well pleased that the first duty required of him the evening of their arrival was that of going in search of Major Wallis. Wallis might have Georgia affiliations, but they failed, somehow, to include Granger. Wallis might be a Southern sympathizer, “but there's nothing *sympatica* between *us*,” said Granger, to Miss Brenham. It had not occurred to Granger that, as a soldier, Wallis might feel respect unspeakable for soldiers fighting gallantly for the cause they had been taught from babyhood to consider sacred, whereas he could feel no respect at all for men who covertly wore the colors of that sacred cause, but could not screw their courage to the point of fighting for it. Granger had ever stood somewhat in awe of Wallis, who loftily patronized him. He knew that at bottom he hated Wallis, yet obediently beamed upon him, for such was Lorna Brenham's wish, and he dare not oppose her. He marveled much that Wallis, whom he had secretly rejoiced to hear of as “in arrest and undergoing trial,” should walk the streets of Washington unchallenged, even saluted by many a soldier, while he, a sovereign citizen, should be questioned. He did not understand that, now that Wallis's limits were

extended, that gentleman could walk whithersoever he pleased within the boundaries of the capital, provided he did not venture, unasked, into the presence or premises of his commanding officer, and of commanding officers there seemed to be a number. Stanton, indeed, would have forbidden him Willard's, if he could have done so without seeming to persecute, and thought it most indecorous of Wallis to persist in Willard's as his boarding place. But Wallis had taken a cot there on the morning of his arrival in July, and though, for comfort and economy both, he later secured a room on Eighth Street, he refused, unless ordered, to change his table. It was at Willard's Granger found him on the evening of their arrival, and found him, somewhat to Granger's surprise, and not at all to his satisfaction, expectant of and prepared for his coming. Unbeknownst to the subservient and adoring messenger, therefore, there had been previous communication between the lady of his love and the dashing soldier. Granger spent the evening in the sulks, listening half an hour to the general conversation between the two ladies and their brilliant, versatile visitor. Then, to his further annoyance, Miss Brenham deliberately drew the major into the adjoining room, a little library, and there conferred in low tone with him as much as twenty minutes without so much as an "excuse me" to either her aunt or him.

Nor did Granger like it that his instructions required of him that he should go with Major Wallis the following morning to find a certain secretary of the French

Legation. The princes of the House of Orleans had been recalled and were no longer with McClellan; but they had bespoken warm welcome for Wallis whensoever he saw fit to make his presence known, and now it was in the power of the minister to furnish information of which Miss Brenham's kindred stood in need. “Etiquette,” said Wallis, airily, “prevents my going under existing circumstances to the legation itself; but—ah—we can see the man if not—ah—the master.”

And the legation secretary had been courtesy and sympathy personified. There was nothing the distinguished Commandant Wallis might ask that it should not be his, the secretary's, utmost endeavor to obtain. As to that let the Commandant be tranquil—be assured. A response should be forthcoming on the morrow. Meantime, a glass of wine, a health to the gallant comrade and entertainer of their Highnesses, his brave compatriots. And so it was after noonday when the major, with his Georgia bred Gothamite, arrived once more within view of the secret service emissary, still “piping” the premises on upper “F” Street.

A telegraph messenger was coming down the steps as they reached the house, some undelivered despatches still in his hand. Their ring was not immediately answered, and Granger pulled the second time. The colored servant who admitted them begged to be excused for keeping the gentlemen waiting—Miss Brenham had just called for a glass of water at that very moment. Miss Brenham came hurriedly forth from the library to meet them, extending a shapely white hand to each, and

there were symptoms of excitement, if not agitation, in her face and manner. Eagerly she plunged into a series of quick questions, one on the heels of another, often without waiting for answer. She was so impatient, she said, to hear the result of their embassy. She was so obviously, they saw, thinking of something else, and Wallis fathomed it:—

“You have answer, I trust, to the despatch I sent for you last night?” he queried.

“Yes—and no. Mr. Hoyt (Miss Brenham did not recognize titles in the Northern volunteers and was indifferent to promotions in the cavalry) has not left Long Branch, but—had you heard?—did you know Mr. Barclay had been exchanged and was to be sent to Washington?”

For once in his life Jim Granger had the satisfaction and comfort of seeing Harold Wallis startled, if not staggered. The major stood one instant, turning grayish white, his fingers twitching; but the old, indomitable drawl was still there as he answered: “Quite possible—ah—I dare say.”

But he quit the house in less than ten minutes; sauntered to Twentieth Street; turned the corner to the left and then fairly sped to Pennsylvania Avenue and his modest quarters, a square or two beyond. That night was a busy one among the boatmen down the Potomac, and one skiff, at least,—dodging patrolling crews, found safe harbor below Mathias Point and so speeded an energetic messenger “On to Richmond.”

CHAPTER XX.

A CRUCIAL INTERVIEW.

THE long, rambling if not ramshackle tenement known as Howlands in the early Sixties, bore faint resemblance to the so-called palatial hosteleries that line the low bluff at Long Branch in this day and generation. It was the summer abiding place of several old New York families, all the same, and some of these were staying through September. Mrs. Rutherford and Ethel were still there, Hortense in attendance and the habitual sulks; Forbes, the assiduous, coming down each Saturday ostensibly to assure himself that Mrs. Rutherford and Miss Ethel wanted for nothing that his vigilance could supply, but actually, as Colonel Bernard Hoyt was not slow to see, that he might have conference with Hortense. Hoyt could not abide that woman. Ethel, he plainly saw, was often irritated and annoyed by her, once to the extent of an outbreak. Hortense had dared to be insolent; had dared her young mistress to report, if Mademoiselle pleased, her language to Madame, her mother, and see what would come of it.

Few people were left at Howlands at the time, and the French woman's raucous tones were distinctly audible through the bare and echoing corridors even to

Hoyt, whose room was some distance away. He had seen and spoken with Ethel several times since her coming, but never alone. He had seen and spoken with Mrs. Rutherford but twice, and then only at her urgent request and for a very few minutes. Whatever the cause of their estrangement it was evident that the colonel was in no mood for reconciliation, if that were the object the unhappy lady had in view, and this was the more remarkable since that estrangement had most seriously affected Hoyt's relations with Ethel herself. At the very time when the fortunes of love and war had rolled their floodtide to his feet, when hope in one and preferment in the other had joyously beckoned him on, something had happened, something had been said or done in an almost tragic interview between an imploring woman and an aggrieved and astounded soldier that morning of the 28th of August that changed the whole tenor of his life and aspirations. He had gone to Howlands about the 6th of September, because the medical officer said he must have total rest and should have abundant salt air. Howlands had been his father's favorite resort in earlier days, so Howlands was chosen. He was amazed and disconcerted when told a few days later that Mrs. Rutherford, too, had come. He had eagerly sought Ethel's society on every possible occasion hitherto. Now he had earnestly sought to avoid it. He would not have come to Howlands at all had he thought Mrs. Rutherford would follow. He had now no home to go to, and was enjoined by the attending physician not to think of leaving the seashore until he

was stronger. Then, when he was stronger and could have gone, he overheard the defiant insolence of Hortense and now could not think of going. Something told him Ethel might need help,—protection,—and now, when he could have thrown pride and scruples to the wind and himself, unreservedly, at her feet, she in turn had become cold and distant. Unerringly had she noted the changed manner the moment they met, and, though it roused her pride and stirred resentment in her heart against him, it had more than ever determined her to wring from her mother's lips the story of that morning's interview, which had left her mother prostrate, exhausted and in tears, and driven Hoyt to the verge of brain fever and total estrangement. Yet not a word of explanation had been vouchsafed to Ethel, to whose entreaties and tears Mrs. Rutherford could only offer counter entreaty and more copious tears. It was something, she said, that honor commanded her to hold as sacred for the present. Later Ethel should know all.

But, so far as Hoyt was concerned, the barriers were swept away the afternoon Hortense let loose her tirade. He stumped up and down the broad piazza a full hour, impatiently waiting for Ethel to come down, as come she had on every afternoon but this. When five o'clock struck and the last of the bathers, looking blue and shivery, came up from the beach, Hoyt could stand the strain no longer. Going to the office he penned a brief note and sent it to her room. The bell boy came back in two minutes. Miss Rutherford's compliments and regrets. She was lying down with a violent headache.

Headaches, as a rule, are but transitory things. Two days later, by which time the crutches had been dispensed with and Hoyt was hobbling with a stick, Ethel appeared, pale and languid, and was surrounded speedily by the few women flitting about the piazza. She knew he was there and would come as soon as the circle broke, so she kept that circle about her. But she did not know him yet. He came unflinchingly before them all, and held forth his thin, white hand and said: "I, too, am glad you are here again, and I have come to beg a few words as soon as you are at liberty. I may have to go at any moment now." It was the broadest hint to be off the surrounding group had ever heard, but they heeded and saw and forgave and made way, and presently the two were alone, a pair of almost colorless faces and two pairs of cold, nerveless hands. Bernard Hoyt would rather have faced Pelham's guns again at short range than the look in those clear, blue, resentful eyes.

"Forgive me for this appeal, when you have so much to worry you," he said, leaning heavily on his hickory cane. He had moved toward a vacant settee, but she would not sit—so he was forced to stand. "I am almost well enough to ride if not to walk, and any moment now may be going back to the regiment and to Gerald. Two days ago I was eager. That afternoon I heard distinctly that abominable French woman's insolence and defiance. —No, do not let that give you fresh trouble!" he hastened to say, for she had started and colored at the abrupt announcement. "Try to remember I have known

you almost since your babyhood, Ethel; that I was Ralph's chum and friend; that I am Gerald's friend and fellow soldier, and try to see that though I can have no other claim, these are in themselves reasons why I cannot leave you when something tells me you are threatened,—that this creature believes she has some hold on your mother that gives her power over you. She is one of that class and race of human fiends that gloried in their torture of the gentle born in the days of the guillotine. Ralph distrusted her years ago. Gerald distrusts her now. You have been made the victim of her malevolence, and yet she remains here in your mother's employ. Have you not told her?"

"Mother is too ill to be agitated," was the answer, as Ethel stood there facing him, cold and unbending. "We have been accustomed to the vagaries of Hortense for years. She is all contrition now. There—there is not the least occasion, Colonel Hoyt, for your remaining—so far as—we are concerned," and with this magnificent piece of mendacity on her lips, Miss Ethel's blue eyes blazed squarely into those of the wounded trooper,—doubly wounded now, and she half turned as though to say the interview was ended, but he spoke again:—

"You are angry, and I am—helpless, Ethel. You were angered at me because I could not tell you last year about Forno and Ralph and Wallis. I did not *know* enough to speak. Now you are angered when other and graver reasons compel my silence. Your mother has my promise, and not until she releases me, hard though it be, can I speak. You say truly, probably, that there is

no occasion for my remaining. Forgive me, then, that I intruded. Not until your mother told me—did I begin to realize how—unwelcome my presence must have been to you. It shall be my duty, of course, to see Major Wallis before I return to the front and tender every amende in my power. Good bye.”

Abruptly he turned and left her—left her standing staring after him in amazement. Off to the eastward the blue waves were dancing, capped with snow under the glorious landward breeze. Noisy children were chasing gleefully along the bluffs. Maids and matrons,—just a few lingerers, but all the house contained,—were grouped about the wooden veranda, covertly, yet curiously watching the pair. What woman at Howlands did not plainly see and know the soldier’s passionate love for Ethel Rutherford? What one of their number did not thoroughly realize that this was a crucial interview and one by no means to be either interrupted—or missed! A colored boy, hurrying from the office with a telegram on a tray, was hailed by one of the wisest of these veterans in the art of love and match-making. “For Colonel Hoyt?” she asked. Then, seeing assent in the waiter’s eyes, spoke commandingly. “Not yet, on any account!” and held him, obedient and unquestioning. Then it was that Hoyt finished his few sad words, and finishing, turned and limped painfully away. But for the heavy thumping of the heart within his breast and the stout hickory cane upon the resounding wooden floor, he might have heard the gasp, the faint, barely articulate cry with which she

strove to detain him when, after a brief moment of stupefaction her senses seemed returning. What could he possibly mean? "Not until her mother told him had he realized that his presence was unwelcome." "Going to Washington to seek Major Wallis to tender further amende." What in heaven's name could he mean? "Colonel Hoyt—Bernard!" she strove to say. But the voice refused its office. She could not speak aloud, and then, when she would have followed, there sat all those women, those hateful, spying women. There stood the negro servant with that fateful, lacquered tray. She *knew* it was a telegram before the boy started forward to deliver it. She saw the colonel take and tear it open; saw him hurriedly read it through; pause one instant; glance irresolutely toward the silent, expectant watchers beyond; then, as though dreading question or comment, saw him turn sharply to his left and disappear through one of the long windows that opened to the veranda. Then came Hortense. "Would Mademoiselle attend Madame at once? Madame had received letters from Washington." Ah, there were other reasons now why the girl was most eager to attend Madame,—reasons that kept her closeted long hours with the complaining invalid and that prevented her knowing until too late that the colonel left that very afternoon for New York, and that Forbes, the invaluable butler, had come, and, turning about, had gone within the hour of his coming, so as to take the same boat that bore Bernard Hoyt.

Three days thereafter there was a meeting and a consultation in Baltimore that called to the monumental

city an assortment from our *dramatis personæ* little to be looked for under existing circumstances and the same roof. The Honorable Beverly Hanson had met with an accident that seriously lamed him and prevented his going to Washington when next needed by his distinguished client, Major Wallis. Hanson had sprained his ankle and been relegated to the sofa by day, and warned to attend to only such business as could be transacted quietly at his home. The War Secretary was properly indignant, yet expressed himself by no means surprised, that Major Wallis should request permission to spend forty-eight hours in Baltimore for the purpose of consulting with his counsel who would be unable to come to Washington for at least a fortnight. The Secretary's immediate impulse was to reply, Not by any means. But the request was backed by senators who said the impression had gone forth that Wallis was a persecuted saint; that he was innocent of all the charges against him and was being held in limbo through the malignity of the War Department. "Better let him go." "Give him more rope," again said one of the advisers, so, grumblingly, Stanton did as advised and Major Wallis received the requisite authority which required him, however, to report himself in person to the commanding officer of the garrison on arriving at and before leaving Baltimore; and that officer received instructions to closely observe the major's comings and goings. So did the secret service.

Was it accident or design that, about that same time, Lorna Brenham, with her attendant aunt and cavalier,

left Washington for Baltimore, and all were presently welcomed in the mansions of certain old residents known to be ardent Southern sympathizers, all within a square or so of the distinguished lawyer's homestead? They were assembled in the Hansons' library the second evening of Wallis's brief stay, gathered in laughing, jubilant chat about the sofa of the great Southern jurist. The cause of the South, despite Lee's leisurely withdrawal to Virginia, whither McClellan would not pursue, seemed abundantly hopeful. All Baltimore was talking over the discomfiture of Halleck and Stanton, for McClellan, as usual, thought it no fault of his, but all theirs. It wasn't the kind of talk officers in Union blue were supposed to relish or even patiently to hear, but, despite Wallis's presence, it went on uninterruptedly for nearly half an hour, Miss Brenham holding forth with her accustomed brilliancy. But silence and surprise fell upon the assembled party when the white-haired *major domo* entered, and, bowing before his master's recumbent form, held forth the silver salver that had done duty in the household since early Colonial days. Thereon lay a single card. Still laughing over Lorna's latest sally, Hanson took the card and read aloud: "Colonel Bernard Hoyt, —th New York Cavalry."

Mrs. de Ruyter instantly arose and signalled her niece. "Don't go!—don't go!" protested Hanson. "Why shouldn't you see him,—all of you? I have learned to honor this man, though I cannot imagine why he should be here!"

"I will step into the parlor, sir," said Wallis, rising. "It—is possible he is—seeking me. I had an intimation two days ago."

There was an interesting tableau as Colonel Hoyt appeared under the curtains at the arched entrance to the cozy old library. In the soft glow from the lamps on the mantel and table, stood Lorna Brenham, tall, dark and triumphantly beautiful, smiling saucy welcome upon the intruder, from the foot of Hanson's couch. At her left and a little back among the shadows, hovered Granger, neither smiling nor content. In her easy-chair, portly and self-satisfied, as became a de Ruyter, sat the chaperon, her eyes on the newcomer, as he bowed low to the lady of the house, who had swept gracefully, graciously forward to bid him welcome. Under the curtain, shutting off the parlor, stood in the dark background, Major Wallis, silent and observant.

"I trust I may be pardoned this intrusion," began Hoyt, his voice telling at once of constraint,—even of distress of mind,—telling of a trying duty that had to be discharged, come what might. "I am sorry to see Judge Hanson so crippled; but I must go on to Washington at ten o'clock, and—they told me Major Wallis was here," and Hoyt glanced about him, inquiringly.

"He is here, and you are most welcome, Colonel Hoyt. Pray come over and let me shake hands with you, for I cannot rise. My daughter, Miss Hanson; Colonel Hoyt—Mrs. de Ruyter. Miss Brenham you know,—and Mr. Granger, of course. Wallis will be with us in a moment."

Obediently yet slowly, Hoyt came forward, leaning heavily still upon his cane. He had bowed to and shaken hands with Miss Hanson; then with her father; then had turned to answer briefly Miss Brenham's half laughing, half defiant challenge, and was then bowing to Mrs. de Ruyter and coldly and formally, to Granger when presently again the old butler entered with his silver tray.

"I can't see anybody else just now," began Hanson, impatiently. "However, I'll look at the card. What! Lieutenant Edward Clayton Barclay, — U. S. Infantry! Is the gentleman there in the hall?"

"Yeas suh; drove up in a carriage just after the colonel came. He asked especially, suh, if Major Wallis, too, was hyuh."

"Well, of all the extraordinary things! Wallis, did you hear this?" and with lowered voice the crippled host turned to accost the tall officer coming forward into the light, with eyes that glittered and a face visibly pale. Hoyt, his back to the entrance, his hand still extended to Mrs. de Ruyter, looked up in surprise; then, catching sight of Wallis's white face, dropped his hand and stood gazing at him. Then, in the midst of the strange silence that had fallen on the entire party, a springy step was heard on the marble tiling of the hallway, and a cheery, boyish voice, at sound of which Wallis started as though shot. The curtains were thrown aside, and, in the uniform of a lieutenant of the national army, there came striding joyously, confidently, daringly into the room not Ned Barclay, not an officer

of the United States, but a soldier of the rebellious and defiant South, and lame as he was, Bernard Hoyt whirled about at sound of the gasping, almost agonized cry that broke from the bloodless lips of Harold Wallis:—

“Eugene, Eugene, are you mad!”

CHAPTER XXI.

IN DEFENSE OF A BROTHER.

LONG as he lives Bernard Hoyt will never forget that night, even though part of it was passed in oblivion. For one brief moment after the major's startled cry a silence as of amaze seemed to have fallen on the assembled party—a paralysis, partly of terror, that held some of their number spellbound. It might be impossible to say who was first to regain control of his or her faculties. Lorna Brenham and Colonel Hoyt, however, were the first to move. The woman's intuition and her year's experience in many a scene that tried her wit and nerve, were quick to show her the peril of Eugene's position. A Confederate officer in Union uniform, under false name, with false papers—what could it mean but that he was a spy, and, once captured in that garb and under that name, what could it lead to but death? Oh, she knew, well she knew—for many a desperate plan had been discussed in her presence—and well she understood the fearful nature of this mad attempt. Escape at any cost, in any direction, was her first thought for him, and with that in view, she sprang like startled deer swift to his side, to lead him forth before Hoyt could move to hinder. But already Hoyt, too, had roused, and with blazing eyes and face almost white with the intensity of his

purpose, had started forward, one hand extended as though to clutch the throat of the mad venturer within the lines, the other, alas, hampered with the heavy cane, without which walking was still impossible. Together and almost at the same instant they bore down upon the disturber, standing there now livid and trembling, for he, too, had suddenly seen—realized—his peril and the awful cost. And then in his extremity, in mad and frantic impulse to rid himself of the one hostile witness to his soldier crime, heedless of where he stood or by whom he was surrounded, deaf to Hanson's warning shout, to Lorna Brenham's low, vehement cry, to Nathalie Hanson's half stifled shriek, he whipped his pistol from the ready holster and, but for the spring of that splendid Southern girl and the swift, frenzied clutch of her jeweled white hands, the navy Colt would then and there have spoken a Union trooper's death warrant. Over went the costly library lamp as, with the leap of a panther, Lorna Brenham hurled herself upon him, her long, slender fingers, with a marvel of nervous, sinewy strength, lacing about his shaking grasp. Down came the blue-sleeved arm, swift almost as it rose. Down came the vengeful hammer at the mad pull of the trigger, but never reached the gleaming copper of the fresh-capped cone. The sharp circular rim cut a cruel, purple groove into the fair skin, but never loosed the firm, fearless hold. "Give it me, instantly," she demanded, fierce and commanding, her words almost hissing between her set teeth, her dark eyes flashing in the intensity of the struggle. Insensibly, mechanically,

he released his grasp, and she sent the weapon spinning toward the hall. It caught in the folds of the heavy damask at the archway, and fell harmless into the depths of the furred rug beneath. Even then her work was but half done. Quick as before, she sprang in front of the trembling youth, between him and the menacing soldier of the Union, and the hand that hurled the pistol aside, flew almost into Hoyt's stern, set face, palm foremost, warning him back.

"Stop!" she cried. "I saved your life, Colonel Hoyt! You owe something to me. Stop!" Yet recoil she had to, a step before his determination stride. "Stop! Hear me!" she repeated. And now stop he had to, or force her rudely back.

"It is my duty," he began, but got no further. Finding himself screened, yet disarmed, young Wallis made a leap for the fallen Colt; but, even as he stooped to seize it, again she was upon him. "How dare you, Eugene! You would hang us all—all! You fool! You idiot!" Then a second time she grasped him; again she turned and confronted Hoyt, again painfully hobbling toward her. "Oh, you won't be warned!" she cried. Then, "Yes—that's right!—quick!—Jim Granger, if you're not a *coward*, help Major Wallis!"

There was a moment of fearful struggle. Springing from behind, Harold Wallis had thrown his right arm about the colonel's throat, while the left encircled the body, pinning the trooper's left arm to his side. Down went the cane with a crash, as Hoyt struck furiously with clinched right fist over the left shoulder at his

captor's face. Mrs. de Ruyter, all dignity forgotten, uttered a squawk of fright and dismay, and collapsed in her big chair. Mr. Hanson, vainly striving to make himself heard, had struggled to his one unbandaged foot and, enfolded by his shrinking daughter's arm, clung to the back of the lounge with one hand and reached impotently toward the swaying wrestlers with the other. All too soon was the fierce grapple ended. Forgetful, in the rage of conflict, Hoyt threw his weight upon the wounded leg. It gave way under him and down they went with fearsome force upon the floor, Hoyt's forehead striking the sharp corner of the old Colonial sofa as he plunged forward—and that ended it all. The blood was spurting from an awful gash in the white temple as the now nerveless arms relaxed their hold and the Union soldier lay there, prostrate, senseless, sorestricken, while his brother officer in the Union blue slowly found his feet and, with clinching hands, with heaving chest, with quivering, pallid, dreadful face, stood gazing down upon the ruin he had wrought, seeing unerringly that, crushed and humbled as was his rival now, there had come at last to him, the victor, a ruin infinitely greater—the utter wreck and ruin of his whole career.

Again the awful silence was broken by Lorna Brenham's voice. That woman should have been riding with Lee and Jackson, mailed, helmeted and spurred—the Jeanne d'Arc of the Southern cause. "Go for water, sponges, towels—quick!" she ordered Granger. "No. Don't let the butler in! Eugene, go to Mr. Han-

son's room and get out of that uniform at once!" Then down on her knees she went before them all, beside the fallen man; and, after one quick, searching look into the pallid face, glanced up into the haggard eyes of him, who, still erect, had yet fallen, as reason told him, beyond all hope of ever standing again a trusted soldier of the flag.

A little later, as Hoyt lay, at intervals feebly moaning on the broad bed in Hanson's own room—a large chamber adjoining the library on the parlor floor, there had been brief, hurried conference in which once more it was Lorna Brenham whose nerve and will and keen, quick wit had made her the guiding spirit, for even the renowned lawyer seemed stunned and appalled at the magnitude of the catastrophe that had beset them. White, stern and self repressed, Harold Wallis had but little to say. What was there to say? He, a Union officer, had assaulted and crushed a comrade who, in the discharge of soldier duty, was striving to arrest an armed enemy of the United States in the garb and guise of its own defenders, and, under the law, nothing less than a spy. One of two things had Harold Wallis to do and do quickly: either aid in the arrest of his own brother, the traitor to his country's cause, or else aid in the escape of that brainless, reckless lad—the little Benjamin of the father's love—that honored and beloved father's last charge to him, to Harold, to his first born, to his hope and pride and strength—that beloved father whose own life had gone out gloriously in battle for the stars and stripes—whose pleading face,

whose parting words, even in that supreme moment when instant action was demanded of the son, had blinded the eyes, had deadened the ears of a proud and sensitive soldier to the cause of soldier duty, and baffled and broken and damned him, a recreant to a soldier's trust. What, indeed, was there left to say? What now could he ever do to undo this foul blot on his record?—this wretched night's work? Nothing! Ended for good and all was the career he loved. But at least he could face his father when they met beyond the grave—there was yet time to save the brother.

Little indeed did that shallow hearted boy deserve the infinite effort. Like other spoiled and petted children, seeing the fearsome plight into which his mad folly had plunged them all, it suited his humor now to play the rôle of injured innocence—to relapse into sulky, sullen, exasperating mood under the lash of Lorna Brenham's furious tongue. Fool, dolt, idiot she had called him, even as she plied sponge and towels over the prostrate head of Bernard Hoyt. How dare he take such senseless risk? What possible good did he expect to accomplish? What earthly object had he in this desperate masquerade? Risk? he answered, hotly. Had not Harold sent word that at all hazards Ned Barclay's exchange must be stopped? It couldn't be stopped! It was an accomplished fact! The exchange had been ordered before Harold's cipher letter came. But, though that exchange could not be stopped, Barclay might be, provided "men of nerve and resource"

would but try it. "I shouldn't have been my father's son," said Eugene, proudly, "if I hadn't tried." Magruder helped him. Magruder gave him command of the guard that was to take Barclay and a dozen other sick and exchanged officers, strangers to Barclay and mostly to each other, in the steamer down the James. The rest was easy. Renshaw went with them as doctor—a daring young scion of the South. Renshaw had been shown Harold's desperate letter to "Forno," now colonel of artillery commanding the defenses about Drewry's Bluff. Renshaw "prescribed" for Barclay, who was weak and ailing; put him to sleep in his, the doctor's own stateroom under a strong narcotic; stripped him of his uniform and papers and sent him ashore by night to be cared for by friends near Norfolk until this thing blew over. Then Eugene donned the uniform and all; was aided from the doctor's stateroom to the gangplank, and, stepping from one boat to another in Hampton Roads, was landed, all unknown and unsuspected, at Fort McHenry that very evening, and here he was, the hero, in his own eyes, of a stupendous sensation, and only just awakening to the consciousness of his crime.

No time to talk of that now! Action—action was what was needed. Escape was the instant thought, and what hope was there of that? Peering through the parlor blinds, Major Wallis had sighted a stout-built man in civilian garb questioning the coachman. He knew what that meant. The house was watched

so long as he and they remained. It was Lorna who solved the problem and planned the move. Miss Hanson and her aunt feebly, tremulously, but all unquestioning—aiding her. Anodyne was administered to Hoyt as he began to show faint symptoms of returning consciousness. Eugene was bundled into an adjoining room and bidden to shave at once his budding moustache—the fool of a lad would even have rebelled at that—then made to doff boots and uniform; to don certain voluminous skirts over a spare “skeleton”—a species of feminine wire entanglement the like of which he had never tried before. A loose dressing sacque completed the upper section. A flounced skirt of tulle—a discarded ball dress of Miss Hanson’s—was fastened about his waist. Then, with Lorna’s *sortie du bal*—her especial pride, a costly fabric fetched from Paris the winter before the war—shrouding Eugene from shoulder to heel, and his head done up in veiling, he was hurried forth to the carriages, Granger and Mrs. de Ruyter in speechless attendance, although it was made to appear that it was Mrs. de Ruyter who required support. Then he was driven with them to the home of the Courtnay Soutter’s, to which hospitably Southern and sympathetic household, Miss Brenham and that very docile aunt had been making their visit. Half an hour later the carriage returned and Granger assisted a slender form in that same *sortie du bal* up the steps and into the house, under the gaze of the sauntering secret service personage, but it was Miss Brenham’s maid,

own sister to Hortense, who then emerged from that comprehensive cloak, Mrs. de Ruyter and Eugene having been left on neutral and, thus far, unguarded ground.

But still much more had to be done. Hanson's own carriage was ordered in readiness forthwith. The stables opened on an alley-way, but stood directly in rear of and communicating with the house. Into that carriage Bernard Hoyt, his head in bandages, his senses in a stupor, was borne by Wallis, Granger and the footman. The coachman, an old and devoted family servant, silently received his instructions and drove away with his drowsy burden inside and a letter to a certain client of Judge Hanson's who dwelt far out on the old Liberty Road. Going through the alley to the opposite side of the square, this carriage escaped the scrutiny of the single official in front of the house. His two aids were unluckily around the corner at the adjoining street. What now remained was to provide for Eugene's return to the Confederate lines. It could not be long before "murder would out," and, Barclay being missing, search be made. With the blood on the parlor rug mopped up and signs of struggle removed, with Eugene and Hoyt both safely trundled away, Lorna feared not any visit that might be made by suspicious provost guardsmen now. But on the morrow Major Wallis was due at Washington. What then must become of Eugene?

Two carriages, as has been said, had stopped in front of the Hanson House that starlit October even-

ing; one discharging an officer in the uniform of a colonel of Union cavalry, who moved with difficulty and by the aid of a heavy cane; the other, arriving barely three minutes later, had been bidden to wait by the young gallant in the garb of a lieutenant of regulars, who fairly sprang across the stone pavement and up the marbled steps to the front door. Coachman Number One was exchanging confidences regarding their respective fares with his brother of the second hack, and commenting on the contrast between the halting movements of the one and the light and agile spring of the other, when a stout built, little civilian sauntered up under the gaslight and began to ask questions—a thing the average hackman welcomes, because it gives him opportunity to be impudent. The newcomer wished to be told where coachee had picked up his passenger, and who he was, and was getting some inconsequent reply when there came that sudden sound as of struggle within the mansion, and the parlor lights as suddenly went down.

Whatever the cause, the excitement was apparently short lived. The sounds had stopped as suddenly as they began. All three men thought they heard a stifled scream, a heavy fall; and the stout civilian had been visibly and keenly interested. He tripped away swiftly to the street corner as silence fell again, but returned almost immediately, and was still there when about 9 o'clock the front door opened, and a young man in evening dress, a young woman

hooded and mantled, came down the steps supporting an elderly lady. The old colored butler, following, asked which was Mr. Barclay's carriage, bade the driver take them to the residence of Mr. Court-nay Soutter, a few squares distant, and the three were swallowed up in the dark depths of the hack and driven away. Again did the alert little civilian skip to the corner and say something to somebody in waiting in the dim light of the side street, and return to his station. In less than half an hour the carriage returned; so did the young gentleman in evening dress, and very carefully he aided to alight a slender young woman in that same long, luxurious *sortie du bal*. The hood, however, did not seem to match the delicate and dainty cloak, yet was effective in obscuring the features of the wearer. Leaning on the arm of Mr. Granger, who seemed more than usually pallid and nervous, she ascended the steps and they were admitted without the formality of knocking or ringing. Evidently they were expected.

Ten o'clock was striking when next the front door opened, carriage Number One being still there awaiting its fare, and this time the light of the vestibule lamp shone brilliantly on the radiant features of Miss Lorna Brenham, as she came forth into the night, saying laughing farewells to invisible friends within the hospitable hallway. Then, taking Mr. Granger's arm, she lightly descended the marble steps; glanced joyously about her as though revelling in the beauty of the still autumn evening, the spangled skies, and

the consciousness of her own charm and power. The stout civilian was not so far away that her keen eyes failed to mark him, and yet her voice had a glad, triumphant ring as she gave her queenly order. "Home again, driver. Then, Mr. Granger, where shall he take you?"

The butler, white-haired and ceremonious, had followed, and now bowed low as they drove away. Then turning to the other coachman, he said, "You need not wait longer. The colonel sends this," and tendered a bill, at sight of which that wide-awake horseman whipped up his team and drove instantly away lest the mistake be discovered, and he be required to refund, or furnish change. And so it happened that when the half hour came only a stout and semi-mystified civilian, impatiently scouting in front of the mansion, remained to greet a little squad of officers that arrived almost on a run. Only a very sleepy servitor answered their loud knock and ring. Only a very dignified and decidedly supercilious major of infantry came forward into the vestibule to see what was wanted. "Judge Hanson," he loftily explained, "is too lame to leave his sofa. Miss Hanson has retired, and Mr.—or—ah—rather Colonel Hoyt—why—ah—the colonel should be well on his way to Washington by this time, at least—ah—such was his intention when he left—ah—at ten o'clock. Lieutenant Barclay? Oh, ah, the gentleman who came in search of Colonel Hoyt. Ah, yes, they probably will next be heard of in Washington."

CHAPTER XXII.

A RUINED CAREER.

EXCITEMENT to an unusual degree was manifested about the old War Department building the morning that followed this eventful night in Baltimore. Strange and stirring news had come from up the Potomac, from the neighborhood of that delightful nook in the mountains where the hamlet of Knoxville nestled at the edge of the beautiful river, with the Loudon Heights but a short distance away on the Virginia shore, and those of Maryland shielding the valley from the winds that in winter swept down from the Alleghenies of Western Pennsylvania, and bound in icy fetters the swift-running stream that swirls and eddies among the rocks at Harper's Ferry.

A charming resort for rest and recuperation was the Catoctin Valley in early October, and there had McClellan lingered while Lee and his battered battalions leisurely took the route up the Shenandoah. Then, week followed week after the bloody work of Antietam, and the only thing doing in the Army of the Potomac seemed to be refitting. The order of the day was draw clothing, shoes, and—poker. Much as the army, and incidentally the administration, might wish for another clinch with Lee, they couldn't

stir McClellan until he was ready, and then it was, as before, that the Virginian took the initiative, and the news that stirred the War Department to its very foundation this fine October morning, wired or wig-wagged from various points in view of the Maryland Heights, sent officers, orderlies and clerks scurrying up and down-stairs and all over town, was of such a character as to completely overshadow in importance two despatches that came buzzing in from Baltimore toward eleven o'clock. A very excitable staff official—by no means one of the placid Townsend type, but rather of the vehement, energetic, high-pressure personages usually dear to the secretarial heart—went running, wide-eyed and open-mouthed into the secretarial office, and ventured to burst in all unannounced upon a conference of the powers, and to interrupt the lion in the midst of a terrific tirade at the expense of certain generals up the river who had permitted something or other to be done under their very noses. “Order them to pursue at once!” was Stanton saying. Order Pleasanton here and Porter there and Buford elsewhere. Order guns to Frederick; cavalry to Point of Rocks; brigades up the Monocacy, up the Catoctin—up to the Gaps;—cover every ferry, block every ford; stop every hole; surround, circumvent, capture, gobble, annihilate, but *get* them whatever else you do! *get* them! Not a horse or man of that crowd must ever get back to Virginia! Mark the Secretary’s words, now, not one! “What the devil do you want, sir? Despatches from

Baltimore? Damn Baltimore! They can't be anywhere near Baltimore. I wish to God they were! Then we might nab them instanter! No, sir! This is no time for side shows. What I want is Stuart—dead or alive.”

Then away went the Secretary to the White House, for this was a cabinet day and the very devil was to pay along the Potomac. And thus it happened that, up to a later hour in the afternoon, there was no one in actual authority in the War Department to give definite orders on a matter the commanding officer at Baltimore conceived, in the light of his instructions, to be of no little importance, for at noon he wired to know whether his previous telegram had been received, and that previous message read substantially as follows:

“Adjutant General,

“Washington.

“Major H. Wallis failed to report this morning, nor did he take train for Washington. Has not been seen since last night. What instructions?”

Another wire from the same source, received almost at the same time read:

“Adjutant General,

“Washington.

“Lieutenant E. C. Barclay, —th Infantry, arrived with exchanged prisoners Fort McHenry 6 P. M. yesterday. Disappeared before seven. Traced to residence Beverly Hanson. Major Wallis there at time, also Colonel B. Hoyt. Inmates declare Hoyt and Barclay

left for Washington 10 P. M. Not seen at depot or on trains. Cannot be found here. Captain Webb exchanged, says Barclay seriously ill when leaving Richmond. Looked like different man on reaching Baltimore."

No wonder the acting assistant adjutant general in charge of telegrams was in something of a flutter. With more experience he would have gone to his immediate chief instead of direct to Stanton. But he was young and callow and over-enthusiastic, and, only when too late to undo the error, went he to the over-worked Adjutant General himself, busy at the moment dictating wires by the dozen, to commanders all over middle and western Maryland. By the time his attention could be secured it was high noon, and a third despatch had come.

"Adjutant General,

 "Washington.

 "Ascertain that Major Wallis left Hanson residence about midnight. Report of strange disturbance there 8 P. M. Am sending you staff officer with particulars first train."

It was after two o'clock when that officer, accompanied by a stout-built civilian, reached the war office and the presence of the chief, and what they had to tell was of such a character that messengers were despatched at once to Willard's and elsewhere to see if Colonel Hoyt had reached the city, while in person the Adjutant General waited with his news upon the Secretary of War, and for the tenth time that day, probably, Stanton arose, as the papers were fond of saying, "like a lion in his wrath," and began to make the fur

fly. To clinch the case against Major Wallis he had especially needed the evidence of Lieutenant Barclay, and now Barclay was missing. To bring matters to a head where Wallis was concerned, he needed, of course, to bring Wallis again before the court, and now Wallis was missing. To make Colonel Hoyt fully conscious of the depth of his, the Secretary's disgust at his utter failure as a witness for the prosecution, Stanton had had in mind a project for Hoyt's grave discomfiture so soon as Hoyt should report for duty, and now, by the Eternal, Hoyt, too, was missing! All three missing! All three mysteriously assembled at the residence of the arch counsel and conspirator Hanson, and all three now as mysteriously disappeared! What could it mean but that Hoyt had gone over, soul and body, bag and baggage to the cause of the accused, if not, indeed, to the cause of the enemy? What could it mean but that there had been some deep-laid plot to lure the government's witness, Barclay, to the residence of the counsel for the accused, and there either to convert, corrupt or make way with him? The story of the excitement, the sounds of struggle, the fall, the crash, the mysterious goings and comings about the Hanson house stirred him to the spinal marrow. More messages had flashed to and fro, and at four o'clock that afternoon the order went forth to all secret service officials, to the provost marshals of the great cities near the front, and to police agencies everywhere, to search for three Union officers believed to be deserted

to the enemy, to wit: Colonel Bernard Hoyt, Major Harold Wallis and Lieutenant E. C. Barclay, and to apprehend or arrest them wheresoever found. Also there went another mandate calling for prompt and summary measures to bring to justice one Beverly Hanson, a citizen of Baltimore, sympathizing with the cause of the States in rebellion, and if need be to search his homestead for the persons of the derelict officers and, incidentally, for any incriminating evidence that might there be found.

The odd part of this was that Hanson knew it almost as soon as did the provost marshal of Baltimore, and was far less flurried at the prospect. The officers of the law who called upon him that evening, as he was being aided to his seat at the dinner table—his daughter and two or three old and respected residents of Baltimore being the others present—were received with marked civility and courtesy, and bidden to make the search as they saw fit, and themselves perfectly at home. Marvelous, indeed, was the contrast between the demeanor of this distinguished civilian and counselor and that of the military victim of the same vehement order, who fell forthwith into the clutches of the martial law. Bernard Hoyt when told he was under arrest turned to and fought like a tiger.

Marked as had been the excitement about the War Department all that day, it was but the shadow of the sensation that thrilled all Baltimore. The failure of Lee's northward march to "fire the Maryland heart"

and rouse the State to concerted action, had caused woeful disappointment to the faithful. Then the bloody, bootless fight at Sharpsburg had proved fearful in its array of killed and desperately wounded, for hundreds of prominent Southern families living both North and South, were plunged in grief and many and many a homestead was decked in mourning. But, little by little, hope and courage came again as McClellan halted at the Potomac, balking when all the Northland would have said pursue. Lee, finding himself unfollowed, strung his bivouacs along the Shenandoah and his pickets beside the Potomac shore. The stars and bars still waved in sight of Northern soil. The blue St. Andrew's cross still quivered in its field of red, stirred by the Northern breeze, and, though in heavy divisions the Union army camped along the dividing river, gay gallants of Maryland and Virginia were galloping about the old familiar lanes by night and whispering tales of hope to many a sympathetic ear—tales that were repeated far and wide and came with the swiftness of the wind to Baltimore. Cities must not starve at such times. Farmers by hundreds must enter, driving in with flocks and herds, with food, forage and news, and at the very moment when sore and anxious hearts were brooding over the peril which involved two brothers, the question that kept two households in sleepless vigils and conference all the livelong night was settled thrillingly, unexpectedly with the coming of the dawn—and tidings from the Blue Ridge.

Eugene had been safely spirited away to the Soutters, where, about midnight, Harold Wallis joined him. The problem now was to get him back across the Potomac at once and before the beginning of the hue and cry sure to be raised as soon as "Barclay" was missed, and it was discovered that Major Wallis had failed to return to Washington. Looking ten years older, his face white and lined and drawn, Harold was writing letters in the library. Well they realized, all but the dullard who had thus involved them, that the end of Harold's soldier days had come, that never again would he be permitted to draw sword for the old flag. Stanch rebel that she was, Lorna Brenham almost sobbed aloud at sight of the dumb agony in his eyes, but he led her aside and spoke low and hurriedly, Eugene being the one thought, Eugene, that wretched little Benjamin of their father's heart; *he* must not be taken; *he* must not die the death of a spy—throttled like coward assassin by the noose. Back to the shelter of the stars and bars they must spirit him within another night and day or the gates would be closed forever. Already he was out of soldier and into civil garb—the Soutters had seen to that. Oh, if they could but get him out of Maryland! Over on the eastern shore were kinsfolk who could give him refuge for awhile, but how to send him thither was the question. Every boat across the bay was searched. Pickets watched the Susquehanna about Havre de Grace. The old route to Virginia down by Port Tobacco and across to Mathias Point might, of

course, be tried, but, above all others, it would be patrolled as never before within another day. "He hasn't sense to go alone," said Harold, sadly. "I, or some one, must be with him."

"But you, major, how can you go?" was the question asked by the elder Soutter, even then writing importunate summons to one of the keenest of the Confederate colony at hand.

"How can I stay?" was the solemn answer. "There is nothing left for me—now."

It had been arranged that, when the Hansons' carriage returned after depositing its unconscious freight at that country house on the westward pike, the footman should be sent over with the latest news of the venture; but four o'clock in the morning had come and still, behind darkened windows, they sat and planned and waited and wondered and no word reached them. In answer to notes sent out to certain of the colony it was promised that by daybreak there would be one or two others to join the conference, but the gray of dawn was draping the eastern sky, and a pallid light creeping up the deserted avenue, and not a soul from without had come to aid. Harold Wallis, pale and silent, was pacing slowly up and down the hall, his head bowed in deep, painful thought. Eugene, apparently the least concerned in the entire establishment, had fallen asleep over the papers and his fifth cigar—on a sofa in the library. There was excuse, perhaps, for his fatigue—Miss Brenham and Granger had been plying him for hours with questions about friends in

the unattainable South. Mrs. de Ruyter, too, had sought her pillow, as had also a certain few of the household, but down on the parlor floor Lorna Brenham flitted from window to window of the darkened rooms, and Granger followed like a shadow. Peering through the blinds, she could see that other shadows, one at least, hovered ever within view, keeping watch for Wallis's reappearance, noting all that took place about the premises, and just as the bells of a neighboring steeple were clanging out the hour of six, there came a ringing at the area bell, and Lorna, ordering all others to remain where they were, ran down to the kitchen; found at the back door a servant from a certain family close at hand, note bearing. Two minutes later she came tearing up the stairs, joy flashing in her eyes, delight and triumph ringing in her words:—

“O, Glory! glory! glory!” she cried. “Jeb Stuart is north of the Potomac with his whole brigade and striking for Baltimore. *Now* have Eugene ready!”

And this was hours before the War Department began to hear what had been going on at Hansons'.

Early that afternoon, afar out beyond the Relay House, where, in those days the tracks of the Baltimore & Ohio parted company—the westward bearing away for the Monocacy Valley and for Point of Rocks, the other southward for Washington—a stout farm buggy behind two mettlesome bays was spinning over the pike, “tooled” by a tall man enveloped in a linen duster, close buttoned about the throat. He wore an old felt hat, pulled well down over his spectacled eyes, a

farmer's full beard and heavy gloves of buckskin. Beside him sat a womanly form in sun bonnet and shawl. A linen lap robe was tucked in about the seat. The buggy top was hoisted, although the day was fair. Jugs, baskets and boxes, all apparently well filled and indicative of a day's purchasing in town, were stowed about the "rig," and the guard at the toll gate had but carelessly examined the pass of the provost marshal in favor of Mr. John Borie, of Westminster, who had business at Ellicott's Mills and points in Howard and Carroll counties. The mills were passed. The last of the chain of outposts of the Baltimore garrison was now left behind; and, at the first northward bearing road, the buggy turned from the pike and sped away in the new direction. There was apparent need of haste, for foam was flying from the bits and flecking the glossy flanks of the team when next they were noted, toward 6 P. M., by two officers riding in on the Liberty Road. One of these latter held up a hand in signal to the driver to stop, and with much apparent effort the mandate was obeyed, but not until the horsemen had been passed, so that these latter had to whirl about and follow, and were miffed at having to do so. "You seem in a devil of a hurry, friend," said the senior of the two. "I signalled when you were half a dozen rods away. Are you just out from town?"

"Just out," was the short answer.

"See anything of an officer on horseback, head done up in bandages, riding like he'd been sick?" was the next question, in the vernacular of the camp.

"No!" But between slouch hat and sun bonnet sudden glance was exchanged.

"You're acquainted hereabouts, I suppose," said the officer. "We stopped to water at the Courtney place back yonder, and they're in a funk about this officer. He was brought there during the night, thrown from his horse, head cut open and leg hurt; seemed half crazy to-day and broke out an hour ago; nabbed a horse without sign of a saddle and galloped off, Indian fashion, with the halter shank through the horse's mouth. Why—he must have passed you unless—Hullo, here comes a patrol!"

The tall Mr. Borie leaned forward and looked back around the edge of the buggy top. Behind them, Baltimore way, a cloud of dust was sailing over the pike, a squad of blue jackets coming swiftly on at a trot. The mettlesome team began to prance.

"Hullo, too!" cried the younger officer. "Here comes your crazy man!"

Both officers, both occupants of the buggy, at the instant turned and stared into a little lane entering the pike from the northward side. Some farm buildings a hundred yards distant accounted for the lane, but not for the stranger in Union uniform, with bandaged head, who came urging a reluctant horse to shambling gallop.

"That's all you need of us, I presume," said the man in the duster, gathering whip and reins and starting his team. But already the patrol was within hailing distance and somebody shouting. "Hold on!" "Halt!" cried the officer. "These fellows want you!" Then

quickly he spurred his agile mount in front of the bays, for the whip was uplifted. Almost at the same instant the lieutenant, commanding the little troop of horse, and the strange rider issuing from the lane, reached the side of the buggy, and without an instant's hesitation, the subaltern began—excitement evident in every tone and glance:

“Colonel Hoyt, I am sure. We are looking for you, sir. One moment, please! Sergeant,” he called, and up rode a sinewy trooper, with a brace of comrades at his heels. Just a backward nod of the head was the officer's sign, and, without a word, the trio ranged themselves about the crippled colonel. Then their young commander turned on the occupants of the buggy. “Which way, sir?—and where are you from?”

For answer the man in the duster began fumbling at his vest pocket. The heavy glove was too big for the slit and caused delay.

“Where did you come onto the pike?” continued he of the patrol, impatiently. “They told us at the outpost that no team had gone out! Yes—your pass—if you've got one.”

Impatient in turn now, the tall man tore off the left hand glove, and then that hand whipped out a flat, farmer wallet, extracted a paper and held it forth without a word. The lieutenant took it and examined hurriedly.

“John Borie, Westminster. Oh, yes, I see. You're just up from Ellicott's, are you? Well, pardon my

overhauling you. Orders are orders. You're all right! Go ahead!"

Then as the buggy moved on without ever waiting for the paper to be replaced in the wallet, for the muffled up driver had thrust it between his teeth, the young officer turned on the bandaged colonel, who, swaying in his seat and staring at the swiftly departing vehicle, seemed deaf to the subaltern's words:

"Colonel Hoyt, I am ordered to conduct you to——"

But he got no further. With feverish excitement in his one visible eye, with quivering lips and trembling hands, Bernard Hoyt had sat one moment as though only half conscious, half awake. Then, as the buggy bowled round a projecting shoulder of hill side, clapped suddenly his heels to his aged charger's ribs, and with wild eagerness in his tone, shouted: "Didn't you see that hand?—that class ring? Come on, quick!" and, before they could fathom his motive, darted away in pursuit.

Only a few rods—only a short hundred yards or so around the bend; then, shouting, protesting, frantically resisting, Bernard Hoyt was overtaken and almost torn from his affrighted horse, and borne raging to the roadside, while into the darkness of the gathering night the Maryland team drove swiftly away, bearing Harold Wallis—and his ruined fortunes—and his brother with him.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A GENTLEMAN AT LAST.

A SOLDIER of the Union lay critically ill in hospital at Baltimore. Mental wear and tear, excitement, exposure, the reopening of a bad gunshot wound and vain struggling against fate, foes and, possibly, friends had been too much for Bernard Hoyt. The cavalry escort that brought him safely in that October evening, expectant of praise for duty well done, found no one in mood for anything but expletives. A perfect whirlwind of action was on at headquarters. Nobody had time to listen to anybody with so small a matter as a delirious colonel to tell about. Stuart—Jeb Stuart—was all the cry. Stuart, with a brigade, a division, a whole corps of cavalry at his back, was coming full tilt for Federal Hill, said rumor. Stuart had looted Chambersburg; tricked Pleasanton; turned the army of McClellan; rounded the Blue Ridge, and, dodging or driving every command that dare oppose him, gathering fresh horses, supplies, provisions, prominent citizens and powerful headway with every hour, was now bearing down on Baltimore to sack the city, release all rebel prisoners and round up federal officials far and wide. Hoyt's bewildered captors, without opportunity to report or

tell their tale, were bidden to ride to the right about, to go at the gallop and join other cavalry, hardly less bewildered, to help to head off Stuart somewhere out toward the Monocacy; and, while Southern sympathizers by the thousand spent the night in delirious hope and rejoicing, and Union men and women watched with grave anxiety, and soldiers of all grades kept vigilant guard, there was none to think for the fevered patient at the provost marshal's office until, toward morning, somebody with a head on his shoulders and a heart in his breast, gave ear to his hitherto disregarded ravings, and had him borne off to a hospital and to bed.

Not until it was known by noon the following day that, so far from coming east, Jeb Stuart was heading for the Potomac, did officials at Baltimore begin to breathe easily. Not until nightfall that day was there inquiry from Washington as to what had been done toward capturing the three culprits supposed to be deserting to the enemy. Not until near midnight was the War Department informed in reply that Colonel Hoyt was safely lodged in hospital, incapable of escape, and that, if credence could be placed in his semi-delirious statements, the brothers Wallis had been reunited in Baltimore—that the missing Barclay was no other than Eugene Wallis, and that in disguise the pair had successfully passed the guards and taken the road to Frederick. Cavalry had been sent in pursuit, and orders telegraphed to arrest them wherever found.

But, "when found," the finders made no move to arrest them. It was all the finders could do to get out

of the way of the plumed gallants of Stuart, who were riding jubilantly southward toward Edward's Ferry, after nabbing a local train on the Baltimore & Ohio, among whose passengers were a Mr. Borie, of Westminster and Mr. Borie's younger brother. The shawl and sun bonnet had been left with the blown team and dust-covered buggy at Sykesville, where no Federal bayonets opposed the boarding of the belated local. Stuart spurred confidently onward through the night, and then, when a big force of blue coats was thrown across his presumable path to block his passage on the following day, and "get him," as Stanton would have it "dead or alive," the gray skirmishers swept forward in far-spreading line, as though feeling the way to attack the solid ranks of waiting infantry, and behind this dusty veil the gay cavalier turned short to the west; swooped down on the canal and the river itself above the sharp elbow near Ball's Bluff, the scene of our sad humiliation barely a year before, and, covered by Pelham's saucy guns, skillfully forded his whole force back to the sacred soil, bearing with him, looking for the last time on loyal ground, Harold Wallis, with his brother and his broken fortunes, faithful to a father's last appeal, yet false to the flag for which the father died.

What the Army of the Potomac thought and said of this daring exploit of Stuart's, and of the failure to profit by so apparently reckless a flaunt in their face, boots nothing now. What Stanton did was fume, and what he said was fury. That with less than two thousand horsemen the Southern leader should presume to

ride again into Maryland; pass between the picket posts to the right of McClellan's host; push away up into Pennsylvania, having circled the main army; and then trot back through the thick of the divisions east of the Monocacy, was something sublimely impudent in itself; but, that he should dare to whisk away with him "as hostages" staid and substantial citizens, and burden his swift-moving column with all manner of booty, ravished from the lap of Maryland and Southern Pennsylvania, was a thing so amazing, so exasperating that there is little wonder the Iron Secretary wanted to know if nothing but wooden heads and wooden horses could be found in our cavalry. Then he turned to discipline the leaders at fault, and to investigate various circumstances connected with the raid. Among the foremost to receive his vehement attention was the escape of the brothers Wallis, and the presumable complicity of Bernard Hoyt, now not only delirious in hospital but doubly in arrest.

"But soon he reined his fury's pace."

There came legislators from his own and other neighboring States, and reports from the surgeons in attendance, and finally letters through the lines that indeed gave him pause. The story of the remarkable exploit of the younger Wallis; the reunion of the brothers in Baltimore; the meeting with Hoyt and attempted seizure at Judge Hanson's; the speedy and sudden flight of the brothers in disguise and their rescue on the verge

of recapture; the arrest of Colonel Hoyt at the moment he was striving to overhaul the fugitives, and now his pitiable plight,—all this was for three or four days overshadowed by the details of Stuart's startling feat. Then, little by little, it began to take hold in the columns of the press and then to spread like wildfire.

It boded ill for many a Southern sympathizer in Baltimore when it became known that at Judge Hanson's residence Colonel Hoyt had met with serious injury; that from Judge Hanson's residence, in Judge Hanson's carriage, he had been sent by night to the Courtney farm far out on the old Liberty Road, and there held until the following evening when he made his escape. The order placing the Hanson homestead under surveillance and sending the lately honored and revered owner to Fort Lafayette was suspended, so far as the judge was personally concerned, because of symptoms of physical breakdown. Strong Union men, old friends and neighbors, went to Washington and pleaded forcibly for him, telling Stanton what Stanton did not know before, how ignorant Hanson had been of the coming of Colonel Hoyt, much less of the coming of Eugene Wallis, and further they could say, and say truthfully, that Hanson was appalled and prostrated by such accumulation of calamities, and that, more than any man living, probably, he deplored the injuries and illness that had befallen the gallant soldier who had suffered within his gates. In strenuous language, too, these gentlemen proclaimed Hoyt's utter innocence of the disloyalty with which the irate Secretary had charged him, and the

grievous wrong done to him, if not to Hanson, by the order of arrest.

And so, before consciousness returned to the prostrate colonel, that arrest was revoked, the order for the removal of Judge Hanson to Lafayette suspended, and the guard about the latter's premises measurably reduced. There were enough of them there, however, to restrain and to question when late one sunshiny October afternoon a carriage was driven to the curb, and a young lady, with fair patrician features, very pale, was assisted to alight by a tall young soldier in the dress of a subaltern of cavalry. The latter showed a slip of paper to the official on duty, and they were passed on into the house, and the presence of the incarcerated master.

He was lying on the couch in the parlor—the same Colonial sofa whose sharp corner had so nearly split the skull of our cavalry colonel, and with him, reading aloud from certain letters, sat his devoted daughter. With her, pallid, sorrowing and actually subdued in manner if not in spirit, was our Georgia beauty, Lorna Brenham. All three started at the old butler's announcement:

“Miss Rutherford, suh, and Mr. Gerald Rutherford.”

Mr. Hanson strove to rise, his old-fashioned cavalier courtesy demanding this homage to women of every age. Miss Hanson started to her feet, the color coming and going in her delicate face. Lorna Brenham sat one moment speechless, then slowly turned

toward the curtained archway, and, as Miss Rutherford entered, arose and faced her, pallid, silent, with a world of question and uncertainty in her deep and glorious eyes. Daring, commanding as she had been in the moment of peril when instant action was needed, she stood now, conscious of the havoc that had been wrought through her leadership, if not actually at her demand. One soldier ruined; another assaulted, accused and well-nigh crushed by his successive wrongs; an old and honored citizen brought to humiliation if not to the cells; and now, with Bernard Hoyt lying at the door of death, here stood the girl he loved and sought to wed, with accusation and with challenge in her unflinching gaze. Ethel had not known of Lorna's presence, yet was not unprepared. She wished to see her. She had that to say which was better spoken and done with than left to sear and smoulder until, like flame, it crusted the surface of her heart against all appeal of contrition, against all hope of pardon.

It was Miss Hanson's duty first to greet, and, as best she could, to welcome these unbidden guests; but, just within the threshold, Ethel had stopped short and stood looking straight at Lorna Brenham. It was the visitor who was first to speak:

"I came to seek Judge Hanson——" and for just a moment her eyes turned to the sofa. "Please do not try to rise, sir. It is but a message—a commission—from my mother who is too feeble to come herself." Then again she faced the Southern girl, and the eyes that were so softly blue a year ago, blazed with no

uncertain fire in that shadowy room. "Lorna Brenham, do you know that Colonel Hoyt is dying? Do you realize that it—is your doing?"

From Miss Hanson's lips there came a gasp of dread and dismay. From the sofa Mr. Hanson's voice was uplifted, with his trembling white hand, half in protest, half in distress, but only a word or two was said. Ethel was listening to none of these. She had eyes,—ears—only for Lorna Brenham, and presently, with slow, stately movement Lorna advanced. Grief and trial had given added dignity to her queenly bearing. There was no shrinking, no evasion. She would have faced, as her kinsmen were facing, the shining steel without a tremor, but the woman in her saw another woman's suffering, and it was that that sent the sob into her answering words.

"It is my doing, Ethel, if what you say is true, yet I pray he may live. He would have hung Eugene Wallis for a spy, and it was to save Eugene we—I—sought to hold Colonel Hoyt, not to harm him. What happened was all unpremeditated, but—I take the blame. Were it all to come to me again as I saw it then, unseeing what would follow, I should *do* it all again. Tell me, if it were not to arrest Eugene Wallis why did Bernard Hoyt come here?"

"To redeem his promise to my mother,—to ask pardon of Harold Wallis in the presence of his counsel and best friend for the wrong that he had done him. Colonel Hoyt believed—and had been allowed to believe—that Major Wallis stole—yes, *stole*—certain

letters from mother's desk—this and—other things—and only recently at Long Branch did he learn how deeply we were indebted to Major Wallis. He never dreamed Eugene was in Baltimore; but, having found him here, what else could he do?"

"He has told you this?" demanded Lorna, her dark eyes glittering, her slender fingers clutching at the back of the nearest chair. "He has *told* you he came here to make amende to Major Wallis?"

"This and more. He was conscious when we reached him yesterday, but they will not let me see him now," and here the soft lips quivered uncontrollably, but, proudly as Lorna's her head was raised, and she turned to the Judge, now half supported by his daughter's circling arm. "It was to you, sir, on mother's account I came—may I present my brother, Lieutenant Rutherford? Major Wallis wrote that he had left certain papers with you. She is very ill, I fear. She is certainly very feeble, too feeble to leave her room at the hotel, but if these are what she hopes to see, it may mean new life to her."

Hanson had been vainly seeking, without interrupting, to induce her to sit. Gerald, seeing his disquiet, came forward with a chair, but Ethel motioned him away, and Hanson resignedly bowed his head. Evidently she preferred to stand.

"Poor Wallis had time to write only three or four letters," was the grave answer, "and none to talk further to me. I would give you everything he left with me gladly, dear young lady, but all my papers, you

know, are seized now. It is to the Secretary of War your mother must appeal."

"Then mother cannot see then—now—at once?" she cried. "I cannot tell how much it means to her. Indeed I do not know how much it *may* mean. There is something behind all this trouble I have never fathomed,—something Major Wallis knew and was striving to straighten for her,—something concerning my brother who—died in Georgia. Lorna Brenham"—and again she whirled suddenly on the friend of bygone days, now so sadly alienated—"you are a Georgian. You knew Hugh Preston. You must have heard stories of all that led up to that cruel insult and to the meeting that followed. You knew Major Forno, too, and what brought him to New York after his state had seceded. What had he to do with my brother? What *was* he to Hugh Preston? What had my brother done to make—gentlemen—his enemies?"

There was silence for a moment, then came the simple answer. "I cannot tell you, Ethel."

"But you know?"

"Concerning Ralph I *know* almost nothing. They would never speak of it at home. Major Forno would never speak of it to me. The only man who professed to know and showed a disposition to tell was Eugene—and Harold Wallis nearly shook the life out of him when he heard of it. Ethel, you mourn your brother. You would have done everything to keep his name unsullied—to save him from disgrace or harm. Can you not feel for Harold Wallis to whom Eugene had been

left almost as a sacred charge? Think what ruin that reckless boy has brought to all who knew him!"

With new distress in her face, Ethel Rutherford half turned as though appealing to her brother, and Gerald then came slowly forward.

"My brother has but just arrived from Harper's Ferry," she faltered. "Tell them, Gerald—I cannot."

And in the gathering dusk the young soldier spoke, solemnly—sadly.

"Harold Wallis sacrificed everything for—nothing," said he. "Eugene was killed in front of my regiment yesterday morning. At least he—*died*—like a gentleman."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WEB UNTANGLED.

NEWPORT, Saratoga, the Catskills, Long Branch and Cape May—the resorts of society in the early sixties—were all deserted now. Fifth Avenue once more showed its colors and was gay with feminine garb and alive with bunting. Houses that had been shut all summer—following the fashion, even though their occupants slept behind the sombre fronts and saw the light of day through dusty blinds—had again flung their curtains to the breeze and made brave show of “just reopening for the season.” The church of the elect threw wide its gothic doors, and the massive form of the omnipotent Brown once more led, or blocked, the way to the aisles of grace. The old familiar faces, the reverently bowed heads of the first families had reappeared in many of the old pews. The gray haired rector resumed the old-time soporifics—the quartette choir the stirring music that had so scandalized the “ower gude” of other congregations, and semi-occasionally rejoiced its own. There was as little of the odor of sanctity as of eau de Cologne about the flock of Grace. They used their piety as they did their perfume, in homeopathic doses. But lambs of the fold, the feminine at least, were out in force and taking

note of all absentees this brisk and beautiful Sunday morning of mid autumn. And of all the pews that bordered that carpeted *via Crucis*—the center aisle—one, and only one was empty. Though stranger guests were many and sanctuaries few, and church going as firmly fixed a habit then as church evasion now, no alien foot indented the soft hassocks of the Rutherford family pew, for the sexton had set his seal against intrusion and a knot of crape upon the bolted door.

Perilous as had been the illness of Colonel Hoyt, it yielded to youth and vigorous constitution rather than to medical treatment, for the methods of that day and generation are scored as barbarous now. Slight as seemed at first the malady of the aging and grieving mother, it gained in omen as she lost in hope and strength. And Ethel, who, with Gerald, had spent hours a day for an entire week at the side of the fevered soldier, was speedily called to give all time to her whose days were evidently numbered. As Bernard Hoyt began to mend and to recognize those about him, the fragile woman began to break, to wander in mind, to see in Gerald the son she had earlier lost and to say things at sound of which Hortense sought vainly to drive Ethel from the sick room. Hoyt, days before, had been given a bright airy hospital tent to himself and his attendants. Mrs. Rutherford had been removed from the hotel to Beverly Hanson's; he would listen to nothing less; and there, within the fortnight of her coming to Baltimore, partly in search of the missing link in the evidence she craved, partly in hopes

of seeing and speaking again with Hoyt, the spirit of the suffering woman flitted away perhaps in hopeful quest of that spirit which had gone before, and brother and sister stood orphaned at the bedside, looking into each other's eyes through swimming tears, dismayed at the story revealed to them with almost the last flutter of the mother's feeble breath.

Then, when there was sent a summons—a stern and imperative summons—for Hortense, the Frenchwoman had vanished. Then, when again Ethel Rutherford longed to hear the voice of her knight and hero, he, too, had gone. The army had swept onward at last in pursuit of Lee, and, though weak and worn, Bernard Hoyt seemed crazed with eagerness to be again in saddle with his men, and the doctors let him go. Ethel never knew until long days later of his coming to the house during the last hours of the mother's life, or, for long weeks, that Hortense had stopped his card, and sent by the butler the message that, owing to Mrs. Rutherford's condition, both sister and brother begged to be excused. Had they denied themselves to all the rest of the world, they would have seen him! Sorrowing, but uncomplaining, he went on to Washington and thence to Warrenton in time to share in the heart-break that seemed to seize the army when McClellan was relieved. That was mid November, and by that time all that was mortal of Cornelia Rutherford lay beneath a fresh-heaped mound in Greenwood. It was December before Gerald could rejoin the regiment, and then all was fierce activity at the front. Under its

new, untried, but loyal commander the army was just beginning the desperate assault upon the old, oft-tried foe, now lining the walled heights of Fredericksburg. Never again until after months of sharp campaigning and finally furious battle, was Bernard Hoyt permitted to see the face of the girl he loved. Then it was in late July. Gettysburg had brought him new laurels and a star that even Stanton swore was nobly won. Now he was to command a brigade, but first there was "urgent private business" to be attended to, and only seven days' leave could be accorded.

Late in May there had come to him, as they were watching the fords of the Rapidan, a sealed packet under cover of a foreign legation in Washington. It bore the marks of travel. It was read with vivid, almost painful, interest, and pondered over long before he summoned his former adjutant, now a zealous young squadron leader, and gave it into his keeping. "It would have lifted a load from your poor mother's heart," he said. "It must be carefully guarded now." Gerald, having read and re-read it, sent it by trusty hand to his mother's closest friend and counselor, Dr. Tracy, one of the executors of the mother's will. Later and about the time they got the news of Gettysburg, it had been shown to Ethel, then sojourning with the doctor's household at Long Branch. The long letter therein read as follows:

"PARIS, *March 31st*, 1863.

"MY DEAR SIR: Months have elapsed since the receipt of your letter dated Warrenton, November 20th,

1862—as noble a letter as was ever penned. I strove to tell you at the time how deeply it touched me, but, like all my efforts, that, too, was probably vain. I did tell you, however, that there seemed at least a likelihood of my unearthing the whole truth concerning Ralph Rutherford's sad fate. I had hoped through other means to do this long ago. I had promised that sorrowing woman, his mother, as much; and there was a time when I hoped that there might come as my reward that which would have a thousand times repaid me for what I had lost personally and professionally before my arrest and trial in August last. Only a soldier like yourself can know what it is to be deemed dishonored and disloyal and yet be unable to explain. All those old hopes, with all the old ambitions and aspirations, are now dead, and all too late to be a blessing to her or benefit to me, the truth is brought to light. You found wherein you had wronged me, and nobly sought to make amende. I found wherein, unknowing, I had wronged you, and to you, therefore, I give these facts in their entirety. They could never have won for me what was already another's. But, knowing you as I now know you, a knightly and chivalrous foe, I place them in your hands that, when my 'treason' is the subject of talk, there may be one friend to say how loyally I labored—even in my disloyalty.

“The winter before we went to Utah I was Hugh Preston's guest in New Orleans. He was a dashing fellow, as you have heard, well born, well connected, well educated, but poor, and, when forty years of age, he fell madly in love with a young girl just out of her school days at the Ursulines. Prior to that time, as the devil would have it, Hugh had been devoting himself to—her mother. Fancy how that fair lady

liked it when she saw her supposed devotee actually smitten with her lovely, unsophisticated child. It afforded me keen amusement at the time, but, God knows, it was short enough. The girl was an angel; the mother a devil, in my opinion; and, when I was ordered off to overtake the expedition, I so far departed from my rule as to venture to warn a man against a woman.

“The next thing I heard of that affair was long afterward. You remember how we were snowed in on the Bridger trail and how new the world seemed when we got out in the spring. Hugh Preston had left New Orleans, a sadder, wiser man. The girl had fallen in love with a wealthy young New Yorker who had become devoted to her even before I left—Ralph Rutherford, in fact. A few months later came the tidings that Hugh Preston had wantonly insulted that young Northerner in the Oglethorpe Club at Savannah and shot him dead in the duel that followed.

“Now, Hugh Preston was not the man to wantonly insult anybody, North or South; and, sure as his shooting, I saw there was some woman back of it all. The more sure was I because Preston would give, and the Club could find, no extenuation for his conduct, and shouldered him out of Savannah. Women cause more shooting than ever did politics, even in 1860. Preston went abroad, took a flyer with the *Chasseurs à Cheval* in Algeria, and I found his trail and brought him back in the spring of '61, for by that time I had seen the Rutherford family and had heard the New York version of the matter. As Albert Forno he joined me and told me his story, and sobbed like a child when he spoke of that poor girl. There was no doubt he loved her with all his soul; but, with the mother and his years both against him at the start, and then this

rich and handsome young Northerner, what chance had he? Léonore Brunel loved Ralph Rutherford, and that ended it—or would have ended it—but for that fiend of a mother. Long months after leaving New Orleans, Preston was in Savannah, when who should appear there but Rutherford. Preston avoided the club, thinking Rutherford would soon leave, return to New Orleans and—to her. Then came a letter from Adrienne, the mother—a fury of a letter—telling him that the girl he so passionately loved had been duped, betrayed, deserted; and they were going away,—anywhere to hide their shame. That night, in his fury, Preston purposely sought Rutherford at the Oglethorpe where Ralph was playing high. No woman was named. Preston simply accused Ralph of cheating and flung cards and counters into his face. Gordon, Ralph's friend and kinsman, was away. Seabrook was over from Moultrie on a visit. He bore Ralph's message to Preston, and sent the poor boy's last letter to his mother. They met at Thunderbolt as soon as it was light enough to see, and one shot settled it.

“Hugh Preston went into exile, believing he had killed the man who ruined the girl he loved, and in that conviction he remained until after his second visit to New York in '61.

“Meantime, through young Barclay, I heard stories of Mrs. Rutherford's being in a very nervous state—receiving letters that gave her dreadful seizures, and Barclay told me in so many words that he had once heard Hortense threatening her. Also that there was something about Forbes, the butler, that would bear watching. Barclay and I fell out not long after that, but the moment I set eyes on Forbes I knew I had seen him before—at the spring meeting of the Metairie Jockey Club, attending his young master, who was

even then showing marked attention to Lèonore. People I knew in New Orleans had looked queer at sight of the two women, the mother and daughter, driving with young Rutherford, but little had been said.

“Ralph was then only twenty, but old for his years, as you know, for he had been much indulged, had traveled a great deal, had been abroad with a tutor, etc. Now he saw his heart’s desire and could not have it. By his father’s will he was still dependent on his mother, and by her will he could never marry a Roman Catholic. Even the rector of Grace admitted that Mrs. Rutherford was bigoted on that score. You know, Dr. Tracy knew, and Ralph knew, that if he married without his mother’s consent before he became of age he was cut off without a shilling, but Hugh Preston knew nothing of this. I had seen enough of Lèonore and heard enough of Ralph to believe in them both, and came to quick solution of the question—that there had been a secret marriage—a secret to be kept until, being of age, he could win his mother over to receiving Lèonore, but before that ever became possible came the duel and his death; followed in a few months, as we were assured, by that of Lèonore. Then it was, as I conceived, that that infernal she cat began blackmailing the poor mother,—that Forbes and Hortense were in league with her against their own mistress; and then the disappearance of those letters from Miss Rutherford’s reticule that Sunday morning added to my suspicions. Proud, sensitive, devoted to her son, it would have bowed her head in shame to the grave to have had her beloved boy shown to the world as one who deserved the death that had been dealt him.

“Then I succeeded in seeing her and telling her my theory, and that I believed it possible, with the letters

in her possession, and what I could learn through friends in the South, to destroy the evil story Adrienne Brunel stood ready to swear to: It was exactly as I supposed. Then 'Forno' came back at my demand to see the letters she had kept locked in her escritoire, and that night, when I called on her, we searched in vain. Already they had been abstracted—Forbes or Hortense, of course, and she, poor woman, dare not let the facts be known because she feared some public *esclandre* started by that 'mother damnable' Brunel.

"You recall that then I was hurried off to Washington. You have heard that there I was in correspondence with Southerners. I was. An awful complication had arisen. The letters sent by Ralph to his mother were the love letters of an innocent girl whom he devotedly loved, and later succeeded in making his wife. He hoped that, if he survived the duel, their grace and charm and innocence would so appeal to the mother that he could then win her consent to the marriage, despite the difference in faith; but even then, hoping to survive, for he was no novice with the pistol, he dare not tell her the marriage had actually taken place. And, worst luck of all, thanks to a childish quarrel, the boy and girl had parted in pique and anger; each was waiting for the other to write for forgiveness, and, even at the moment when he faced the vengeance of Preston's aim, the poor lad did not know *why* he should have told his mother all. He died in ignorance of Lèonore's condition.

"O, what a tangled web we weave
When first we practice to deceive!"

"We could not find out what had become of her. Preston did his utmost to track the mother through

the South, even at the time Georgia was claiming his sword, and failed. When he turned up in Washington, to my great detriment, it was to say she was somewhere North, and later we found this true. She *was* there, blackmailing and threatening. She had a back room in Twelfth Street that commanded yours in Eleventh, and, as we heard long afterward, that blackguard Forbes used to signal to her from the Rutherfords' conservatory. The horrible whip she held over Mrs. Rutherford's head was the threat to tell the world her daughter had died in childbirth, the victim of Ralph Rutherford's perfidy. And I knew that she knew they were legally wed. I knew she probably had all the papers to prove it. I doubted Lèonore's death, and yet could not prove a thing. The world would say Adrienne could have got all she wanted by simply proving the marriage, but Ralph had doubtless told her of the will and his dependence, and, as she was low and crafty, her argument was that, as the law justified Mrs. Rutherford in refusing to provide, it never occurred to a woman like the Brunel that the mother's heart would plead for the girl her boy so worshiped. No! threat and blackmail was her game, and, now that Hortense had secured the letters that told how fervently Ralph's love was returned, and all the papers were in the hands of the enemy, Mrs. Rutherford was on the verge of distraction.

"But now Preston was fully aroused, and through friends in New Orleans he secured and sent me a packet of letters Lèonore had written to a schoolmate, also some statements affecting the mother. You remember the row there was about that night at Savage Station. Coming as it did soon after my meeting with Eugene in front of the Warwick, it nearly finished me. (Eugene was serving on Magruder's staff at that

time.) Through De Joinville, who knew the Brunels and something of madame's history, I was able to satisfy McClellan that the letters were strictly private and confidential. Later I was able to place them in Mrs. Rutherford's hands, to warn her further against Hortense and Forbes, and to promise her that through Father Gentil, in New Orleans, evidence of the marriage should yet be found.

"At this time you stood sturdily in the way; and when your testimony, probably, would have led to her being summoned as witness before the court in my case, it became necessary that she should tell you the truth as to my connection with the disappearance of the letters, etc., and she told you, doubtless, more than was necessary. Then Madame Brunel bled her savagely before again quitting New York, and our failure to bring matters to a climax was sapping her strength. Preston secured a few more papers which he sent by that mad brother of mine, and then came the catastrophe at Baltimore.

"But meantime another ally had joined us in the person of Miss Brenham. She had in abundance what we had but in moderation—wit, and in moderation what we lacked totally—money. She has given freely of both. She it is, not I, who deserves the credit of our final success. Through her energy, through her means and maid—I mustn't forget the maid—Madame Brunel was traced to Paris. Here was found that estimable dowager. Here in seclusion, yet safety, dwelt Léonore and baby Ralph. (Mrs. Rutherford would have loved that child.) Here we found Hortense and Forbes, who has done me the honor to call and ask for a recommendation as butler or gentleman's gentleman, and herewith I send you, attested by our consul, copies of all important papers, including the

marriage certificate. I would to God Mrs. Rutherford might have lived to know her son was not the reprobate she feared.

“And now, Hoyt, farewell. There is one whom in days to come you may teach to look upon me with kindlier eyes than in the past. I was not all disloyalty. There is another—no, there *was* another for whom we could have prayed forgiveness, even from Ethel and her mother, but he died like a hero in front of your guns at Fredericksburg. You are destined to live to adorn the profession you love, and for which you are so admirably fitted. I loved it, better than was deemed possible, despite the fact that I neither adorned nor was fitted for it. Should you ever see old Jasper at the ferry, tell him he is often held in grateful remembrance by

Yours, etc., etc.,

“H. WALLIS.”

So there it was, the long story of the misery that had so wrecked the mother's life—that had actually unhinged her mind, and that had involved the names and fortunes and fair fame of so many others. They had been talking of her, Bernard Hoyt and Ethel, in low, reverent tone, that soft, starlit evening the last of July, beneath the low bluff in front of Howlands, alone in the shabby little board summer house at the foot of the stairs. She was in deep mourning, and there were traces of tears about her fair face, and something of appeal and anxiety in her swimming blue eyes, for, though he had been there only thirty-six hours, on the morrow he must return to the front. He had been unusually grave and silent, even for him,

but in his manner there was ever that same gentleness and tenderness she had grown to expect of him, no matter what she might have said or done, and the last time they were at Long Branch together she had both said and done things that might well have tried both temper and tenderness, and now he would not so much as allude to them. He seemed to be thinking only of her mother and Ralph and Gerald, and, oh, of course, in a protecting, tolerant way, of *her*, instead of showing proper resentment of her unjust, petulant words. Of course all *that* had been wiped out by her being with him when he was so desperately ill at Baltimore, but then, really, how very little he knew of that, and it wasn't a thing for her to tell about. He was going back to the front now, just so surely as that big yellow moon was peeping up at the edge of the heaving deep before her eyes, and who could say when she could see him again—or how. Possibly he thought his whole duty lay with his country now. Possibly he thought that she could only think of her beloved mother. He was always thinking so much for others. It was high time he was speaking something for himself if ever he meant to. Across the glistening track of the moonlight a steamer was heading southward—another followed—another seemed but a cable's length behind.

“Transports,” said he. “The Silver Spoons are on one. They were sent up to quell the draft riots after Gettysburg, you know. Poor Wallis! Think how happy he'd be if he were only again at their head!”

She had been leaning on his arm, and had not en-

tirely withdrawn her hand. Now she looked up quickly into his face. "Do you think—there is no other happiness in store for him?"

Perceptibly he winced. "I—heard there was," said he, his eyes on the distant flotilla.

"Heard!" she exclaimed. "Why, it's barely two months since they went over, and hardly any one knows he's there."

"Since who went over?"

"Who? Why, Lorna and her aunt, of course."

"And, pardon me, but what have they to do with the happiness we were speaking of?"

Both her hands clasped about his arms now and turned him to her. Her face had been clouded. Now it brightened with womanly sense of superiority.

"Bernard Hoyt," said she, something very like a little laugh bubbling with her words, "do you know I sometimes think you are—dreadfully stupid. Don't you know that Lorna Brenham and Major Wallis will be married within a year—that she will be his fortune, his happiness?"

"Upon my word, I never thought of it," said he, astonished. Then with manlike irrelevance: "Poor Granger!"

"Poor Granger, indeed!" quoth she, casting loose his arm, and glad enough to have somebody on whom to vent her wrath. "Poor Granger! I've no patience with men who can't fight for their colors, or stand up for their convictions! Can't you see how impossible it is for a girl like Lorna—for any kind of a girl with

a head and a heart to care for a nondescript like him? Can't you see how Wallis's sacrifices and sorrows, some of them her doing, were just sure to turn her heart to him? What *owls* some men are!"

Silently, at least, as an owl, he turned and looked down into her flushing face, with a something in his eyes now that, imperious and superior as she had been but the moment before, caused her to droop and falter before him. It was quite a moment before he spoke. "The last time I heard he was to be rewarded in that way it was not Lorna," he gravely said, though his heart was beating hard. "Wallis at least stands up for his convictions if he has asked her, too."

"I did not say he had—asked her or—anybody. Lorna is a law unto herself, and he will be more than stupid if he doesn't see she—cares for him."

"Is it not possible he—cares for somebody else?"

"Himself, yes, and Eugene," she answered, quickly, and looking up for an instant into his eyes: "He never lacked self-esteem." Then, after a moment's pause: "He asked—no one else—to my knowledge."

"He asked *for* some one else, and had her mother's consent," said he.

"Mother would have—I mean on Ralph's account," she began, impetuously. Then in wrath and confusion both she faced him fairly. "Mother did not know what she was saying—she did not know——" and then came another abrupt stop.

"Know what, Ethel? It means all the world to me." And now, pleading with all his deep, long-re-

pressed love in his eyes, Bernard Hoyt stood bending toward her, his strong hands seeking and clasping hers.

“Then why——?” she began, but her cheeks were burning and the words would not come. The distant lights at sea had faded from view. The big round moon, a gleaming disk, was illumining the bare line of the bluff above them and the shining strand, foam fringed for miles on either side, but here in the little summer house was shelter and seclusion.

“Why, what?” he asked, his lips so near her white forehead that she could feel the trembling of the soft mustache. “I have loved you with all my heart, Ethel, ever since my home coming in '61——”

“And—wouldn't tell me—until now,” she almost sobbed. “You don't deserve——” But further words were lost—or smothered.

* * * * *

Many a moon rose over the broad Atlantic before again they gazed together upon those heaving billows. They were journeying eastward then, the long war ended—Ethel and her soldier liege, Gerald and his fair young bride, after a tumultuous leave-taking at the Cunarder's docks, where a dozen strong service and Seventh Regiment men had gathered to wish them *bon voyage*—Barclay among them—to say “God speed” and send greeting little looked for to another wedded pair, long waiting for the coming of these others to the sunny land of France, there to meet with

fond and pitying hearts, Lèonie and her little Ralph, there to clasp hands with those who, despite the snare of sectional strife, the web of Fate that so nearly wrecked so many lives, had proved such valiant and such valued friends and allies.

THE END.





